

Policy #HR009: Loss of Community Member Notification

Recommended for Approval by: 
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Approved by: 
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President

Effective Date: 04/07/2026

A. Intent

The intent of this policy is to ensure that Pennsylvania Western University (PennWest) responds with compassion, clarity, and consistency when the University experiences the loss of a community member. This policy establishes the framework for timely and appropriate notification following the death of a current employee, emeriti faculty member, emeriti administrator, or eligible family member of an employee. It supports coordinated communication across University leadership, departments, and the broader campus community, while honoring the individual and providing support to those affected.

B. Definition(s)

Employee – An active employee of PennWest at the time of passing.

Emeriti Faculty – A faculty member awarded Emeritus status upon retirement from PennWest.

Emeriti Administrator – An academic dean, provost, or vice president for academic affairs who has been awarded Emeritus status upon retirement.

Family Member – Spouse, parent(s), stepparent(s), child(ren), or stepchild(ren). Does not include in-laws.

C. Policy Statement

PennWest is committed to ensuring compassionate, timely communication in the event of the death of a community member. The University will take appropriate steps to notify internal stakeholders and the campus community, coordinate with surviving

family members as needed, and facilitate support services for affected employees and students.

The President's Office, Human Resources, Academic Affairs, and other relevant departments will work collaboratively to carry out the required actions and notifications.

This includes:

- Providing internal notifications to University leadership, Human Resources, trustees, and other relevant departments.
- Issuing clear and consistent communication to faculty, staff, and students, as appropriate.
- Notifying the University community in the event of the death of a current employee, emeriti faculty or administrators, or an eligible family member of a current employee.
- Coordinating benefits-related processes, the return of University property, and necessary communication with the deceased employee's family.
- Facilitating counseling and support services to assist employees and students during a time of loss.

Notifications will not be sent for former employees except in cases of emeriti faculty or emeriti administrators.

D. Related Policies

[Emeritus Status \(AC001\)](#)

E. Contact Information

For additional information, please contact the Office of Finance and Administration or the Office of Human Resources.

F. Policy Review Schedule

Each policy shall be reviewed by the corresponding Vice President on a regular basis as appropriate.

Procedure #HR009: Loss of Community Member Notification

Corresponding Policy: Loss of Community Member (HR009)
Responsible Office: Office of Human Resources
Effective Date: 04/07/2026
Last Reviewed/Updated Date: Not Applicable

A. Intent

To establish a process to define the notification process and steps required when a current employee, emeriti faculty, and emeriti administrator pass away and family members of current employees.

B. Definition(s)

Employee – Active employee of Pennsylvania Western University (PennWest) at that time of passing.

Emeriti faculty – A faculty member who has been awarded emeritus status upon retirement from PennWest.

Emeriti Administrator - An academic dean of a college or school, provost, and/or vice president for academic affairs who has been awarded emeritus status upon retirement from PennWest.

Family Member - Spouse, parent(s), stepparent(s), child(ren), and stepchild(ren).

C. Procedure

- Current employee internal notification protocol:

Order	Task	Employee Type	When	Who
1	Human Resources (HR@pennwest.edu) is notified	Faculty & Staff	Same Day	VP's Office
2	Cabinet is notified	Faculty & Staff	Same Day	Human Resources
3	Notify trustees	Faculty & Staff	1 business day	President's Office
4	Request list of students in faculty member's class from Registrar	Faculty	1 business day	Provost or Dean

Order	Task	Employee Type	When	Who
5	Email list of students in faculty member's class to Human Resources (HR@pennwest.edu)	Faculty	1 business day	Registrar
6	Email department faculty and staff	Faculty & Staff	2 business days	Human Resources
7	Email students in the faculty member's classes	Faculty	2 business days	Human Resources
8	Email sent to all-faculty and all-staff	Faculty & Staff	2 business days	Human Resources
9	Submit Case in HRConnect who will contact family	Faculty & Staff	2 business days	Human Resources
10	Notify Budget Office and Union	Faculty & Staff	3 business days	Human Resources
11	As needed, set up counseling services through SEAP for employees	Faculty & Staff	3 business days	Human Resources
12	Set up counseling services for students	Faculty	3 business days	Student Affairs
13	Work with HRConnect for benefit and payout coordination	Faculty & Staff	2 weeks	Human Resources
14	Coordinate with family for return of personnel items and return of university property	Faculty & Staff	3 weeks	Dean/Director

- Campus Community Notification
 - Human Resources will notify the University community when a current employee (faculty, managers and staff) passes away.
 - Human Resources will notify students in a faculty member's classes of the faculty member's passing.
 - Human Resources will notify the University community when a family member of a current employee, emeriti faculty, and emeriti administrators passes away. Eligible family members include spouse, parent(s), stepparent(s), child(ren), and stepchild(ren). Not included are in-laws.
 - Notices will not be sent for former employees except for emeriti faculty and emeriti administrators.
 - Email Notification Message Language – See Appendix A: Email Notification Message Language Templates

D. Related Policies or Procedures

[Emeritus Status \(AC001\)](#)

E. Forms/Resources

Not Applicable.

F. Contact Information

For additional information, please contact the Office of Human Resources.

G. Procedure Review Schedule

Each procedure shall be reviewed by the corresponding Vice President on a regular basis as appropriate.