

MS 265 Death of a Volunteer Procedures

Effective Date: December 21, 2021

Responsible Offices: Office of Global Operations (OGO), Office of Health Services (OHS) and Office of Safety and Security (OSS)

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1.0 Introduction

These Procedures support the implementation of MS 265 *Death of a Volunteer* and provide a framework for Posts and Headquarters staff to effectively respond to the death of a Volunteer.

MS 265, these Procedures and the following Attachments to MS 265 should be thoroughly reviewed by Posts and Headquarters staff who would normally participate in any response to the death of a Volunteer.

- (a) **Attachment A –MS 265 *Death of a Volunteer Procedures***
- (b) **Attachment B – *Post Death Procedures Template***: Each Post is required to have country-specific Post Death Procedures, based on Attachment B, which address the unique logistical, administrative and cultural challenges of the country where the Post is located. Post Death Procedures must be reviewed by Post and Headquarters staff who would normally participate in any response to the death of a Volunteer.
- (c) **Attachment C – *Response Action Checklist and Toolkit***: A detailed, interactive checklist of actions and timeline for each office is provided in an Excel format. Attachment C should be viewed as a detailed supplement to the Procedures. Attachment C contains multiple tabs

with task lists for Post and individual Offices: the Post Action Log; the Personal Effects Log; the Post Memorial Log; and the Initial Report.

- (d) **Attachment D – Notice of Volunteer/Trainee Action - HQ**, which records the end of a Volunteer’s service.
- (e) **Attachment E – Call Notification Protocol**: Flow chart for the notification of key individuals within the Peace Corps and the U.S. Embassy of a Volunteer death.

For purposes of MS 265 and these Procedures:

- (f) The individual named by the deceased Volunteer as next-of-kin/designated representative on the Trainee/Volunteer Registration Form PC-1487 will serve as the designated representative until an executor or administrator has been designated under state law in the state pertaining to the Volunteer’s Home-of-Record. Thereafter, upon proper written notice to the Peace Corps, the individual designated under state law will become the designated representative.
- (g) The term Volunteer encompasses Trainees.

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Responding to the death of a Volunteer is a sensitive and often difficult, complex matter that requires participation from many staff and offices at both the Post and Headquarters.

The general roles and responsibilities of offices and staff involved in the response to the death of a Volunteer are provided below.

2.1 Response Teams

Coordination of the immediate response is carried out by a Post Response Team and a Headquarters Response Team.

- (a) **Post Response Team**: Established and led by the Country Director. Will normally include the Country Director, sub-regional Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer, Peace Corps Medical Officer, Director of Management and Operations, Director of Programming and Training, Safety and Security Manager, and others as needed.
- (b) **Headquarters Response Team**: Led by the responsible Regional Director in consultation with the Office of Global Operations, includes members from each supporting office. The Regional Director serves as the Response Manager and establishes the Headquarters Response Team.

At a minimum, the Headquarters Response Team includes representatives from the following Offices: Director, Chief Financial Officer, External Affairs, General Counsel, Global Operations, Health Services, Management, Safety and Security, and Volunteer Recruitment and Selection. If the deceased person was a Peace Corps Response Volunteer, include the Office of Peace Corps Response.

Post's Country Director participates remotely in meetings of the Headquarters Response Team. Other members of the Post Response Team participate as necessary.

The Headquarters Response Team should meet within the first 12 – 24 hours after confirmation of a Volunteer death and then meet daily, or as needed, until the response is completed. The Regional Director chairs the meetings and sets up the meeting schedule.

The Region, usually through the Post's Country Desk Officer, creates a distribution list of Response Team members, and prepares and distributes daily notes and updates to HQ Response Team members as needed.

2.2 Post

2.2.1 Country Director (CD)

- (a) Leads Post response and ensures that Post Response Team members understand their roles and responsibilities. Leads planning and preparation, including the development of Post Death Procedures. Ensures that staff likely to participate on the Post Response Team understand MS 265 policies and procedures and their respective roles and responsibilities.
- (b) Makes the initial notification and subsequent reports to the Designated Security Specialist (DSS) with the Office of Safety and Security. Subsequently, the Country Director notifies the Regional Security Officer (RSO), the U.S. Ambassador, and American Citizen Services at the U.S. Embassy to ensure coordination with the U.S. Mission. If the Country Director is unable to make the notifications, the Country Director may delegate the responsibility to another USDH.
- (c) Ensures positive identification of the deceased Volunteer's remains by the Peace Corps Medical Officer (PCMO) or another Peace Corps staff member as quickly as possible.
- (d) Once guidance and authorization are received from the Designated Security Specialist regarding the preservation of potential evidence, assigns at least one Peace Corps employee, as necessary, in coordination with host country authorities as appropriate, to secure the deceased Volunteer's residence and personal possessions and limit access only to Peace Corps staff, the Regional Security Officer, the Consular Officer, host country authorities and the Office of Inspector General (OIG) if applicable.
- (e) Ensures all response actions are recorded by Post in a detailed log, which is found in Attachment C.
- (f) In order to ensure dignified and respectful handling of the deceased Volunteer's remains, assigns Peace Corps staff, or appropriate representatives, to stand watch at all times with the deceased Volunteer's remains, as long as it is safe to do so.
- (g) Reviews the Post Legal Environment Survey to determine if autopsy will be required. Consults with the Office of Health Services (OHS) regarding arrangements for autopsy, either through agreement with the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES) or by alternative means.

- (h) In coordination with HQ offices, selects staff member to accompany the deceased Volunteer's remains to the Home-of-Record (HOR). The Country Director is usually the best candidate to escort the Volunteer's remains to the HOR and should be prepared to play that important role.
- (i) In coordination with Region, the U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section, and the Office of Communications, develops talking points for notification of Volunteers, staff, the host family and community, and public releases.

2.2.2 Peace Corps Medical Officer (PCMO)

- (a) Acts as a member of the Post Response Team, coordinating completion of necessary medical procedures, based on the Post Death Procedures and the Office of Health Services Medical Technical Guidelines regarding autopsy, embalming, and pathological specimens.
- (b) Assists in planning and preparation, including the development of Post Death Procedures, especially regarding autopsy, preparation, casketing and shipment of remains.
- (c) Responsible for identifying a qualified pathologist and an in-country facility capable of performing an autopsy.
- (d) As appropriate and feasible, promptly travels to the location of the deceased Volunteer's remains, confirms positive identification, and escorts the remains to the refrigeration site.
- (e) Attends both the autopsy and the embalming, if possible under local law. Should bring a photograph of the Volunteer to assist in identifying the remains before autopsy and embalming. Records all significant findings from the autopsy. If the PCMO is unable to attend, another Peace Corps staff person should be present to ensure that the dignity of and respect for the Volunteer are maintained.
- (f) Makes every effort to photograph the remains prior to the start of the autopsy.
- (g) Provides dental records as needed to assist in identifying the remains.
- (h) Sends a medical report to the Office of Health Services, designated "For Med Eyes Only", on each Volunteer involved. The report should include the following:
 - (1) Description of the incident;
 - (2) Description of the first contact with the remains;
 - (3) Comment on the escort of the remains;
 - (4) Comment on the release of the remains to a mortuary;
 - (5) Description of the autopsy and any findings;
 - (6) Description of the embalming;
 - (7) Method of sealing of the casket;

- (8) Comment on appropriateness of family members viewing the body; and
 - (9) Comment on memorial service that was held.
- (i) Obtains a copy of the autopsy report.

2.2.3 Director of Management and Operations (DMO)

- (a) Acts as a member of the Post Response Team, managing the administrative and financial matters to support the response and in-country memorial service, including coordination with the Region and Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) to ensure funding for all allowable expenses.
- (b) Manages logistics for transporting remains.
- (c) Works with the Country Director to coordinate, inventory, secure and transport the property of the deceased Volunteer.
- (d) Submits administrative and financial information to OCFO.

2.2.4 Director of Programming and Training (DPT)

- (a) Acts as a member of the Post Response Team, providing support as needed.
- (b) May oversee coordination of in-country memorial service(s).

2.2.5 Safety and Security Manager (SSM)

- (a) Acts as member of Post Response Team to interface with U.S. Embassy Regional Security Officer and local law enforcement officials as necessary.
- (b) Works with the Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer (PCSSO) and Regional Security Officer to advise the Country Director and Post Response Team on relevant country laws, policies and procedures and how they impact Volunteer death procedures in country.
- (c) Obtains the local police report, if applicable.
- (d) The Safety and Security Assistant (SSA) provides support and may participate on the Post Response Team.

2.3 Headquarters Offices

2.3.1 Office of Health Services (OHS)

2.3.1.1 Behavioral Health and Outreach Unit (BHO)

- (a) Serves as the primary liaison with the deceased Volunteer's next-of-kin or designated representative.

- (b) The BHO Director supports the Peace Corps Director during notification of the deceased Volunteer's next-of-kin.
- (c) Assigns a Family Liaison from its trained staff to act as the main point of contact with the deceased's family throughout the response.
- (d) After the Director's call to the next-of-kin/designated representative, calls the next-of-kin/designated representative to offer support, identify points of contact for streamlined communication, and establish a plan for regular communication. Seeks from the deceased's next-of-kin/designated representative any preferences regarding religious or cultural practices in handling or transporting the deceased's remains.
- (e) Consults with CD, DSS, and/or Office of General Counsel (OGC) and notifies next-of-kin/designated representative of any host government or legal restrictions that may affect handling or transporting the deceased's remains.
- (f) Discusses with the Volunteer's next-of-kin/designated representative the timing of the return of the Volunteer's remains, plans for a funeral/memorial service, and where the final resting place will be.
- (g) Assigns trained staff to work with Post in supporting Volunteers affected by the Volunteer death, consults with Post staff in their support of Volunteers, and travels to Post if requested.
- (h) Manages the Agency Duty Officer program and ensures participants are trained in how to respond effectively when notified of a Volunteer's death.
- (i) The BHO Director informs the Headquarters Response Team and the Country Director of the names and contact information for BHO staff assigned to various tasks in these Procedures (*BHO designee*).

2.3.1.2 Office of Medical Services (OMS)

- (a) Advises the PCMO on the autopsy, especially the handling of blood, fluid, and tissue specimens and/or slides prior to an autopsy.
- (b) Advises and supports PCMO as necessary.
- (c) Acts as agency point-of-contact with the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES).
- (d) Consults with Post and Region regarding arrangements for autopsy, either through agreement with the AFMES or other alternative.
- (e) Provides the Office of Safety and Security with a copy of the death certificate and autopsy report.

2.3.2 Region

The responsible Regional Director, assisted by regional staff:

- (a) Leads the Headquarters Response Team.
- (b) Designates or serves as the point of contact between the Post and Headquarters.
- (c) Provides timely reports to the Peace Corps Director and members of the Headquarters Response Team.
- (d) Ensures distribution of the Volunteer's biographical information (e.g. Resume, Aspiration Statement and photo) to the Director, Office of Communications and Director BHO. (Motivation and Aspiration statements are not available if it is a Peace Corps Response Volunteer)
- (e) Coordinates communications with Post and the HQ Response Team to minimize multiple callers to Post. Establishes schedule for regular communication with the Country Director, such as a daily phone call with the Region's Senior Staff and Country Desk Officer.
- (f) Co-leads after-action briefing with OSS; documents and shares lessons learned.

2.3.3 Office of the Director

- (a) Once the Volunteer's name and death are confirmed, contacts the next-of-kin/designated representative and conveys condolences to family.
- (b) Sends official Peace Corps condolence letter to the next-of-kin/designated representative, consulting with BHO as needed. The condolence letter may be hand-carried to the funeral/memorial service or visit with the Volunteer's family.
- (c) Ensures senior Peace Corps leadership representation at Volunteer funeral or memorial service.
- (d) Sends notification of death to appropriate Congressional, White House, State Department and Embassy (host country in Washington, DC) officials. Includes an invitation to the funeral/memorial service if requested by the next-of-kin/designated representative.
- (e) Designates appropriate staff member to serve as liaison between the Office of the Director and the Headquarters Response Team.

2.3.4 Office of Safety and Security (OSS)

- (a) Coordinates investigation support from host country law enforcement and other agencies as appropriate. Conducts an inquiry for the purpose of compiling the official timeline and all other relevant information and evidence for the Agency's official Death of Volunteer Report.
- (b) Advises Post and Region on appropriate coordination with the RSO and local law enforcement officials.
- (c) Dispatches the Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer to coordinate investigation support and assess safety and security concerns.
- (d) Assigns the Designated Security Specialist as necessary.

- (e) Shares observations and recommendations based on security and investigation findings from, host country law enforcement and other agencies, as appropriate.
- (f) Provides the Agency's official Death of Volunteer Report.
- (g) Consults with OIG on evidence regarding the case.
- (h) Briefs OIG within 10 days after the death notification and provides a copy of the Death of Volunteer report when completed.
- (i) Provides a joint after-action briefing with the affected Region to the Agency's HQ Response Team.

2.3.4.1 Designated Security Specialist (DSS)

- (a) Receives initial report of death from Post and notifies Regional Director and Agency Duty Officer, which initiates the call notification protocol within Headquarters.
- (b) Provides initial guidance to Post regarding actions needed to safeguard other Volunteers and potential evidence for a possible criminal investigation if warranted.
- (c) Serves as a liaison with OIG, CD and PCSSO. Consults with OIG as needed concerning information and evidence regarding the case and whether OIG plans to conduct an investigation.
- (d) If a crime is suspected, contacts the Diplomatic Security Service/Criminal Investigative Liaison, U.S. Department of State.
- (e) Ensures notification of the State Operations Center, U.S. Department of State.
- (f) References Legal Environment Survey to provide guidance to the HQ Response Team and in determining actions related to investigation (if applicable) and repatriation.

2.3.4.2 Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer (PCSSO)

- (a) Upon learning of the possible or confirmed Volunteer death, contacts the Country Director to discuss circumstances of the incident, the PCSSO's role, and their travel to Post.
- (b) Travels to Post to coordinate investigation support, assess safety and security concerns, liaise with the DSS, and provide other relevant support as needed.
- (c) Communicates with the RSO as needed.
- (d) Compiles the official Death of Volunteer report.

2.3.5 Office of the General Counsel (OGC)

- (a) Provides legal and policy advice as appropriate, including review for legal clearance.

2.3.6 Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO)

- (a) Works with Region and OHS to ensure that adequate funds are available to support the response and transportation of the deceased.
- (b) Provides complete copy of Volunteer personnel file to BHO and Region as soon as possible.
- (c) Records death in financial system with information from form PC-440 submitted by BHO (*Attachment D Notification of Volunteer/Trainee Action*).
- (d) Determines life insurance coverage.
- (e) Provides information and support to DMO and CD regarding financial matters regarding the Volunteer death.

2.3.7 Office of Management

- (a) Ensures appropriate support from management sections and teams as necessary with special emphasis on transportation of the deceased Volunteer and travel support for accompanying staff and other travelers.
- (b) Provides U.S. and Peace Corps memorial flags to a Peace Corps representative to present to the Volunteer's family.
- (c) Ensures Volunteer's name is etched into the Memorial Wall at Peace Corps HQ.

2.3.8 Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection

- (a) Coordinates the Office of Recruitment and Selection Diversity's support for escort accompanying the Volunteer's remains upon arrival in the U.S. and for supporting Peace Corps staff participation in funerals or memorial services in the U.S.
- (b) Assists with or provides compassionate, in-person delivery of the Volunteer's personal effects to the next-of-kin or designated representative.

2.3.9 Office of Global Operations (OGO)

- (a) Ensures prompt notification of senior leadership of a possible or confirmed Volunteer death.
- (b) Provides coordination and support for the Headquarters Response Team.
- (c) Disseminates lessons learned and incorporates into future guidance.

2.3.10 Office of External Affairs

2.3.10.1 Communications

- (a) In accordance with MS 294 *Confidentiality of Volunteer Information* and in conjunction with the Region, develops talking points and a communication plan that includes HQ, intranet notification, public news release, and notification to Volunteers, host family and community.

- (b) Once talking points are approved by the Director (or Director's designee), distributes approved talking points to the HQ Response Team, Agency Duty Officer, Country Director, and U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Officer. Updates talking points as necessary, following consultation with the Regional Director and Director.
- (c) Responds to U.S. media inquiries.
- (d) Provides guidance to Post on communications with local media.
- (e) Oversees the agency's communication with media and public; coordinates as needed with the U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs Office.

2.3.10.2 Congressional Relations

- (a) Supports the Peace Corps Director as needed in notifying appropriate Congressional leaders and provides additional information to Congressional staff or representatives as requested.
- (b) Encourages Congressional condolence letters. Condolence letters should be sent to the BHO designee, who will direct condolences to the next-of-kin/designated representative.

2.3.11 Office of Inspector General (OIG)

- (a) In instances where a Volunteer, staff member or other individual connected to the Peace Corps is suspected of being involved in the death of a Volunteer, investigates any crime or serious misconduct, coordinates with the Department of State Bureau of Diplomatic Security (Criminal Investigative Liaison Branch), the RSO, and other Federal agencies, and, to the extent necessary, serves as liaison with host country law enforcement officials.
- (b) Consistent with the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, may independently review the facts and circumstances surrounding the death of a Volunteer and the actions taken by the Peace Corps in responding to such incident. OIG may conduct a preliminary inquiry of any incident leading to the death of a Volunteer, as well as the agency's response, to determine whether a further review is warranted. The characteristics of any review (i.e. investigation, evaluation, management advisory report) will be driven by the nature of the incident leading to the death of the Volunteer.
- (c) Promptly informs the Designated Security Specialist whether OIG plans to investigate or review the death.
- (d) Attends meetings consistent with their oversight responsibilities.

2.4 U.S. Embassy

- (a) Through American Citizen Services, develops the Disposition of Remains report (7 FAM 260) which the Country Director incorporates into an annex to the Post-specific Post Death Procedures.
- (b) Advises and supports Peace Corps on logistics and contact with U.S. Despatch Agents as necessary.

- (c) Provides Consular Report of Death of a U.S. Citizen Abroad (CRODA).
- (d) The U.S. Consular Officer may have been trained to witness autopsies and embalming and may accompany Peace Corps staff involved in the procedures.

2.5 Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES)

- (a) Through an agreement established by the Office of Health Services, AFMES provides autopsy and pathology services when requested.

3.0 Notifications and Reports

3.1 Notification Protocol

For each call listed below, callers must clarify whether the death and Volunteer's identity have been confirmed. The Volunteer's identity and death should be confirmed prior to making any additional notifications beyond those listed in this subsection.

The notification protocol outlined below and in Attachment E are the ideal approach to timely and methodical notification of key Headquarters and U.S. Embassy offices. However, there occasionally are situations in which an outside entity makes the initial notification of a possible or confirmed Volunteer death directly to Headquarters, such as to the Agency Duty Officer. Headquarters and Post staff should ensure all appropriate offices are notified, no matter how the initial notification is received.

3.1.1 Country Director

- (a) When Post receives notification of a possible Volunteer death, the Country Director at Post first calls the Designated Security Specialist (+1 202-437-5159) who will initiate the Headquarters call notification protocol (*see* Attachment E). This call must take place as quickly as possible, whether or not visual identification and confirmation of a Volunteer's death has occurred.
- (b) The Country Director then notifies the U.S. Embassy's Regional Security Officer, Ambassador and consular officer at American Citizen Services (ACS). If the Country Director is unable to make the calls, the Country Director may delegate the responsibility to another USDH.
- (c) The Country Director should explicitly explain to ACS that the Peace Corps will make all next-of-kin/designated representative notification and will coordinate future press announcements with the Ambassador and Public Affairs Office (PAO). (It is standard operating procedure for ACS to contact next-of-kin when a death of US Citizen is reported; thus, ACS may need to be reminded that PC will handle this notification.) (*See* 7 FAM 224.3).
- (d) The Country Director is responsible for ensuring visual identification and confirmation of the Volunteer's remains by the PCMO or another staff member as quickly as possible. Once

positive visual identification has been made, the Country Director must notify the Designated Security Specialist.

- (e) The Country Director should refrain from issuing an email or other mass communication to staff and Volunteers until the Country Director receives verification that the Peace Corps Director has notified the deceased Volunteer's next-of-kin/designated representative.
- (f) The Country Director should inform any staff and Volunteers who are aware of the death to refrain from blogging, posting on social media, speaking to the press or contacting the deceased Volunteer's family until the Country Director authorizes after confirming the Peace Corps Director has notified the deceased Volunteer's next-of-kin/designated representative.
- (g) Prior to issuing mass communication to staff, Volunteers, and host country partners, the content must be reviewed and cleared by the Regional Director or Chief of Operations.

3.1.2 Designated Security Specialist

- (a) After learning of the possible or confirmed Volunteer death, the Designated Security Specialist initiates the Headquarters call notification protocol, as delineated in Attachment E, by first calling the Regional Director and then the Agency Duty Officer (+1 202-692-1470).
- (b) The DSS subsequently calls the Associate Director for the Office of Safety and Security.
- (c) The DSS, in collaboration with the OIG, notifies the Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer (PCSSO) assigned to the Post's sub-region so that steps can be immediately taken to advise Post on how to secure a potential crime scene.

3.1.3 Regional Director (RD)

- (a) The Regional Director immediately notifies the Associate Director, Office of Global Operations. Subsequently, the Regional Director notifies the region's senior leadership team and the relevant Country Desk Officer so that staff can prepare to support the Headquarters Response Team and Post as needed.
- (b) The Regional Director should call the Country Director to offer support and to establish a communication process and daily call schedule that minimizes disruption of the Post's ability to handle the multiple, complex challenges related to a Volunteer's death.

3.1.4 Associate Director, Office of Global Operations (AD/OGO)

- (a) The AD/OGO immediately informs the Peace Corps Director of the possible Volunteer death, noting whether there is confirmation of the Volunteer's death or identity.
- (b) The AD/OGO ensures notification of the following: Deputy Director, Chief of Staff, Associate Directors of the Offices of External Relations and Management, General Counsel, and Inspector General.

3.1.5 Agency Duty Officer

- (a) The Agency Duty Officer immediately notifies the Director of BHO and the Associate Director for the Office of Health Services.
- (b) If the Agency Duty Officer receives the initial notification of a Volunteer death from an outside source, before the call notification protocol in Attachment E is operational, the Agency Duty Officer should immediately relay the information to the Country Director before making any other notification calls.

3.2 Confirmation and Report of Volunteer Death

3.2.1 Confirmation of Volunteer Death

- (a) Post must make every effort to expeditiously confirm the alleged death and identity of the Volunteer. The PCMO or another member of Post staff must confirm positive identification of the deceased's remains.
- (b) The Country Director should notify the Designated Security Specialist immediately upon receiving confirmation of the Volunteer's identity and death. The DSS subsequently notifies the Regional Director who ensures the information is appropriately shared with the Director and the Headquarters Response Team.

3.2.2 Initial Report and Updates

- (a) Generally between 12-24 hours after a Volunteer death, Post sends a brief report via e-mail to the Regional Director and Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer. The template for the initial report of the death is provided in Attachment C Response Action Checklist and Toolkit, under the Initial Report tab.
- (b) The Country Director should submit updates by email to Region every 24 hours, or as needed, until all uncertainties of the Volunteer's death are resolved and the Regional Director confirms they are no longer needed.
- (c) At minimum, the Country Director's daily updates should be sent to the RD, ChOps, and CDO, who will disseminate the information as needed.
- (d) Such information should be disclosed only to offices or personnel who have a need to know the information in order to perform their official duties. *See* Subsection 6.4, MS 265.

3.2.3 SIMS Notification

Post must report a Volunteer death via the Security Information Management System (SIMS) within three business days of the incident and update the report as necessary. This report must be done whether or not a crime is suspected.

3.2.4 Post Action Log

The Country Director must ensure a detailed log of all actions taken in country. The log of action items informs the daily updates to the Regional Director and the PCSSO's official Death of Volunteer report. The log should be regularly updated in real time.

A template for the Post Action Log can be found in Attachment C. The log must be provided to the PCSSO upon request so the official Death of Volunteer report can be compiled.

3.2.5 Post Updates to Region

Through a communication schedule established by the Regional Director, Post should communicate with the Regional Director at least once every 24 hours, or as frequently as needed, until all uncertainties about the death are resolved. Region's Senior Staff should participate in calls, as appropriate.

3.2.6 Inquiry

The Office of Safety and Security will conduct an inquiry into the Volunteer death, even if the death was determined to be accidental. The inquiry will help the agency develop lessons learned and more fully understand the circumstances around the event, the causal factors and future steps that could be taken to mitigate risks.

4.0 Supporting Families, Volunteers, Staff and Communities

4.1 Supporting Families

- (a) The Director of BHO will assign a trained staff member to act as the main liaison between the Peace Corps and the family and next-of-kin/designated representative.
- (b) At the request of the family, BHO may ask the Office of Gifts and Grants Management to help establish a memorial fund or allocate funds to a Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP) in memory of the Volunteer.

4.2 Supporting Volunteers and Staff

- (a) BHO will provide a trained staff member to support the grieving process for Volunteers in conjunction with Post staff, at the request of the Country Director.
- (b) Post should be mindful of any Volunteers who may be in Post's office prior to the Country Director notifying all Volunteers of the death. Additionally, some Volunteers may arrive in the office without having seen the Country Director's message. As such, the Country Director should assign a Peace Corps staff member to inform Volunteers about the death as they come into the Post's office. If the Country Director is not yet authorized to issue mass communication about the death (*see* 3.1.1 of these Procedures), Volunteers should be instructed to refrain from notifying others about the death.

- (c) In addition to receiving the Country Director's mass communication to Volunteers, individual phone calls should be made to any Volunteers who were especially close to the deceased. The Program Manager is typically the person assigned to make such calls.
- (d) Any Volunteers who witnessed or were directly involved with the death should come to the office as soon as feasible. Post should consider arranging transportation for such Volunteers.
- (e) Information should be given to the Volunteers frankly and openly. Staff should acknowledge feelings of sadness, anger, guilt, and frustration.
- (f) A period of mourning is important for the Volunteer community. Post should consider how to provide Volunteers the time and flexibility to mourn with other Volunteers, such as revising training schedules or providing more flexibility with out-of-site restrictions.
- (g) Volunteers should be given an opportunity to participate in any in-country memorial service.
- (h) Volunteers who were especially close to the Volunteer or who were injured in the same incident may need to be medically evacuated for counseling to the U.S. Other Volunteers may be fearful and vulnerable particularly in the case of a violent or accidental death. For assistance with short term counseling, refer to TG 510 *Mental Health Assessment and Support*.
- (i) The Peace Corps host country staff may have their own way of marking a death according to local customs. Be sensitive to their needs and include them in the memorial service. Allow them the opportunity to grieve.
- (j) Keep updating the Volunteer community about the death. Ask the representative of Peace Corps at the funeral in the U.S. to bring back any pictures or announcements of the service.
- (k) The death of a Volunteer may be a difficult experience for all staff. On a case by case basis, the Country Director may grant up to three days of Administrative Leave and counseling support to staff as described in MS 682 *Staff Safety and Health Program*. Special consideration should be given to the PCMO, Safety and Security Manager and other staff who were directly involved in identifying the deceased Volunteer's remains, witnessing the crime site, attending the autopsy, or other significant events. Such individuals may need some additional time to recuperate.
- (l) The Country Director should remind staff of the availability of the Peace Corps Employee Assistance program (*see MS 658 Peace Corps Employee Assistance Program*).

4.3 Conduct of Funeral and Memorial Services

4.3.1 Post Memorial Service

- (a) When a Post elects to have an in-country memorial service, the Country Director should delegate the coordination of the service(s) to an appropriate staff member, often the Director of Programming Training. Posts are encouraged to include Volunteers in memorial service planning and to provide opportunities at the service(s) for staff and Volunteers to share memories and stories about the deceased Volunteer.

- (b) Posts are encouraged to provide a recording of the service and other appropriate memorial photos or reflections that can be shared with the deceased Volunteer's family. All items should be sent to BHO to either be transmitted to the family during the memorial service when possible or be coordinated with BHO so they can arrive with the rest of the personal effects. In preparation, Post should provide BHO a calendar of memorial events as well as a list of possessions that they wish to be conveyed to the family.
- (c) The DMO should work closely with the Region's Chief Administrative Officer and OCFO's Office of Global Accounts Payable (OGAP) to determine appropriate expenses and spending authority described in MS 724 *Representation Allowance* and MS 729 *Food and Refreshment Expenses*.

4.3.2 Counterpart and Host-Community Memorial Services

Posts are also encouraged to attend and support memorial services arranged by host country officials or members of the deceased Volunteer's site or training community.

4.3.3 Family Funeral/Memorial Service

- (a) BHO will confirm the family's plans for funeral/memorial services and inform the Peace Corps Director and Country Director whether the family would like to have an official Peace Corps representative present remarks during the service.
- (b) The Director's Office will provide remarks to the senior Peace Corps representative who will make a presentation or deliver remarks during the funeral/memorial service.
- (c) Designated staff from the Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection, usually a Regional Recruiter, provides transportation or other support as needed to Post and HQ staff accompanying the remains and attending the service.
- (d) BHO sends flowers to the service on behalf of the Peace Corps.

5.0 Preservation of Information and Material

The Country Director, in consultation with and guidance from the DSS, and the OIG as appropriate, must ensure Post staff take reasonable measures, in accordance with host country laws, to preserve and refrain from tampering with, disturbing, or moving any information or material, in any medium or format, that may be relevant to determining the cause or root cause of the cause of death. Such measures must not interfere with the legal procedures of the host country if the government of the host country is exercising jurisdiction over the investigation of such death.

The OIG must be given the opportunity inspect any secured items or relevant materials prior to their final disposition.

5.1 Securing the Volunteer Residence and Potential Evidence

- (a) Immediately upon learning of a death, the Country Director shall consult with the DSS on the steps to be taken to secure the Volunteer's residence. The DSS shall liaison with the

PCSSO, RSO and OIG to relieve the Country Director of multiple calls. Securing the Volunteer's residence immediately reduces the risk of theft or tampering with potential evidence. (*See* 10.0 of these Procedures.)

- (b) The Country Director must assign one or more Peace Corps employee(s), as necessary, in coordination with host country authorities as appropriate, to secure the individual's house or apartment and limit access only to Peace Corps staff, the Regional Security Officer, the Consular Officer, and host country authorities. The Volunteer residence must be secured regardless of the location or possible cause of the death. If it is impossible for staff to secure the site quickly, the Country Director may ask a trusted community member to do so. Individuals should be advised not to touch or remove any items from the Volunteer's residence until authorized by the Country Director.
- (c) Potential evidence related to the death must not be tampered with; specifically, evidence or material found near or on the body must be safeguarded, secured in place, and left undisturbed until informed otherwise by competent local law enforcement or OIG. The Country Director should ensure that guidance is received from the DSS or PCSSO before staff touch or remove any items associated with the crime scene or in the Volunteer's residence. Examples of items to be secured include:
 - (1) Electronics (computer, cell phone, fitness tracker, charging cables, etc.);
 - (2) Medications (both prescribed and over-the-counter);
 - (3) Clothing and other personal effects;
 - (4) Cash; and
 - (5) Personal identification (wallet, passports, credit cards, etc.).
- (d) Local authorities will generally inventory, collect and maintain items at the death scene if an investigation is being conducted.
- (e) The site of the Volunteer's death should be preserved for an investigation of a crime until the Country Director is notified otherwise by the PCSSO, OIG, or DSS. If feasible, in cases where that is not possible, such as a traffic accident, mitigating steps such as filming or taking photographs of the site should be taken prior to anything being moved.
- (f) The DSS shall consult with OIG, as needed, to determine guidance to be communicated to the Country Director regarding inventory and collection of personal effects. Prior to the release of any personal effects, OIG must be given an opportunity to inspect items.

6.0 Preparing the Remains

6.1 In-country Accompaniment and Vigil

The Country Director must assign one or more staff members to accompany the Volunteer's remains 24/7 within the host country. As conditions permit, this includes escorting the deceased

Volunteer's remains during in-country travel and maintaining a vigil in the funeral home or other in-country facilities.

6.2 Autopsy

Many host country laws require an autopsy prior to removal of a body from the country. Where an autopsy is not required by law, BHO must seek permission for an autopsy from the next-of-kin/designated official. On occasion, the remains of the deceased Volunteer will be transported to an appropriate facility in the U.S., Europe, or other location, e.g., U.S. military facilities, for an autopsy. In these circumstances arrangements must be made to transport the body under refrigerated conditions.

6.3 Basic Information about Autopsies

Prior to the autopsy, the handling of blood, fluid, and tissue specimens and/or slides should be discussed with OMS. When an autopsy is performed in country, it may be appropriate to collect and refrigerate blood, gastric fluid, urine, or other fluids for future analysis.

- (a) **Gross Autopsy:** A gross autopsy entails inspection of the body and the internal organs so that any structural abnormalities can be ascertained. The cause of death in cases of disease can sometimes be determined on the basis of the "gross autopsy."
- (b) **Microscopic Examination:** At the time of the gross autopsy, specimens of all body tissues are prepared using a fixative. After fixation, sections are taken and placed on microscope slides. Microscopic examination reveals abnormalities in the histologic patterns of the various tissues. These abnormalities can help pinpoint the cause of death in many cases.
- (c) **Toxicologic Studies:** Specimens for biochemical analysis are extremely important in cases where toxic substances may have contributed to the death, either accidentally or with suicidal intent.

6.4 Embalming

Embalming is usually required by commercial air carriers before accepting a body for transport. If autopsy is performed in-country, or if an autopsy will not be performed, embalming prior to repatriation is appropriate.

Preservation of the body in a cold environment (refrigeration) may be necessary while coordinating transportation arrangements if on an outer island or extremely remote site. If unavailable, consult with OHS on best preservation methods, such as ice.

Embalming prior to autopsy limits the information that can be obtained as it makes microscopic and toxicology analyses more difficult or impossible.

Customs, laws, and procedures regarding embalming vary widely from country to country. The Consular Officer can provide more information on local procedures that should be included when filling in the Post Death Procedures Template.

If autopsy is planned to be performed at a facility in another location, e.g. the U.S., Europe, a U.S. military facility, etc., refrigerated shipment of the remains without embalming should be arranged. This may require extensive advance preparation.

7.0 Casket and Transportation of the Remains

The Office of Management shall:

- (a) Arrange transportation of the deceased Volunteer's remains and the escorting staff member.
- (b) Advise Post, Region and BHO on transportation shipping options, as needed, taking into consideration potential travel challenges and family wishes.

For burials in the United States, BHO will provide the name of the licensed funeral home/ director or other individual to whom the shipment is to be consigned.

Hermetically sealable caskets and transfer cases may be available at U.S. Missions, consulates, and U.S. military installations. The Country Director should have this information ahead of time in the Post Death Procedures.

Post must ensure that the Volunteer's autopsy and death record match the identity of the Volunteer, and will be casketed and shipped to the correct funeral home.

In order to avoid delays, the Post should generally adhere to the following procedures:

- (c) Have a through airway bill made out to the final destination (a through airway bill expedites movement of the remains from an international carrier to a domestic carrier at the port of entry), including the following:

- (1) **FOR CUSTOMS CLEARANCE NOTIFY UPON ARRIVAL**

- U.S. PORT OF ENTRY, U.S. DESPATCH AGENT
(Name of U.S. Despatch Agent)

- (Complete Address of Despatch Agent)
(City, State Zip Code)

- (Complete Phone Number)

- (2) **TRANSFER TO ASSIGNED FUNERAL DIRECTOR**

- (Name of Funeral Director)

- (Name of Funeral Home)

- (Complete Address of Funeral Home)
(City, State, Zip Code)

- (Complete Phone Number)

- (d) The addresses of the U.S. Despatch Agents of the Department of State can be obtained from M/AS. U.S. Despatch Agents work for the Department of State and facilitate shipments to and from U.S. government employees overseas.
- (e) Send copies of the U.S. Government Bill of Lading and the through airway bill to the appropriate Despatch Agent as soon as possible.
- (f) Arrange, in coordination with the Travel and Transportation Division as necessary, for CONFIRMED AIR FREIGHT space and CONFIRMED SEATING FOR ESCORT from the host country to final destination on the earliest available flight(s).
- (g) NOTE: BHO may assist the Travel and Transportation Division by acting as the liaison between the various parties involved in arranging the transfer of the remains from an international airport to a domestic airport, for example, from Kennedy Airport, NY to LaGuardia Airport, NY. There must be a minimum of six hours between the arrival time of the international flight and the departure time of the domestic flight to accomplish the transfer. For the transfer of remains from an international carrier to a domestic carrier at the same port of entry airport, a minimum layover of four hours is required.
- (h) Send applicable documents described in 7 FAM 258 (Consular Mortuary Certificate; Certificate of Death; Affidavit by the Local Funeral Director; Transit Permit) with the shipment.
- (i) Inform the BHO Family Liaison by e-mail (the U.S. Despatch Agent should be an information addressee on all communications concerning shipping arrangements) of the following as it becomes available:
 - (1) Complete shipping schedule, including the names of all airline carriers, all flight numbers, all departure/arrival times and dates, and the name of each airport that is a transfer point. If air freight space and/or escort seating is not confirmed, point this out and request assistance from BHO.
 - (2) Through airway bill number.
 - (3) Complete dimensions of shipping container, including weight, height, length, and depth.
 - (4) Name of person who will escort the remains, the nature of the escort's relationship to the deceased Volunteer, and a physical description of the escort to facilitate being met by the U.S. Despatch Agent at the port of entry; and
 - (5) Confirmation of the departure of the escort and the remains. If time is a critical factor, the escort may choose to confirm departure by an international phone call to the Agency Duty Officer. The Agency Duty Officer will immediately notify the BHO Family Liaison. If necessary, M/AS will arrange routing within the U.S.; however, to avoid confusion, this routing must be confirmed prior to the departure of the escort and the remains from the host country.

- (j) Request the airline carrier accepting the shipment to communicate all information regarding the shipment, the through airway bill number, and the complete flight schedule to the appropriate person(s) at the transfer points and to the carrier making the final delivery to the destination. Instructions advising the final delivering carrier must be included in case the shipment is delayed or re-routed. The carrier accepting the shipment also must confirm that all connecting flights can accommodate the weight and size of the shipping container.
- (k) Determine any difficulties that might be anticipated in transporting the remains through a third country en route to the U.S., and as necessary enlist the aid of the Embassy or any Peace Corps Country Director there to resolve any problems. Be certain that information copies of any e-mail traffic arising from such a situation are also addressed to BHO and the U.S. Despatch Agent.

8.0 Death Certificate and Consular Report

Post should verify with local officials what documents are needed to obtain a death certificate. Multiple copies of the local death certificate should be obtained, at least 12 if possible. Post should arrange for an accurate translation to be made of the death certificate in order to inform the Office of Health Services of its content.

Post should obtain at least 12 copies of the Consular Report of Death of a U.S. Citizen Abroad (CRODA) from American Citizen Services. At least three copies should be held for the Region, BHO and Office of Chief Financial Officer. Post should refer to the U.S. Embassy's Disposition of Remains report to verify required documents to obtain the CRODA. Upon receipt, Post should scan and email the CRODA to BHO.

9.0 Staff Escort

- (a) The Country Director, or designated staff member, will accompany the shipment of the deceased Volunteer and act as the Peace Corps country representative at the funeral. If possible, the escort should be someone who knew the deceased Volunteer well and who also knows the host country well.
- (b) Reservations for transport of remains are not automatically linked with accompanying traveler. When making reservations, take great care to ensure that the two reservations are always together. Request the airline to link the two reservations together. Where appropriate, services of U.S. Embassy expeditors should be engaged, especially at transfer and connection airports.
- (c) Any, and all, special arrangements should be made before departure, such as having an Honor Guard and anticipating potential difficulties in remaining with the deceased Volunteer's remains during airport transfers.
- (d) Back-up transportation plans must be in place to counter any unforeseen problems, including those caused by delays that may occur. The escort must be able to deal with any and all delays and logistical problems that may be encountered en route. Therefore, the escort should not be an individual who was so closely associated with the deceased Volunteer that their grief would preclude effective handling of any problems that could arise.

- (e) If any significant delays or difficulties, including missed connections, are encountered en route, the escort should enlist the aid of the nearest Embassy Consular Section to resolve the problem and notify the Region and the U.S. Despatch Agent by whatever means necessary. The escort is responsible for reporting to BHO immediately upon arrival at the port of entry.
- (f) The U.S. Despatch Agent at the port of entry is normally responsible for safeguarding the remains during the transfer from an international to a domestic carrier. When the Despatch Agent is not available, the escort assumes these responsibilities. In extremely unusual cases when the escort does not accompany the remains during shipment, the Regional Director may authorize the escort to proceed directly to the U.S. port of entry to assume duty.
- (g) The Region will authorize the escort to proceed to Washington, DC for debriefing following the discharge of his or her duties with the next-of-kin/designated representative. The consultation will be done in coordination with the Regional staff. The Office of Health Services will pay transportation and per diem expenses for the BHO escort and the Region will pay for Post staff expenses, as appropriate.
- (h) To the extent possible, ensure that the casket is draped with a U.S. flag during transportation to the place of burial.
- (i) Post may reach out to OCIO for assistance in obtaining a cell phone for the escort to use during travel.

10.0 Possessions of the Deceased Volunteer

The Peace Corps has the primary responsibility for the disposition of the Volunteer's possessions, but the Post may contact the Consular Officer at the U.S. Embassy for information and assistance with respect to performing the inventory and valuation of the personal effects of the deceased Volunteer. (*See* 7 FAM 224.3, 7 FAM 290.)

The Country Director should assign at least two people, preferably a staff member or other trusted person, to secure the deceased Volunteer's residence to safeguard property. Such individuals should be advised to avoid touching or tampering with any items found in the Volunteer's residence. (*See* 5.0 of these Procedures.)

The Country Director must receive authorization from the DSS before authorizing the release and disposition of any information or material, in any medium or format that may be relevant to determining the cause or root cause of death. The OIG must be given the opportunity to inspect such items before they are released.

Any questions regarding the custody, inventory, or appraisal of the effects of the deceased Volunteer must be referred through BHO to the Office of the General Counsel.

10.1 Inventory and Release of Personal Effects

- (a) After receiving authorization from the DSS, and as quickly as possible, the Country Director should assign at least two people, preferably staff, to inventory the Volunteer's personal effects. This includes all personal effects (electronic equipment, medications, cash, clothing, personal identification, etc.).

- (b) The DSS shall consult with the OIG to determine guidance regarding the inventory, collection and release of personal effects and to clarify whether the OIG chooses to inspect items before they are released.
- (c) All of the Volunteer's personal effects must be inventoried, including those on the body, those in the Volunteer's living quarters, and any other personal effects, including currency. Pharmaceuticals must be listed and detailed by name, dosage, and amount, i.e., number of pills remaining as compared to the number prescribed.
- (d) The final inventory should clearly note which items will not be able to be returned (such as lithium ion batteries), items being held for OIG investigation, or items being hand-carried by the staff member accompanying the Volunteer's remains.
- (e) The Country Director must keep a copy of the inventory, also referred to as a log of personal effects. After the DSS receives the OIG's clearance and DSS authorization is given, and in accordance with local laws and directives, the Country Director should email the log of personal effects to BHO and may authorize release of the Volunteer's personal effects.
- (f) Peace Corps may send items of minimal value (i.e., with a total value of not more than U.S. \$1,000) back with the escort, along with a list of those items, and give them to the next-of-kin/designated representative. This might include personal effects such as photographs, diaries, letters, and other items of minimal value. Those personal effects carried personally by the staff escort must be secured and kept in the escort's presence at all times until arrival at the final destination. An acknowledgement of receipt from the next-of-kin/designated representative should be obtained, if possible. The Country Director must include on the inventory any items returned by the escort, with a notation that they were turned over to the next-of-kin/designated representative. The Country Director must advise BHO of any possessions withheld due to their un-presentable condition or relevance to the local investigation.
- (g) The Country Director must arrange for the collection of any personal funds from the residence and submit a voucher for payment to the designated representative. *See* the Overseas Financial Management Handbook, 66.10.20 for guidance.
- (h) BHO will send a copy of the inventory to the next-of-kin/designated representative. The next-of-kin/designated representative can nominate items that they would like personally carried and delivered by the escort, i.e. cell phone, wallet, etc.
- (i) The next-of-kin/designated representative should indicate how each item in the inventory should be disposed of. The next-of-kin/designated representative should designate those items to be returned and those to be sold or given away and designate to whom they are to be given. For example, they may choose to give some items to other Volunteers who were close to the deceased Volunteer or to Host Country Nationals in the community where the deceased Volunteer lived.
- (j) The next-of-kin/designated representative should keep a copy of the inventory and return a list of the designations to BHO. BHO will, in turn, keep a copy of the list of designations and forward a copy by e-mail to the Country Director. Upon receipt of the email copy, the

Country Director will contact BHO for final shipping instructions for all personal effects that the next-of-kin/designated representative wants returned.

10.2 Shipment or Delivery of Effects

- (a) The personal effects must be packed in air freight containers of the lightest weight material available that is substantial enough to withstand handling and weather conditions, as well as the distance and time involved from origin to destination. Special care should be taken to ensure against breakage or other harm to the personal effects. Trunks, footlockers, etc. should be locked. Containers for air freight must not exceed dimensions of 80" x 40" x 40" personal effects shipped to the U.S. should be shipped by air, regardless of weight. For customs purposes, indicate on all shipping documentation that the Volunteer is deceased. All items should be sent in one shipment when possible, as to minimize the strain on the designated representative and family.
- (b) BHO will coordinate with the Post and Country Desk Officer to ensure that any and all personal effects are shipped to a designated staff member of the Peace Corps who, upon receipt of such personal effects, will make arrangements for personal delivery of the effects to the next-of-kin/designated representative or someone selected by the next-of-kin/designated representative. In no instance will personal effects be sent directly to the family unless done so at the express direction of the next-of-kin/designated representative, as determined by BHO.
- (c) If the Volunteer's personal effects are to be delivered in person to the next-of-kin:
 - (1) As applicable, the Regional Recruiter receives the personal effects from BHO and hand delivers them to the next-of-kin or designee. Personal items should be delivered with the utmost compassion.
 - (2) BHO confirms with the next-of-kin the receipt of the personal effects.

11.0 In-Country Bank Accounts and Debts

The Director of Management and Operations or designee at the Post will assist in closing the Volunteer's in-country bank accounts by implementing the following procedures, as applicable:

- (a) The Director of Management and Operations will e-mail BHO with details of the bank's requirements for the closure of accounts of deceased individuals. This may include the need to obtain a Power of Attorney or letters testamentary from the designated representative.
- (b) BHO will coordinate obtaining the necessary Power of Attorney and/or letters testamentary and forward them to the designated in-country Post staff, who in turn will coordinate with in-country bank officials to close the account.
- (c) Upon receiving the funds from the accounts, the Director of Management and Operations will e-mail BHO indicating the amounts of the funds and advising that the funds will be issued to the next-of-kin/designated representative, or if there is no next-of-kin/designated representative, then such person as may be designated to receive such funds under a Power of

Attorney. If there is no next-of-kin/designated representative or person designated under a Power of Attorney, the funds will be paid out in accordance with the order of precedence set forth in 5 U.S.C. § 5582(b). (As a precautionary note, BHO may need to inform the next-of-kin/designated representative in writing of the need to review all of the deceased Volunteer's debts prior to forwarding any funds in the deceased Volunteer's accounts.) BHO will notify the next-of-kin/designated representative in advance of the return and issuance of all funds.

- (d) Any outstanding in-country debts the Volunteer may have had are to be deducted from the Readjustment Allowance. Any funds remaining at Post should be paid to next-of-kin in U.S. dollars non-cashier liquidation.

11.1 Deceased's Debts or Debts due the Deceased

If the deceased Volunteer has outstanding debts or there are debts due to the deceased Volunteer, the Post will contact BHO by e-mail immediately for instructions.

12.0 Funeral, Memorial, Cremation and Burial Costs

- (a) In accordance with MS 265, the Peace Corps will assist in defraying the funeral, memorial, cremation, and burial or internment costs for a deceased Volunteer. The total amount authorized for such costs shall not exceed \$12,000, unless authorized in writing by the Director. Such costs may include, but are not limited to:
 - (1) Preparation of remains;
 - (2) Transportation of remains to/from funeral home (including funeral director expenses related to transportation of remains) to crematorium and/or place of burial (i.e. standard means of transportation (hearse));
 - (3) Storage of Volunteer's remains (for a maximum of 60 days);
 - (4) Casket or casket rental (including re-casketing, if necessary);
 - (5) Cremation fee;
 - (6) Urn;
 - (7) Funeral and/or cremation expenses can only be paid within 60 days of the Volunteer's remains reaching the burial or cremation location. The Director of BHO, under extraordinary circumstances, may authorize the payment of funeral and/or cremation expenses beyond 60 days (i.e. due to frozen ground);
 - (8) Burial vault, burial plot, headstone, and opening and closing of ground; and
 - (9) Other traditional and common funeral or memorial service expenses.

Peace Corps will either pay directly to the provider or reimburse next-of-kin up to \$12,000 for expenses claimed with appropriate documentation. Reimbursements must be claimed within 90 days of the repatriation of the deceased's remains.

- (b) In addition to costs listed in subsection (a) above, the Peace Corps will pay for:
 - (1) Transportation of the Volunteer's personal effects;
 - (2) Travel of escort to place of burial or disposition of the remains; and
 - (3) Travel of escort to Peace Corps Headquarters for debriefing with BHO and other Headquarters staff, as appropriate.
- (c) In the event the next-of-kin/designated representative requests payment of costs beyond those authorized in (a) and (b) above, BHO shall consult with the OCFO and OGC before confirming Peace Corps payment.
- (d) If the next-of-kin/designated representative requests that the burial be in the host country, BHO will inform the Post and provide specific information regarding the family's instructions.
- (e) If the Volunteer was a U.S. Veteran, BHO facilitates the Peace Corps providing assistance to the family in applying for Veterans' benefits. (Such benefits may include a gravesite in a national cemetery, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a headstone or marker, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate.) Families of some deceased Veterans may also be eligible for burial allowances from the Veterans' Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

13.0 Other Administrative Actions

- (a) The Office of the Chief Financial Officer shall:
 - (1) Based on form PC-440HQ received from BHO, terminate the Volunteer's service in HRMS and deactivate the Volunteer's Vendor Record in Odyssey/AP to prevent inappropriate payments.
 - (2) Provide to BHO the SF-1153 for next-of-kin/designated representative to claim Unpaid Compensation due to the Volunteer and provide MetLife insurance claim form to BHO to be completed by designated beneficiary.
 - (3) Coordinate with BHO to mail the agency's final payment (Readjustment Allowance and any funds recovered at Post) check to the next-of-kin.
- (b) BHO shall:
 - (1) Support the next-of-kin in completing insurance forms
 - (2) Obtain from the Country Desk Officer the Volunteer's Life Insurance Beneficiary or Waiver of Coverage form.
 - (3) Support the next-of-kin in completing form SF-1153 (Claim for Unpaid Compensation of Deceased Civilian Employee); submit the completed form to the OCFO for final processing.

- (4) Make arrangements with the next-of-kin regarding death benefits, including FECA reimbursement of funeral expenses, as needed.
- (c) Post shall close or transfer the Volunteer's Peace Corps Partnership Program and other grants, as necessary.
- (d) The Office of Management adds the Volunteer's name to the memorial wall in Peace Corps Headquarters after consulting with BHO on the family wishes regarding the spelling of the name.
- (e) The Office of Safety and Security shall brief the Office of Inspector General within 10 days of the death notification and provide a copy of the PCSSO's official Death of Volunteer report.
- (f) Post and HQ shall follow all records management requirements as specified in MS 892 *Records Management*; specifically the DOV related records guidance in Attachments A and B. Ensuring OSS receives a copy of all related documents.
- (g) Following the after-action debriefing co-led by Region and the Office of Safety and Security, the Office of Global Operations shall disseminate lessons learned to other Regions and participating offices and update Response Action Checklist and other MS 265 Attachments as needed.

14.0 Flags

Post should obtain a U.S. flag to drape over the casket during transport. Such flags can usually be provided through the U.S. Embassy. To the extent possible, ensure that the casket is draped with a U.S. flag during transportation to the place of burial.

The Office of Management will provide two flags for the next-of-kin. The flags will be folded in a triangle pattern and each flag will be encased in its own wooden display case for presentation to the next-of-kin during the funeral/memorial service or other appropriate gathering.

Information for engraving the flag's case plaque should be obtained from BHO. The engraved plaque will be three rows with the first line containing the deceased name, second line will say "Peace Corps" with a hyphen and country of service, and the third line will have the date of service.

BHO should work with the Office of Management to obtain a U.S. flag that can be either shipped or carried to the funeral home for draping over the casket during the funeral service. This is due to the assumption that a flag used during transportation from Post to place of burial it would no longer be in a presentable state.

If there is no funeral/memorial service, BHO should work with the Office of Management to mail the encased flag to the Volunteer's next-of-kin or to the Regional Recruiter for hand-delivery to the deceased Volunteer's family.