



City of Pittsburgh  
Operating Policies

<b>Policy: On-Duty Death or Catastrophic Injury to City of Pittsburgh Employees</b>	<b>Original Date: 5/2015</b>

**PURPOSE:** To provide considerate assistance to appropriate family members of any City of Pittsburgh employee who dies or experiences a catastrophic injury while on-duty.

**POLICY STATEMENT:** The death or catastrophic injury of an employee is a tragic event. It is extremely important that personnel demonstrate sympathy for surviving family members and be sensitive to the needs of the family by processing claims as quickly as possible. When an employee dies or is catastrophically injured on the job, the City of Pittsburgh will provide considerate and humane notification to the employee's designated emergency contact. In the event of the death or catastrophic injury of an employee on the job, the City of Pittsburgh will ensure that the employee or his/her survivor(s) is/are informed of the benefits and/or how to file a claim relating to the incident.

*Disclaimer: No statements in this policy are intended or set forth as contractual commitments or obligations of the City to any individual employee or group of employees, or to establish an exception to the employment-at-will doctrine beyond that specified in the Civil Service Statutes and Rules, any applicable federal, state and local laws, or pertinent collective bargaining agreement. If there are differences between the various collective bargaining agreements and this policy, the pertinent collective bargaining agreement takes precedence.*

**PROCEDURES**

**NOTIFICATIONS:**

When an employee dies or is catastrophically injured while on-duty, any unharmed employee witnesses will be responsible for contacting the deceased or catastrophically injured employee's immediate supervisor. If the employee was alone when this catastrophic injury or on-duty death occurred, upon notification by Law Enforcement, the admitting hospital, an immediate family member, or another appropriate and verifiable source, the employee's immediate supervisor will be notified. Once the immediate supervisor has been notified he/she will notify the Department Director/Chief. The Department Director/Chief and/or his/her designee will be responsible for notifying the Mayor.

Each department should have an Emergency Contact Form for each employee on which the employee should designate an emergency contact. After approval by the Mayor's Office, the Director/Chief or his/her designee will notify the deceased or catastrophically injured employee's emergency contact, provide the contact number for the Benefits Supervisor so that any benefits or claims issues can be promptly addressed, and will provide any verified and approved factual information about the circumstances. Only factual information that has been verified by the Director/Chief and approved by the Mayor's Office and the Law Department will be provided to the emergency contact and the release of such information will be handled with compassion and dignity.

Every effort will be made to notify the emergency contact in person, and as soon as possible, so the family/designated emergency contact does not learn of the injury or death through other sources. In the case of out of state or distant designated emergency contact, the Director/Chief will notify local law enforcement and request assistance with notification.

In the case of catastrophic injury, arrangements should be made to assist the designated emergency contact/family members with transportation to the hospital where the employee has been taken, if such assistance is desired.

In the case of death, the designated emergency contact should be notified of the location of the employee's remains.

**PERSONNEL AND CIVIL SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The Director and/or his/her designee will notify the correct retirement authority of the employee's death or catastrophic injury (payout of pension and/or disability pension) and provide assistance with other benefits upon request (e.g., Accidental Death and Dismemberment). Personnel and Civil Service will also ensure the employee's final paycheck is mailed.