

# WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY IN AFRICA



*Addressing Gender Disparity and Fostering Equity in University Education*

## BEREAVEMENT POLICY

### 1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the nature of assistance which the University shall provide in the unfortunate event of the death of a staff member or that of their immediate relative.

### 2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

The University is concerned about the health and well-being of its employees and recognises that expression of sympathy is a means of reinforcing this concern. This expression also provides an opportunity for the bereaved family to be made aware of the assistance that the University community provides.

### 3.0 SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all Women's University in Africa full-time staff members.

### 4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

The Deputy Registrar, Human Resources and Administration shall be responsible for implementation of this policy.

### 5.0 DEFINITION OF TERMS

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Bereavement	The loss of an immediate family member through death.
Funeral Assistance	Assistance in cash and kind given to a staff member or their surviving family upon death.
Ex-gratia payment	Salary benefit paid to the surviving member's family upon their death while in service.
Terminal Benefits	Amount in respect of any allowances and vacation leave days that were due to a member at the time of death.
Immediate relative	Spouse, own biological children and biological parents.
Claimant	A person responsible to receive funeral assistance and bereavement benefits upon death of a staff member.

## **6.0 REFERENCE POLICY DOCUMENTS**

This policy makes reference to the following policy documents:

- a) NSSA Act; and
- b) Women's University in Africa Pension Fund Rules.

### **SECTION A: DEATH OF A STAFF MEMBER**

#### **7.1 Death of a Staff Member**

- 7.1.1 Upon the death of a staff member, the Head of Department/Section shall immediately advise the Deputy Registrar, Human Resources and Administration, in writing, soon after receiving such news.
- 7.1.2 Upon receipt of such notification the Human Resources and Administration Section shall write to the Registrar to obtain approval authorising the Section to pay funeral assistance for the late member's family.
- 7.1.3 The Human Resources and Administration Section shall notify staff members of the death of their colleague in writing through all Departmental/Section Heads.

#### **7.2 Obligations of the University upon Death of a Staff Member**

- 7.2.1 The University shall communicate accordingly with the Bank to facilitate the payment of the prescribed funeral benefit funds from the Funeral Policy to the family of the deceased staff member.
- 7.2.2 Upon receipt of such notification the Human Resources and Administration Section through the Registrar shall seek the Vice Chancellor's approval to pay an amount of USD\$1000 or its equivalent paid in local currency to the bereaved staff member's surviving family.
- 7.2.3 The surviving spouse or close relative shall complete and duly sign the funeral assistance form as acknowledgement of receipt of the funeral assistance. A copy of a burial order/death certificate should then be attached to the completed funeral assistance form.
- 7.2.4 A University vehicle, preferably a truck will be provided to assist with the running of errands during the funeral.
- 7.2.5 A University vehicle or bus and fuel shall be provided to ferry staff members to attend the funeral. Staff members shall attend the funeral at their own will and the University shall not pay any travel and subsistence allowances to members attending the funeral.
- 7.2.6 The Deputy Registrar, Human Resources and Administration or her/his representative and/or the respective Head of Department/Section of the deceased staff member shall attend the funeral on behalf of the University.

### **7.3 Payment of Terminal Benefits**

7.3.1 The following benefits shall be payable to the late member's surviving spouse or family:

7.3.1.1 Ex-gratia payment [three (3) month gross salary to be paid immediately on death of a staff member];

7.3.1.2 Group Life Assurance benefit from the WUA Pension Fund administered by Old Mutual paid as per WUA Pension Fund Regulations. This amount is only payable in the case where the deceased was a member of the WUA Pension Fund;

7.3.1.3 National Social Security Authority (NSSA) funeral grant paid as per the NSSA Act; and

7.3.1.4 Terminal benefits in respect of allowances and accrued vacation leave days.

7.3.2 To enable processing of the benefits stated in 3.0, the Human Resources and Administration Section shall require the following documents:

7.3.2.1 Certified copy of death certificate of the late member;

7.3.2.2 Certified proof of identity of the claimant;

7.3.2.3 Certified copy of marriage certificate. If there is no marriage certificate an affidavit as proof of marriage;

7.3.2.4 Copies of birth certificates of all children below the age of 18 years;

7.3.2.5 Certificate of Guardianship where the guardian is not the parent of dependent children;

7.3.2.6 Certificate of Administration of the late member's estate where the late member has no spouse and children below the age of 18 years;

7.3.2.7 Bank account details; and

7.3.2.8 Proof of residence.

### **7.4 Department/Section Arrangements for Funeral Services and Memorials**

7.4.1 Time away from work for the purpose of attending funeral/memorial services for bereaved staff members is granted at the discretion of the Head of Department/Section.

### **7.5 University Property and Personal Property**

7.5.1 The deceased member's Department/Section and Human Resources and Administration Section will contact the spouse/next of kin/executor concerning the retrieval of any University property that was held by the deceased member at her/his home at the time of death.

## **SECTION 2: DEATH OF AN IMMEDIATE RELATIVE**

### **8.0 Funeral Assistance on the Death of an Immediate Relative**

The Funeral Assistance is meant to assist a staff member when faced with the death of an immediate family member.

### **8.1 Coverage on Death of an Immediate Relative**

- 8.1.1 A member will benefit from funeral assistance from the University in the event of losing an immediate family member through death. An immediate family member shall be;
- a) Spouse of a member
  - b) Own biological children up to 18 years
  - c) Biological parents
- 8.1.2 It is a requirement that any beneficiary outlined above be registered through the provision of a copy of birth certificate to the Human Resources and Administration Section. For any dependents above 16 years a copy of National Identity Card must be submitted.
- 8.1.3 The bereaved member of staff notifies her/his Head of Department/Section of the death of an immediate member of her/his family.
- 8.1.4 The respective Head of Department/Section will inform the Human Resources and Administration Section of such bereavement in writing.
- 8.1.5 Upon receipt of such notification the Human Resources and Administration Section shall seek the Registrar's approval to pay an amount of USD\$300 or its equivalent paid in local currency to the bereaved staff member.
- 8.1.6 The member will receive payment as approved by the University and complete an acknowledgement of receipt form to which a burial order/death certificate or letter from a Councilor/Village Head/Chief is attached.
- 8.1.7 The bereaved staff member will be granted special leave by her/his Head of Department/Section of up to a maximum of 6 days to attend the funeral of his/her deceased immediate family member.
- 8.1.8 Failure to produce a burial order/death certificate within fourteen (14) working days, from the date of bereavement, to the Human Resources and Administration Section shall result in an order being raised for the staff member to retribute the funds paid as compensation for days granted as compassionate leave. The Head of Department/Section shall write to the Human Resources and Administration Section to instruct deduction of the funds advanced on the following month's pay sheet.
- 8.1.9 A University vehicle, preferably a truck will be provided to assist with the running of errands during the funeral.

8.1.10 A University vehicle or bus and fuel shall be provided to ferry staff members to attend the funeral. Staff members shall attend the funeral at their own will and the University shall not pay any travel and subsistence allowances.

8.1.11 The Deputy Registrar, Human Resources and Administration or her/his representative and/or the respective Head of Department/Section of the bereaved member of staff will attend the funeral on behalf of the University.

**9.0 Policy Renewal**


This policy will be reviewed after every five (5) years or whenever the need for changes arises.

**10.0 Amendments**

The University may, from time to time, and at its sole discretion and with or without retrospective effect, amend, alter, add to, or cancel any provision(s) contained in this policy, provided that no such amendment(s), alteration(s), addition(s) or cancellation(s) shall result in the terms or conditions which are less favourable to staff members.

**11.0 Commencement**

This policy shall become effective to all staff members at Women's University in Africa from the date of approval.

Document Name	Bereavement Policy	
Version Reference	1.0	
Document Owner	Registrar	
Council Chairperson's Name	Rachel Chibaya	
Date of Approval		
Signature	<i>Chibaya</i>	
Review Date		