POLICY: One of the difficult tasks we take on is reaching out to the family or loved ones of our colleagues who have passed away. As friends and coworkers, we want to offer them acts of kindness that are both heartfelt and appropriate.

PURPOSE: RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) provides support to the family of an employee who passes away while in active status. In partnership with the employee’s family, the following outlines how RWJBH will provide assistance during this difficult time.

QUALIFICATIONS: All RWJBH employees.

PROCEDURE:

1. **Expressions of Sympathy:**
   A sympathy card template is available through Corporate Creative. The cards, which contain space for a hand-written message and signatures, are expected to be sent timely to the family.

   Human Resources will provide information about the employee who passed to Barry Ostrowsky’s office, which should include the family contact information along with and some work and personal background so a letter of recognition can be sent.

   Human Resources, on behalf of the organization, will send a plant to the family or make a donation to the designated charity.

2. **Attending the Funeral or Memorial Service:**
   We look to RWJBH leadership to represent us at the funeral or memorial service and offer our sympathy and support.

   Human Resources to send out a broadcast email to staff at their site sharing funeral arrangement details in the event staff would like to pay their respects and offer condolences. In addition, Human Resources will coordinate the observance of a moment of silence at the site as an expression of remembrance.

3. **Provide a Meal:**
   A practical and traditional way to support a family in mourning is to provide ready-to-eat meals. There are many meal delivery services to use and some offer family-size or catering options as well as individual meals.
4. **Create a Testimonial:**
   This is an opportunity for staff to share personal remembrances – photos, items or stories – in an impactful way. Use simple materials like poster board and markers so that all those in the department have room to share a message with the family or loved ones.

5. **Form a Tribute:**
   A way to give each other strength and to find closure in our grief is to create a tribute at your facility. Organize a Service on-site that includes the family and co-workers participation.

   Create and implement (if not already in place) an “in memorial” plaque that would include the person’s name, position and years of service for public viewing.

6. **Provide Support to the Family:**
   Some families might need financial support to help them with unexpected expenses. Consider taking up a collection among your staff and sending a check. A gift card for essentials such as groceries is another way to donate.

   If the employee who passed was not eligible for a life insurance benefit, then please process through Corporate Benefits a payment for $3,000 as a way to assist with burial expenses.

   If the employee who passed was eligible for benefits, please notify corporate benefits so that a personal connection can be made to the family to enhance understanding of benefit process.

   If the family is covered by the RWJBH health plan, coverage will be continued for the balance of the year or six months, whichever is greater, at no cost.

7. **Emotional Support for Staff:**
   Be sure co-workers know that EAP and our psychology departments will provide support to those who seek it.

8. **General Media and Social Media Policies Reminder:**
   In communications with the media, you’re required to seek the proper individuals and channels to provide information.