

Death in Service Guide

Summary of Guide

Elizabeth Finn Homes (EFH) recognises that it can be very shocking and sad when an employee dies as they may have been an important part of your team, and you and their colleagues will feel their loss.

As a manager, you may be unsure about what you need to do next. This this guide provides recommended actions, answers to some of the questions you may be asked by the employee's family, and signposting to help you support your team at this difficult time.

Note: Some benefits references in this guide may not be applicable to all employees, depending on their personal choices and/or eligibility based on their job role. Before confirming anything with family or colleagues please ensure that you have checked the individuals' particular arrangements.

Section 1 - Acknowledging and reporting an employee's death in service

What contact should I be having with the family?

You may already have a point of contact from the family, depending on the circumstances. If not, use the employee's next of kin or nominated emergency contact details from their personnel file to make contact. Introduce yourself, offer your condolences and let them know who their main point of contact will be if they have any questions. This should be the General Manager for the care homes and Head of Department for the CST team. You will be able to help the family to finalise the employee's work affairs in a sensitive and supportive way.

After the initial contact has been made, please send the letter of condolence to the family which is available on the intranet and referred to at the end of this document as appendix A.

Who do I need to inform?

For information purposes only, please ensure you send an email notification to the following individuals to ensure these individuals can not only support you as the point of contact but also guide you on any further requirements that may be necessary:

- The CEO
- All Directors
- Head of Operations
- The relevant HR Business Partner for the function or care home

It may not be necessary or appropriate to disclose the full details of the employee's death. Therefore, please ensure you only share as much information as required for awareness only.

In certain circumstances it may be important for the Marketing team to be aware if media (eg newspaper or TV) interest is likely, or if there is likely to be a lot of social media activity around the individual's death.

Updating the Payroll System

Your Business Support Administrator for the care homes and HR Administrator for the CST team must be notified as soon as possible, as they will need to complete the HRIS form to record the employee's death to ensure their final salary payment is accurate and paid at the earliest opportunity (but never before condolence contact has been made). Please ensure you use the leaver code of 'Death in Service'.

The payroll action may also trigger the start of any benefits such as life assurance and pension, therefore, any delay may also impact these processes.

Section 2 - Supporting Employees

When and how should I tell employees in the immediate and wider team?

It is likely to be preferable to tell the employee's immediate team as soon as possible to avoid them hearing the news from another source. How you choose to notify the team will vary depending on the care home or CST team and also when you are informed of the news, but as a guide where possible take the team aside to share the news sensitively, giving them some time afterwards to digest it.

You may have some employees who are away from the business at the time and therefore you should attempt to make contact with them if appropriate to do so and ask the individuals that you have informed to keep the news confidential until such time where it is deemed as appropriate to disclose further.

What shall I do if employees are upset?

There will be certain colleagues that would have been closer to the employee than others, but everyone reacts differently to shock and grief, so offer support to all.

Reassure the employees that they can and should discuss this with a manager at any point, and maybe create a 'quiet place' where people can go if they are feeling overwhelmed and just need a bit of space.

You will need to be compassionate, flexible and sensitive to the teams needs over the next few days, weeks and months and be mindful that the effects of a bereavement could also have an impact on a colleague's performance at work, so keep checking in with the team and be aware of any changes in performance, mood or behaviours that might indicate that an employee is struggling and may benefit from a supportive conversation and/or signposting to sources of support.

Mention EAP which is available to all staff, and MH first aiders, here as well as below?

Looking after yourself as the employee's manager

We know as a manager your focus will be on supporting the family and your team right now, but it's equally important to look after yourself, so don't ignore your own feelings or reaction to the news and

remember to reach out for help from your manager, peers or the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) if and when you need to. Further details of the EAP are available further in this guide.

External support available

Elizabeth Finn Homes has an Employee Assistance Programme operated by DAS, which includes the provision of a confidential 24-hour telephone counselling and bereavement service. Employees who feel that they may benefit from the support available can take advantage of their services at any time. If you feel that you or one of your team may benefit from such support, please call 0345 266 9667.

Also available to employees is Cruse Bereavement Care. Cruse is the leading national charity that provides free emotional care and support, as well as access to bereavement counselling, to people experiencing bereavement. Their website is <https://www.cruse.org.uk/> or you can call them on 0808 808 1677.

Attending the funeral or memorial ceremony

Be guided by the family about whether or they would like to invite any work colleagues to the funeral or memorial ceremony. At an appropriate time, ask the family contact what their plans are and how colleagues can pay their respects if they choose to (e.g. attending the ceremony, sending cards and flowers, contributing to a book of condolences or donations to a charity).

If several colleagues wish to attend, the Head of Operations will look to support you with temporary cover from other teams where possible.

If the family wish for this to remain private, the HR team can support you to arrange a gathering at the care home to pay our own respects to the employee.

It is important to be mindful and respect any religious beliefs or customs relating to their plans.

If the employee's family also work for Elizabeth Finn Homes, what time off are they entitled to?

Details around any Compassionate Leave are included within the Special Leave Policy. You should also speak to the family member(s) who work for EFH to understand what support they might need immediately and over the next few months. Remember to signpost them to EAP as well.

Section 3 - Finalising a employee's work affairs

What happens to the employee's final pay?

Any outstanding final pay will be processed once the leaver actions have been entered onto the system by the payroll team. We must be mindful of payroll cut off and if any HRIS forms are received after this time then the final payments will be made the following month.

If appropriate, please ask that the family keep the bank account open for the individual until they receive the final payments, however, if this is not possible and the bank account has been closed then the final payment will be returned by the bank and will be paid into another account of the next of kin.

What happens to an employee's annual leave entitlement if they die in service?

Any annual leave entitlement accrued up to the date the employee died that has been accrued but not taken will be paid in the final payment. If the employee had taken more annual leave than they had accrued, then an adjustment will be made to the final payment.

Giving the employee's property back to the family

It is important to agree with the family when and how you can return any personal possessions that the employee had at work (e.g. from their locker).

It is appropriate to gather their belongings and put them in the manager's office in a safe place until the agreed time has been made.

Getting the employee's equipment or company property back

As above, it is important to agree with the family when and how they would like to return any company property or equipment that the employee had (e.g. keys, phone, laptop, locker key).

Alternatively, we can arrange for one of the team or for a courier to collect them if this would be more convenient.

Consider if you really need the uniform back, it may be more appropriate to ask the family to dispose of these responsibly themselves.

What happens to the employee's pension if they die in service?

The pension scheme for Elizabeth Finn Homes is operated by Legal and General. As we are not financially regulated, we are unable to provide advice on pensions and therefore would direct the family to contact Legal and General directly using the contact details on their website.

If an employee is eligible for a death in service pension which is open to selected roles, this will again be paid directly from Legal and General.

Review date	Next Review Date
July 2024	July 2027



Appendix A

Private and Confidential

[Name]

[Address]

[Date]

Dear [Name],

I am writing, both personally and on behalf of Elizabeth Finn Homes, and [name of Care Home] to express my sincere condolences to you on the death of [name of deceased].

[Name of deceased] was a valued member of our team. They were a hardworking and well-respected colleague who will be greatly missed by us all.

If there is any way in which we may be able to help you at this most difficult time, please do not hesitate to contact me. If I am unable to answer your questions myself, please be assured that I will contact the appropriate people for you.

I am aware there are a lot of formalities that must be followed following the death of a loved one. For information and advice on the practical steps following the death of a loved one, you may wish to contact the Bereavement Advice Centre on 0800 634 9494 (Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm) or visit <https://www.bereavementadvice.org/>

This can also be a profoundly difficult time, so should it be of any assistance, either now or at some point in the future, I thought it appropriate to include the details of Cruse Bereavement Care. Cruse is the leading national charity that provides free emotional care and support, as well as access to bereavement counselling, to people experiencing bereavement. Their contact details are as follows:

Cruse Bereavement Care:

- <https://www.cruse.org.uk/>
- 0808 808 1677

There are also a number of processes that we, as [Name's] employer, must follow. This includes making arrangements for the release and payment of monies still owed to [Name]. If it is possible for their bank account to remain open, we will be able to make any payments into their normal account at the earliest opportunity. If the account has been frozen or closed, the monies will be returned to us, and we will require additional documentation before we can make the appropriate arrangements for monies to be released to the estate. Should this be the case, we will contact you again shortly to inform you of the documentation that is required.



Finally, we would very much like to pay our respects to [Name] and I would be very grateful if you could let me know if it would be possible for colleagues from Elizabeth Finn Homes to attend the funeral, once arrangements have been made. We understand however that you may wish to hold something more intimate and if so, we will arrange our own memorial for colleagues to attend.

Once again, I am extremely sorry for your loss and if I can be of any additional assistance at this most upsetting time, please do contact me.

Yours sincerely

[Name]
[Job title]