

Texas Woman's University University Regulation and Procedure

Regulation and Procedure Name: Reporting Student Death Guidelines

**Regulation and Procedure
Number: URP: 06.150**

Policy Owner: Student Life

POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this URP is to establish an orderly and timely procedure for reporting a student death at Texas Woman's University.

A student's death can have a significant impact on the Texas Woman's University community. This impact calls for a sensitive and well-planned response. All members of the University community must conduct themselves with the highest degree of compassion and professionalism while maintaining clear communication among the various staff that will perform tasks related to a student's death.

This policy will ensure proper notification to appropriate university administrative offices, identify support resources for University community members impacted by a student death, and indicate procedures for working with the affected family members.

APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to TWU Students, Faculty, and Staff.

DEFINITIONS

1. "On-Campus Student Death" means the death of a student that occurred on campus if the death takes place on property owned, leased, or maintained by the university. A student death may be treated as having occurred on campus if it occurs while the student is participating in a program or function hosted or supported by the university (e.g., students participating in Education Abroad programs, student-athlete competitions, or conferences as university representatives).
2. "Student" means a person taking courses at TWU, a person who is not currently enrolled in courses but who has a continuing academic relationship with TWU, or a person who has been admitted or readmitted to TWU.

REGULATION AND PROCEDURE

I. Student Death on Campus

- A. All student deaths on campus shall be reported to the Vice President for Student Life.
- B. TWU Police will determine the need to conduct a death investigation.
- C. TWU Police will notify or coordinate notification of next-of-kin, as necessary.
- D. TWU Police will notify the Vice President for Student Life when there is confirmation of a student's death. If a death occurred in a residence hall, TWU Housing and Dining will be notified.
- E. If the student is an international student, Student Life will notify the Office of International Affairs as soon as possible to coordinate notification of next-of-kin and any other necessary process.
- F. Under no circumstances should there be any comments about the cause or suspected cause of death.
- G. "Support for Students and Employees Impacted by Student Deaths" means any students currently enrolled on campus who may be impacted by the death of another student can contact staff in the following departments for support and assistance: Dean of Students; Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS); Department of Housing and Residential Life; Student Health Services; and their supervisor, if employed by the university.

Any employee who encounters the death of a student in their employment capacity or is impacted by the death of a student should notify their supervisor or Human Resources for support and resources. An employee can seek assistance through the TWU Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

II. Student Death Off Campus

- A. Response to any death occurring off campus will be handled initially by the appropriate policing agency, medical examiner, or hospital involved. It is the responsibility of these agencies to notify the next-of-kin. TWU Police may be notified to assist in this process. If TWU Police are notified, then the TWU Police will contact the Vice President for Student Life. When the information is communicated to the Vice President for Student Life, the same process of internal communication within the university will be followed.
- B. If a death occurs during student travel as part of a university-sponsored event or an off-campus official university-sponsored event:

1. If a university faculty or staff member is accompanying the students, the staff member should immediately contact local emergency services and the local police agency. As soon as possible, the university staff member shall contact TWU Police.
2. If travel was part of an Education Abroad program, the accompanying faculty or staff member, surviving students, or liaisons must contact the Office of International Affairs, TWU Police, and the Dean of Students Office.
3. If no faculty or staff member is accompanying the students, the surviving students or program liaisons should contact TWU Police and the Dean of Students Office to support any other university travelers impacted by the student's death.
4. Travel scheduled by a registered student organization is not a university-sponsored event. In this situation, the individuals traveling should contact local authorities immediately. They should contact TWU Police and the Dean of Students Office as soon as possible so that the internal process and support given to students or families can occur.

III. Reporting Student Death Guidelines

- A. The Office of Student Life should be notified if any person has knowledge of the death of a TWU student. The Office of Student Life will confirm if the person was a student, verify the information, provide notification, and facilitate appropriate administrative arrangements as required.
- B. The Vice President for Student Life will coordinate institutional follow-up actions, as needed, and maintain internal procedures and notification lists for this purpose. These actions may include, but are not limited to:
 1. Coordinating expressions of condolence on behalf of the University to the next-of-kin or other appropriate persons;
 2. Notifying appropriate staff of verification of a student death to update university records, initiating relevant procedures including consideration of an honorary degree; and
 3. Communicating with the deceased student's family to coordinate university services and resolve administrative details.
- C. Upon notification and verification of a student death, the Vice President for Student Life (or her/his designee) shall notify the Chancellor and President and Vice Presidents. The following steps will be facilitated by the Vice President for Student Life (or her/his designee):
 1. Notify the Campus Manager of the Dallas or Houston Campus, as appropriate;

2. Inform the Office of Marketing and Communications for preparation for media inquiries;
3. Advise the Counseling Center who will provide support services to the University community as required;
4. Take necessary steps to withdraw the student from the University; and
5. Notify the following individuals and/or departments :
 - a. Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
 - b. General Counsel
 - c. Chief Information Officer
 - d. Vice President of Marketing and Communications
 - e. Registrar
 - f. Executive Director of University Housing, if applicable
 - g. Executive Director of Financial Aid
 - h. Bursar's Office
 - i. Alumni Office
 - j. Dean of Graduate School, if applicable
 - k. Dean of the College/School in which the student is enrolled
 - l. TWU Police
 - m. Office of International Education, if applicable
 - n. Senior Integration Analyst for ID Services
 - o. Director of Design and Communications for Student Life
6. Coordinate appropriate steps necessary on the part of the University to resolve any personal matters related to the deceased and his/her relationship to the University.

IV. Account and Emergency Loan Balances

Student account and emergency loan balances will be reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid and the Bursar and adjusted as required. Refunds, if any, will be processed by the Bursar and forwarded to the family of the deceased student.

V. Posthumous Degree

Any request for a posthumous degree will be considered in accordance with University policy and procedures.

VI. On-campus Remembrance

Each fall term, the Office of Student Life will sponsor Pioneers Remembered, a memorial service to remember and honor members of the university community who passed away during the preceding year.

REVIEW

This policy will remain in effect and published until it is reviewed, updated, or archived. This policy is to be reviewed once every six years. Interim review may be required as a result of updates to federal and state law or regulations, Board of Regents policies, or internal processes or procedures.

REFERENCES

[TWU Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#)

[TWU Student Death Response Protocol](#)

FORMS AND TOOLS

None

Publication Date: 07/02/2021

Revised: 07/02/2021; 11/11/2025