



Policy Source: Gwinnett Tech	Owner: Vice President of Student Affairs	Effective: 9/2018
Division: Student Affairs	Reviewed: 12/2020, 2/2026 Revised:	

6.3.3 GT Student Death Procedure and Protocol

Purpose: *In the event of the death of a currently enrolled Gwinnett Technical College student, the proper notification channels must be followed in order to respect the student’s next of kin and to ensure that all of the appropriate campus individual have been contacted. The purpose of this protocol is to establish certain responsibilities concerning the notification of various campus administrators and departments in the event of a student death. This procedure describes those notification channels, specific staff to be notified, and serves as a guideline for handling student deaths. These responsibilities are coordinated by the Vice President of Student Affairs or designee.*

Initial Awareness: *There is no single entry point of information. Initial awareness of a student’s death can come from a media release, phone call from the family to an administrator or instructor, police contact with the college’s public safety officer, or a conversation with friends or classmates of the deceased. It is also true that early facts are frequently unsubstantiated and details obscured. Because there is a need to establish a central point through which information can be verified and disseminated, college employees are asked to contact the Vice President of Student Affairs as soon as they become aware of a student’s death so that appropriate action can be initiated.*

I. Verification

Any report of a student death should be referred to the Vice President of Student Affairs or his/her designee for verification and information collection. The Vice President of Student Affairs will:

1. Gather as much information from the reporter as possible, including but not limited to, student’s full name, student ID (900#), and also (if available) details of the death, demographic information, other students who might have been involved or affected, and their contact information.
2. If death is not confirmed, the Vice President of Student Affairs will contact the Chief of Campus Police and ask to confirm the student death.
3. Use the **Student Death File Quick Reference Form** to gather and document information.

4. Use the **Student Death Checklist** to document case management. Accomplishment of check-listed tasks will be initialed and dated by the Vice President of Student Affairs or designee upon confirmation of each task's completion.
5. If the death occurred on campus, find out if the emergency contact has been contacted, and if so, by whom.
 - If the emergency contact has not been contacted, the Vice President of Student Affairs will gather as much information as possible from the reporter to help identify the correct student in Banner (specifically, address, birthday, middle name, etc.) to help authorities in locating parents/family.
 - If the Vice President of Student Affairs is unable to identify the deceased student in Banner with the information available, the Chief of Police will speak with the coroner, hospital staff and/or police to assist in identification for appropriate notification of emergency contact.
6. Call the student's emergency contact. The Vice President of Student Affairs will offer verbal condolences, request email address and/or specific phone numbers. The Vice President of Student Affairs will follow up with the emergency contact/family/next of kin via email to share contact information and to detail information discussed over the phone.

II. Campus Notification

The Vice President of Student Affairs provides notification of confirmed student deaths to the campus leadership team and affected administrators on campus. Upon notification, administrators are instructed to take action within their department to update their records and address the student's death as needed.

1. Immediately upon confirmation of the death, the Vice President of Student Affairs will initiate the following notification to campus officials:
2. Call the following to inform of the student death: Leadership Team, Chief of Police, GBIT Chair, Executive Director of Communications
 - Immediately or as early as possible upon receiving confirmation that parents/family have been notified, the Vice President of Student Affairs will email campus officials of the deceased student's name, Banner ID #, year, major, address, and dates of attendance.
3. For general notification and action, steps will be taken by appropriate staff members according to the **Student Death Checklist**.

III. Communication with Family

The Student Affairs Vice President of Student Affairs acts as the Gwinnett Technical College point of contact for the student's family/next of kin. All communication from various departments to and from the family/next of kin is distributed through the Vice President of Student Affairs for simplicity and continuity.

1. Prepare correspondence for the President to sign and send to the family/next of kin. Email prepared letter to the Executive Assistant to the President to arrange signature and mailing.
2. Gather and disseminate as appropriate, information about the memorial service/funeral the family/next of kin may be planning for the deceased.

IV. Funeral

1. The Vice President of Student Affairs communicates with the family/next of kin about funeral arrangements and ensures communication to appropriate parties.
2. Attend funeral and/or visitation, or arrange for a college representative to attend, to offer condolences to the family/next of kin.

V. Follow-Up

1. The Vice President of Student Affairs will follow-up with campus offices to ensure necessary action has been taken with regards to the student's passing.
2. The Vice President of Student Affairs will continue to reach out to the family/next of kin to acknowledge anniversaries and communicate about memorial ceremonies.
 - Send a card to deceased's family/next of kin at the 6 month and 1 year anniversaries.
 - Correspond with student's family regarding the details of future memorial ceremonies, if applicable.

STUDENT DEATH CHECKLIST

**Please initial and date when each item is complete.*

Immediately: Upon confirmation of death and family notification (if applicable):

Task	Initials	Date
1. <u>Vice President of Student Affairs</u> : Complete Student Death File Reference Form		
2. <u>Vice President of Student Affairs</u> : Email Leadership Team		
3. <u>Leadership team</u> : Contact their staff as follows to commence steps 3-22:		
✓ Chief of Police → Assistant Chief of Police		
✓ GBIT Chair		
✓ Registrar → Graduation Auditor		
✓ Director, Student Accounts		
✓ Manager, Content and Media Relations		
✓ Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs → Director, Library Services		
✓ Director, Academic Affairs - ANF		
✓ Director, Student Affairs - ANF		
✓ All Division Deans		
✓ Director Student Life		
✓ Licensed Student Counselors		
✓ Coordinator, Veterans Affairs (if applicable)		
✓ Director, Dual Enrollment (if applicable)		
✓ Executive Director, Enrollment Support		
✓ Executive Director, Enrollment Processing		
✓ Executive Director, Information Technology		
✓ Coordinator, Environmental Health and Safety (if applicable)		
✓ Director, Facilities		
4. <u>Director, Facilities</u> : Lower Gwinnett Tech flag to half-mast for 48 hours after notification of student death.		
5. <u>Executive Director, Information Technology</u> : Lock student's email account. Remove student and parent information from the Gwinnett Tech alert system.		
6. <u>Executive Director, College Communications</u> : Respond to all calls from the media; Issue a public statement, if applicable.		
7. <u>Content and Media Relations Manager</u> : Assist the Office of the President in drafting a public statement from the President, if applicable, and letter to family/next of kin.		
8. <u>Chief of Police</u> : Notify Vice President of Student Affairs if student has a registered vehicle on campus so he/she can notify family/next of kin.		
9. <u>Registrar</u> : Process withdrawal for student records; mark student as deceased in Banner.		
10. <u>Director, Student Accounts</u> : Identify account balances as appropriate.		
11. <u>Director, Library Services</u> : Notify Vice President of Student Affairs if student has checked out library books; notify library staff so student's family/next of kin is not contacted about library fines or overdue books.		
12. <u>Vice President, Administrative Services</u> : If approved by the President, process refund or clear balance; notify Vice President of Student Affairs to confirm with family the method by which refund should be processed, if applicable.		

13. <u>Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs</u> : Notify student's instructors and academic advisor(s) of death; work with Graduation Auditor to determine eligibility regarding any posthumous awards.		
14. <u>Graduation Auditor</u> : Process Certificate of Attendance and posthumous award, if applicable; prepare framed certificate for Leadership Team representative to give to parents of deceased, if appropriate.		
15. <u>Executive Assistant to the President</u> : Prepare and send condolence letter from President to student's family. Notify Board of Directors, if appropriate.		
16. <u>Executive Director, Human Resources</u> : Identify if student was a student employee or work study on campus, notify student's supervisor regarding death, if applicable.		
17. <u>Director, Student Life</u> : Confirm whether or not student was involved in a student organization; notify local president and advisor as well as national chapters as applicable; provide general support to organization and refer to campus resources, if appropriate.		
18. <u>Director, Student Life</u> : Work with Student Counseling Services to provide support for impacted students.		
19. <u>Counseling Services</u> : Provide support to students impacted by death; provide campus outreach as requested.		
20. <u>Coordinator, Veteran Services</u> : <u>IF</u> deceased student is a veteran, notify fellow students and staff as appropriate		
21. <u>Director of Dual Enrollment</u> : <u>IF</u> the deceased is a dual enrollment student, act as a liaison between the Vice President of Student Affairs and high school.		
22. <u>Executive Director, Institutional Advancement</u> : Remove email so student's family is not contacted about alumni or fundraising efforts.		
23. <u>Environmental Health and Safety Coordinator</u> : <u>IF</u> the death occurred on campus – file claim and works with college insurance company.		

During Appropriate Business Hours (7:45 AM to 4:45 PM):

Task	Initials	Date
1. Email friends/classmates and refer to Student Counseling Services (if applicable)		
2. Call family to offer condolences. Obtain their email address and send a follow-up email with contact information as point person.		

During the 1st week after death:

Task	Initials	Date
1. Confirm funeral arrangements with family		
2. Arrange for a Gwinnett Technical College representative to attend funeral		
3. Prepare condolence letter for President		
4. Email letter to Executive Assistant to the President, for signature/mailing		

Follow Up:

Task	Initials	Date
1. Send card, 6 month mark		
2. Send card, 1 year mark		

STUDENT DEATH FILE QUICK REFERENCE FORM

Student Name: _____

Address: _____

Banner Student ID 900#: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Date of Death: _____

Program/Major Code: _____

Program Director/Dean: _____

Reporter Name: _____

Cause of Death: _____

Summary of Incident: _____

Supporting Documentation: _____

Funeral Arrangements: _____

Family Contact Info: _____

Family Contact Made: (Y/N)

Current Classes: _____

Clubs/Organizations: _____

Veteran: (Y/N)

International Student: (Y/N)

Dual Enrollment Student: (Y/N)