



# GUIDE TO SURVIVOR AND BENEFICIARY BENEFITS

Losing a loved one and settling one's estate while you are grieving can be difficult. Please be assured the team at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC Health Department) is ready to assist you and explain all the benefits available to you, other survivors or beneficiaries.

The NYC Health Department's Leave and Benefits Unit will be your primary contact throughout this process. They will answer your questions and guide you through how to claim the employment benefits you may be eligible for. If you have any questions or need more information, email [bereavement@health.nyc.gov](mailto:bereavement@health.nyc.gov) or call 347-396-2388. Their office is located at:

NYC Health Department Bureau of Human Resources and Labor Relations  
Leave and Benefits Unit  
42-09 28th St.  
Long Island City, NY 11101

## STEPS YOU NEED TO TAKE WHEN AN EMPLOYEE PASSES AWAY

We know you may have questions, and we are here to help you throughout this process. Follow the steps below so we can provide you with the information needed to process benefits that you may be eligible for.

### STEP 1

**Notify the Health Department as soon as possible** by contacting the supervisor where the deceased person worked. If you do not know who this is, contact the Leave and Benefits Unit directly. When you call, please have the following information about the deceased:

- Name
- Next of kin
- Date of birth
- Social Security Number
- Home address
- Relationship to the caller

Also be prepared to provide the following information of the surviving family member/beneficiary:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Social Security Number
- Home address

Do not hesitate to contact the Health Department even if you do not have all of this information. It is very important that the agency is contacted promptly regarding any employee's death. This allows us to begin the process of preparing any benefits the deceased employee's beneficiaries may be eligible for.

## STEP 2

**Notify NYC Employee Retirement System (NYCERS)** if the employee was enrolled in the City's pension system. If you are unsure if they were part of NYCERS, the Leave and Benefits Unit can help look this up. For more information, visit [nycers.org](http://nycers.org).

**Contact other institutions as outlined under the section "Other Employment Benefits for Survivors of Health Department Employees."**

## STEP 3

**Wait to receive a letter from the Health Department's Leave and Benefits Unit** (typically mailed to the address on record within two weeks of initial contact). Each person who is listed as a beneficiary will receive a letter explaining the potential benefits they are eligible for and the documents needed to complete this process.

## STEP 4

**Send requested documents to the Health Department's Leave and Benefits Unit.** In the letter you receive, you will be asked to send copies of documents, such as a certified copy of the death certificate, marriage certificate, birth certificates for the spouse or children, etc. We recommend you start gathering these documents in advance.

## STEP 5

**Respond to any requests for additional information from the Leave and Benefits Unit.** This will help the unit process the benefits promptly.

The Health Department's Office of Payroll will calculate the final salary, vacation pay and other monies that were due to the employee, excluding their regular deductions (i.e., taxes). The timeframe to receive these may vary. Expect to receive this within four to eight weeks after the Health Department receives the requested documents and all the information is verified.

## **OTHER EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS FOR SURVIVORS OF HEALTH DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES**

The Leave and Benefits Unit will provide you with a list of institutions where the deceased was affiliated, and you should check with them directly. The timeframe for receiving any benefits from these entities will vary. These may include the following.

- **Contact the Office of Labor Relations' Deferred Compensation Program** if the employee was enrolled in 401K or 457 programs. Visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/olr/deferred/dcp-beneficiary-information.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/olr/deferred/dcp-beneficiary-information.page). If you are unsure, the Leave and Benefits Unit can help look this up.
- **Notify the union** (DC37, OSA, 1199, Doctor's Council, Teamsters, 1180, etc.) if the employee was a union member. Some unions, such as DC37, offer death benefits. If you are unsure about which union they belonged to, the Leave and Benefits Unit can help look this up. Contact the union directly to discuss death benefits.
- **For managerial employees**, contact the Management Benefits Fund (MBF) at [nyc.gov/mbf](http://nyc.gov/mbf).
- **For information related to pension**, contact NYCERS directly at [nycers.org](http://nycers.org).
- **For information related to health insurance:** Health insurance for covered dependents ceases at the time of death. If you lose eligibility for NYC-sponsored health and other benefits at the time of the employee's date of death, and you wish to continue coverage, apply for COBRA medical, dental and/or vision coverage. Please note that the COBRA package will be mailed to the deceased employee's address on file within seven to 10 business days after the agency has made the deceased inactive in its system. Call the NYCAPS at 212-487-0500 if you have not received this after this time.

Lower-cost health coverage options can be obtained at the [NY Health Plan Marketplace](#).

## OTHER HELPFUL TIPS

- Order a Death Certificate online from [vitalchek.com](http://vitalchek.com). In order to claim benefits, you may be asked to produce a copy of a death certificate. Make sure you know how many copies you may need to avoid having to reorder in the future. For further information on who can order a copy of the death certificate and a list of accepted documentation, go to [nyc.gov/site/doh/services/death-certificates.page](http://nyc.gov/site/doh/services/death-certificates.page). For other FAQs on how to request a death certificate, go to [www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/covid-19-death-reporting.pdf](http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/covid-19-death-reporting.pdf) or call 347-396-7962.

**LOOKING FOR SUPPORT?** The NYC Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers free, confidential information, education, counseling and referrals to employees and family members. Contact the EAP by visiting [nyc.gov/eap](http://nyc.gov/eap), emailing [eap@olr.nyc.gov](mailto:eap@olr.nyc.gov) or calling 212-306-7660 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.

- NYC Well provides 24/7 free and confidential mental health support services in over 200 languages. Call 888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355), text “WELL” to 65173 or chat at [nyc.gov/nycwell](http://nyc.gov/nycwell).
- **Make sure you get legal advice and contact other relevant institutions**, such as the Social Security Administration, credit unions and banks.