

**BY ORDER OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**

AIR FORCE INSTRUCTION 36-809

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Personnel

CIVILIAN SURVIVOR ASSISTANCE

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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This Instruction implements Air Force Policy Directive 36-1, *Appropriated Funds Civilian Management and Administration* programs. It prescribes procedures to follow when a qualified civilian employee, as defined in this Instruction, dies while on duty. This Instruction applies to all uniformed members and civilian employees of the Regular Air Force, the Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard who are called upon to provide civilian survivor assistance. This instruction extends benefits to appropriated fund civilian employees, Title 5 and Title 10 civilian employees of the Air Force, United States Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, and civilian employees assigned to foreign overseas areas; civilian employees with transportation agreements assigned to non-foreign overseas areas; and local national employees on temporary duty. It does not extend benefits to Title 32 Air National Guard Technicians and Nonappropriated Fund employees. In collaboration with the Chief of the Air Force Reserve (AF/RE) and the Director of the Air National Guard (NGB/CF), the Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel, and Services (AF/A1) develops personnel policy for civilian survivor assistance. This publication may be supplemented at any level: all Major Command-level supplements must be approved by the Human Resource Management Strategic Board (HSB) prior to certification and approval. Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the Office of Primary Responsibility using the Air Force Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*; route Air Force Forms 847 from the field through the appropriate functional chain of command. The authorities to waive wing/unit level requirements in this publication are identified with a Tier ("T-0, T-1, T-2, T-3") number following the compliance statement. See AFI 33-360, *Publications and Forms Management*, for a description of the authorities associated with the Tier numbers. Submit requests for waivers

through the chain of command to the appropriate Tier waiver approval authority, or alternately, to the requestor's commander for non-tiered compliance items. This Instruction requires the collection and or maintenance of information protected by the Privacy Act of 1974, authorized by Executive Orders 9397 and 13478. The applicable SORN, OPM/GOVT-1, *General Personnel Records*, is available at: <http://dpclo.defense.gov/Privacy/SORNs.aspx>. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with Air Force Manual 33-363, *Management of Records*, and disposed of in accordance with the Air Force Records Disposition Schedule in the Air Force Records Information Management System.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This document has been revised and major changes include administrative edits to ensure compliance with the current publication standards.

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW

1.1. When a qualified civilian employee dies during official duty, the Air Force handles notifying and assisting a qualified civilian employee's next of kin. For purposes of this Instruction, a "qualified civilian employee" includes all appropriated fund civilian employees of the Air Force, United States Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard who are funded under Title 5 or Title 10, United States Code, to include such employees who are assigned to foreign overseas areas or who are assigned to non-foreign overseas area pursuant to a transportation agreements, and local national employees on temporary duty. Title 32 Air National Guard Technicians and Nonappropriated Fund employees are not "qualified civilian employees" and are not entitled to civilian survivor assistance benefits prescribed by this Instruction.

1.2. This instruction explains the responsibilities of commanders; supervisors; employees; Civilian Personnel Sections; Air Force Personnel Center, Benefits and Entitlements Service Team; casualty assistance officials; installation mortuary officers; and other staff officials responsible for notifying and assisting a employee's next of kin.

1.3. The civilian survivor assistance program aims to reduce the trauma of the next of kin by taking care of the personal affairs of the deceased employee. The Air Force handles the deceased employee's personal affairs with thoughtfulness, professionalism and confidentiality.

1.4. Consult the Air Force Manual 34-310, *Nonappropriated Fund Personnel Program Management and Administration Procedures*, for Nonappropriated Fund Personnel casualties.

Chapter 2

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. Employee's Commander/Organization Director

2.1.1. When an employee dies, the unit commander/organization director will ensure the supervisor immediately notifies the Civilian Personnel Section and provides the installation commander status on next of kin notification. (T-1)

2.1.2. The commander/organization director will ensure casualty notification to other family members is made in person by an Air Force representative when requested by a family member (T-1). The commander/organization director will work with the casualty assistance representative located in the Airmen and Family Readiness Center, or in some cases the Military Personnel Section, Force Support Squadron, for assistance in assembling a Casualty Notification Team. (T-1)

2.1.3. The commander/organization director will ensure a field grade officer or civilian equivalent (GS-12 and above) provides notification with the assistance of the Civilian Personnel Section, the employee's supervisor and others. (T-3)

2.1.4. Once notification is completed, the unit commander/organization director will convey condolences in person or by sending an official letter of condolence to the next of kin within 5 business days of the date of death notification. (T-3) The letter should be personal and sympathetic in tone and offer full assistance to the employee's survivors.

2.1.5. The commander/organization director will request assistance from the base casualty assistance representative or the Air Force Personnel Center to notify other family members if deemed appropriate or requested by the Civilian Personnel Section or next of kin. (T-3)

2.1.6. The commander/organization director may challenge an Occupational Safety and Health Administration decision to allow family members to act as the employee representative, and will decide who are appropriate employee representatives for participation in informal conferences between the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Air Force. (T-0)

2.2. Supervisor. When an employee dies, the supervisor or next supervisory level will immediately:

2.2.1. Notify servicing Civilian Personnel Section, installation and organizational commander, and, in the overseas areas, installation mortuary officer, when applicable. Supervisor will assist in next of kin notification, if requested. (T-1)

2.2.2. Certify and send employee's final Time and Attendance Sheet as soon as possible on the first workday after employee's death. (T-1)

2.2.3. Secure employee's personal property from work area for prompt inventory and/or shipment to authorized recipient according to Air Force Instruction 34-501, *Mortuary Affairs Program*. (T-1)

2.2.4. Arrange for return of government property assigned to employee and for out-processing of decedent through normal Civilian Personnel Section and installation procedures. (T-1)

2.2.5. Prepare appropriate worker compensation forms according to Department of Defense 1400.25-M, *Civilian Personnel Manual*, Volume 810, Injury Compensation, with assistance from the Civilian Personnel Section and ensure forms are filed with the Air Force Personnel Center Injury Compensation Unit when an employee dies as the result of an injury or occupational illness in the performance of duty. (T-0)

2.2.6. Notify in writing an official of the local union when employee is covered by a recognized bargaining unit, so that union official may express condolences and provide any insurance or other union benefit that may be due to survivors. (T-1)

2.3. Civilian Personnel Section

2.3.1. Immediately upon notification of a civilian death, the Civilian Personnel Section will notify Benefits and Entitlements Service Team via Total Force Service Center to report the death (T-1). The Civilian Personnel Section provides Benefits and Entitlements Service Team the deceased employees' name, social security, date and cause of death and next of kin information (name, phone number and address). (T-1)

2.3.2. When a civilian casualty occurs, home installation Civilian Personnel Section will coordinate next of kin information with employee's supervisor before providing the casualty assistance representative the Emergency Contact Information from MyBiz. (T-1)

2.3.3. If next of kin are aware of the casualty and desire family members to be notified who are not in the immediate area, the Air Force Personnel Center Casualty Services Branch will assist in notification, if requested. (T-2)

2.3.4. If the immediate family has not already been contacted, employee's supervisor will coordinate with casualty assistance representative, and the Air Force Personnel Center Casualty Services Branch, to notify next of kin as quickly and compassionately as possible. (T-1)

2.3.5. If it appears employee's death could be the result of a work-related injury or illness, the Civilian Personnel Section will promptly notify the Air Force Personnel Center Injury Compensation Unit by telephone or e-mail and describes details of death. (T-1)

2.3.6. If requested, the Civilian Personnel Section, with assistance from the Air Force Personnel Center Injury Compensation Unit, will make information from employee's personnel record available for use in a public announcement. (T-3) The Civilian Personnel Section will not allow any public announcement of the identity of a decedent to be made before next of kin have been provided initial casualty notification. (T-1)

2.3.7. If the death occurs outside Continental United States, Civilian Personnel Section will notify American Embassy in host nation. (T-1) The Benefits and Entitlements Service Team will notify Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service Injury Compensation/Unemployment Compensation Division. E-mail address: ICUCcontact@cpms.osd.mil. (T-1)

2.3.8. The Civilian Personnel Section shall annually remind employees to update their emergency contact information via MyBiz, to include designation of beneficiary forms. (T-3)

2.4. Benefits and Entitlements Service Team

2.4.1. Once notified of an employee death, the Benefits and Entitlements Service Team will ensure a Standard Form 50, *Notification of Personnel Action*, from the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System is created and processed. (T-1)

2.4.2. The Benefits and Entitlements Service Team will provide counseling to survivors and/or designated beneficiaries on potential benefits as soon as possible after death notification has been completed, which may include: (T-1)

2.4.2.1. Any unpaid pay and allowances.

2.4.2.2. Death benefits under the Civil Service Retirement System, the Federal Employees' Retirement System, the Thrift Savings Plan, and the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program.

2.4.2.3. Health benefits coverage under the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program.

2.4.2.4. Possible eligibility under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act if a work-related injury or illness caused the death.

2.4.2.5. Special benefits if the death occurred because of terrorist or military action.

2.4.3. Other services provided by the Benefits and Entitlements Service Team will include: (T-1)

2.4.3.1. Provides claim forms to survivors/designated beneficiaries and assists with their completion.

2.4.3.2. Notifies survivors they may need a minimum of six certified copies of the death certificate which reflects the manner/cause of death within the continental United States or DD Form 1300, *Report of Casualty*, if the employee died while in a temporary duty status or outside of the Continental United States.

2.4.3.3. Advises survivors as to whether they may be entitled to any benefits, to include Social Security Administration, Veterans Administration or military benefits.

2.4.3.4. Advises survivors of the flag recognition benefit for fallen federal civilian employees.

2.5. Air Force Personnel Center Casualty Services Branch

2.5.1. When the next of kin has no knowledge of the death of the civilian employee and the Civilian Personnel Section requests assistance, the base casualty assistance representative and/or Air Force Personnel Center Casualty Services Branch will assist with the civilian casualty notification process. (T-1)

2.5.2. Air Force Personnel Center Casualty Services Branch will report the casualty in accordance with guidance provided in Air Force Instruction 36-3002, *Casualty Services* and this Instruction. (T-2)

2.6. Casualty Assistance Representative

2.6.1. Ensures the Civilian Personnel Section is aware of the civilian casualty reporting process on their installation. (T-1)

2.6.2. The casualty assistance representative will receive civilian death worksheet from Civilian Personnel Section, submit via the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System, and

forward to the Air Force Personnel Center Casualty Services Branch for inclusion in Air Force Casualty Morning Reports. (T-1)

2.6.3. Provides Casualty Assistance if the civilian employee is also either a retired Air Force member or Air Force Reservist. (T-1)

2.7. Employees

2.7.1. Complete Emergency Contact Information in MyBiz at the earliest opportunity and verify it periodically to ensure currency. (T-3) The Emergency Contact Information in MyBiz provides the mechanism for immediate access to employee emergency information. MyBiz may be accessed via MyPers website or the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System Secure Portal.

2.7.2. Should provide the supervisor with a printed copy of the emergency information to be placed in the Supervisor's Employee Work Folder. (The servicing Civilian Personnel Section and the employee's supervisor have view-only capability of the employee's emergency information.)

2.8. Installation Mortuary Officer

2.8.1. Assists the next of kin with mortuary affairs benefits when a civilian employee dies outside of the Continental United States or while in a Temporary Duty or Permanent Change of Station status. (T-1)

Chapter 3

NEXT OF KIN

3.1. The Air Force identifies the next of kin in the following order:

- 3.1.1. Spouse.
- 3.1.2. Children acknowledged by the employee or so determined by a court, including natural, adopted, and stepchildren.
- 3.1.3. Parents (unless a court or a statute has granted sole legal custody of the employee to someone else.).
- 3.1.4. Persons granted legal custody of the employee by court or statute.
- 3.1.5. Siblings, including those gained through adoption.
- 3.1.6. Grandparents.
- 3.1.7. Other relatives in order of relationship to the employee according to civil laws.

3.2. If no next of kin are available, the Secretary of Air Force may act on behalf of the employee.

Chapter 4

WHEN DEATH OCCURS OUTSIDE OF THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES OR WHILE TRAVELING ON OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

4.1. When an employee dies outside of the Continental United States (48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia) or Alaska and Hawaii and the employee is performing official travel, government business or pursuant to a transportation agreement, the remains are prepared and transported as provided for in Air Force Instruction 34-501, *Mortuary Affairs Program* and Joint Travel Regulation, Chapter 3, Temporary Duty Travel.

4.2. When an employee is assigned outside of the Continental United States dies, the travel and transportation of family members, household goods, and personal effects are provided as specified in Air Force Instructions 34-501 and Joint Travel Regulation, Chapter 3, TDY Travel. The Civilian Personnel Section and Air Force Personnel Center will work together to ensure timely completion of required orders. (T-3)

SHON J. MANASCO
Assistant Secretary of the Air Force
(Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

Attachment 1**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

Air Force Policy Directive 36-1, *Appropriated Funds Civilian Management and Administration*, 18 March 2019

Executive Order 9397, *Numbering System for Federal Accounts Relating to Individual Persons*, 22 November 1943

Executive Order 13478, *Amendments To Executive Order 9397 Relating To Federal Agency Use of Social Security Numbers*, 18 November 2008.

Air Force Instruction 33-360, *Publications and Forms Management*, 1 December 2015

Air Force Manual 33-363, *Management of Records*, 1 March 2008

Air Force Manual 34-310, *Nonappropriated Fund Personnel Program Management and Administration Procedures*, 28 September 2011

Air Force Instruction 34-501, *Mortuary Affairs Program*, 18 August 2015

Department of Defense 1400.25-M, *Civilian Personnel Manual*, Volume 810, *Injury Compensation*, 16 April 2009

Air Force Instruction 36-3002, *Casualty Services*, 20 June 2017

The Joint Travel Regulations, Chapter 3, *Temporary Duty Travel*

Prescribed Forms

There are no forms prescribed by the Instruction.

Adopted Forms

Air Force Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*

Department of Defense Form 1300, *Report of Casualty*

Standard Form 50, *Notice of Personnel Action*

Terms

Beneficiary—A person who is entitled to receive certain benefits either by law or by written designation of the employee.

Casualty—An employee who is lost to the organization by virtue of having been declared dead, missing, ill, or injured (per Air Force Instruction 36-3002, *Casualty Services*).

Casualty Assistance Representative—A designated person at an Air Force installation responsible for reporting deaths and assisting next of kin survivors.

Civilian Employee—For purposes of this Air Force Instruction, a civilian employee is a person who is employed by the Air Force, paid from appropriated funds, and either a US citizen or an alien admitted for permanent residence.

Continental United States—The 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia. This definition specifically excludes the states of AK and HI as they are not part of the contiguous states and are included in the definition of Non-Foreign, OCONUS locations.

Deceased—A casualty status applicable to an employee who is either known to have died, determined to have died based on conclusive evidence, or declared dead based on a presumptive finding of death. The recovery of remains is not a prerequisite to declaring a person deceased.

Immediate Family—An employee's spouse, children, parents, and siblings.

Installation Commander—The individual responsible for all operations performed by an installation.

MyBiz—A sub-program of Defense Civilian Personnel Data System which contains employee maintained Emergency Contact Information.

Overseas—All locations, including Alaska and Hawaii, outside the continental United States.

Transportation Agreement—written contract between the Air Force and the civilian employee used to pay expenses, up to a set maximum for the travel and transportation of the employee and his /her family members.