MIT Work-Life
Human Resources

Specialized Support For:

- When an employee passes away
- When employees present with emotional distress
- When an organizational crisis or disruption occurs

1 **Contact MIT Work-Life and provide overview of situation**

Who to contact:

Kristen Cascio
Program Manager, Work-Life
Phone: 781-752-6351 **Email:** kcascio@mit.edu

Ann Mac Kenzie
Director, Benefits
Phone: 508-472-8208 **Email:** amackenz@mit.edu

2 **MIT Work-Life reviews your support options, and helps you develop a support strategy for your employees and managers**

Support Options (See Page 2)

- Individual Sessions
- Group Sessions
- Outreach Phone Calls
- Manager Consultations

3 **MIT Work-Life provides you with a customized Action Plan**

Action Plan Includes

- Recommended Contacts and Next Steps
- Email Templates (if needed)
- Helpful Information and Strategies

4 **You implement Action Plan while MIT Work-Life coordinates support services**

Review and Share, As Needed

- Email Templates
- Counselor Bio and Group Description
- Family Benefits Checklist (See Pages 3–4)
- Employee and Family Support Strategies (See Pages 5–6)

5 **MIT Work-Life coordinates debrief and connects you with additional resources, if needed**

Helpful Information and Strategies Include:

- Curated Articles
- Employee and Family Support Strategies

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SPECIALIZED SUPPORT FOR DEPARTMENT CRISIS

Support Options

Coordinated by MIT Work-Life

Departments may choose one or more of the following crisis support services provided by Master- and PhD-level clinicians

Individual Sessions

Employees are always encouraged to contact MyLife Services — a free, confidential resource for benefits-eligible MIT employees and their household members — for individual support sessions. Counseling and stress management consultations can be conducted via phone or video conference.

If your DLC has non benefits-eligible staff, such as temporary staff or contractors who are looking for individual counseling support they may contact their employer, health insurance plan, or access MIT Work-Life's "How to Find a Therapist" guide at **hr.mit.edu/worklife/mental-health**.

Group Sessions

Group sessions are useful for processing emotions and building a sense of collective wellbeing when employees have experienced a loss or in the aftermath of a crisis. Available in-person or virtually, group sessions can be held as 60-minute moderated processing groups and/or drop-in support sessions. Group support options are open to any member of the DLC who is impacted by the crisis or loss, including temporary staff, contractors, and interns.

Outreach Phone Calls

MyLife Services can make outreach phone calls to both employees and their household members who wish to speak with a counselor for individual support. The employee can be advised to email MIT Work-Life (**worklife@mit.edu**) if they wish to utilize this. Employees may also request a call back from MyLife Services at **mitmylifeservices.com/contactus**.
Please note: The employee's written permission is a prerequisite for this service. You may consult with your Human Resources Officer or MIT Work-Life if an employee is not able to provide written permission.

Manager Consultations

MyLife Services can advise managers on how to support their employees' emotional needs during challenging times, while promoting productivity and engagement in dynamic work environments. Consultations can be conducted via phone or video conference.

MIT Chaplain Services

Support from MIT's Office of Religious, Spiritual, and Ethical Life (ORSEL) is available upon request.

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BENEFITS CHECKLIST FOR

Family Members

When a family member dies, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. In addition to coping with your own grief, there are so many pressing needs to address. As a family member of a deceased MIT employee, you may be entitled to a number of benefits and compensation. This checklist will make it easier for you to understand and address them without adding stress to what is already a painful time for you and your family.

Inform MIT Benefits that your loved one has passed away:

MIT Benefits	Cari Angellotti	Kristen Panagopoulos
hr.mit.edu/life-events/death	**Email:** caria@mit.edu **Phone:** 617-258-7489	**Email:** kpanago@mit.edu **Phone:** 617-253-4270

MIT Benefits will develop and mail you a customized summary of your loved one's benefits along with a request for documentation required for processing

MIT Benefits will connect you with other Human Resources services as needed

When reviewing your customized benefits summary, be sure to consider the information outlined below and contact MIT Benefits if you have questions:

Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance

- Was your loved one enrolled in an MIT Health, Dental, and/or Vision insurance plan? If so, when will the benefits terminate?
- Were you enrolled in your loved one's MIT Health, Dental, and/or Vision insurance plan as a family member? If so, what are your coverage options after your loved one's benefits terminate?
- Are there any outstanding bills or payments that require your attention?

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BENEFITS CHECKLIST FOR

Family Members CONT.

Flexible Spending Account (FSA)

- Was your loved one enrolled in a Flexible Spending Account?
- If so, how may remaining funds (if any) be utilized?

Life and Accidental Death Insurance

- Did your loved one hold one or more MIT Life Insurance policies? (There are three options: Basic, Supplemental, and Dependent.)
- If you are listed as a beneficiary, what benefits can you expect and what steps are necessary for you to collect on these?

Retirement Plans (401(k) and Pension)

- Was your loved one enrolled in an MIT Retirement plan (e.g., 401(k) and Pension)?
- If you are listed as a beneficiary, what benefits can you expect and what steps are necessary for you to collect on these?

Other Benefits

- Was your loved one enrolled in a Long-Term Care Insurance policy?
- Did your loved one hold an account with MIT Federal Credit Union?
- If so, MIT Benefits can provide contact information for these vendors.

Need more help? Contact MIT MyLife Services – a 24/7, free, confidential counseling and consultative resource available to adult household members* of deceased MIT employees – for emotional support and work-life resources and referrals

* Family members of the deceased employee who are not eligible for MyLife Services may access MIT Work-Life's "How to Find a Therapist" guide at **hr.mit.edu/worklife/mental-health**. They may also find supportive resources via their primary care provider, health insurance plan, or their workplace's Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

MIT MyLife Services

Website: mitmylifeservices.com
Phone: 844-405-5433
Online Contact Form: mitmylifeservices.com/contactus

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Employee and Family Support Strategies

When an employee in your department passes away, colleagues and family members may look to you for support and guidance as they navigate through the grieving process. Responding to their expectations might feel layered and challenging. This guide provides strategies and resources that will help you begin guiding your organization through the painful experience of a collective loss toward healing and acceptance of a new normal.

Administrative Strategies:

- Contact your Human Resources Officer. Your Human Resources Officer will:
  - > Connect you with Central Human Resources for administrative support.
  - > Connect you with Human Resources Communications to help you develop an internal (and external, if needed), communications strategy.
- Contact Information Technology for assistance with redirecting your employee's emails and phone calls.

Strategies for Supporting Employees:

- Contact MIT Work-Life to schedule MyLife Services employee support services. Departments may arrange to receive one or more of the following:
  - > Individual Sessions
  - > Group Sessions
  - > Outreach Phone Calls
  - > **Note:** If these support services will take place on campus, then MIT Work-Life will deliver MyLife Services materials to hand out as needed.
- Assign one colleague to communicate with the deceased employee's family on behalf of your department. This will protect the family from being inundated with calls and emails, while still allowing colleagues to receive information and provide support.

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Employee and Family Support Strategies CONT.

- Offer colleagues the opportunity to write letters of condolence to be sent to your employee's family in one care package (along with flowers, if appropriate).
- Organize a virtual meeting for your department or team so that colleagues can share fond memories of your employee and express what they will miss about working together.
- Make a targeted effort to call or email impacted employees to acknowledge their grief and encourage self-care:
  - > Acknowledge that they may find it difficult to concentrate during the initial mourning period.
  - > Normalize the need for everyone on your team to seek counseling and emotional support from others.
  - > Provide information about support through MyLife Services and encourage them to explore community, spiritual, and online resources that can help colleagues process their grief.

Strategies for Supporting Family Members:

- Contact MyLife Services to discuss culturally-sensitive ways in which you can support your employee's family.
- Ask about funeral and memorial plans and whether the family is comfortable with department members attending.
- If you have a discretionary fund or know that your team would like to make a contribution, ask the family whether your department can help cover a portion of the funeral or memorial service costs.
- Encourage the employee's family to contact MIT Work-Life if they would like guidance on locating mental health and/or community support resources.
- Provide the family with the Benefits Checklist.
- Consider creating a memorial fund in honor of your employee. Ask the family what organization(s) or charities they would like to sponsor the fund.