



Ask to Come Home. Ask for Caldwell Hospice.



## An Employee's Personal Loss: What to Do

Significant losses, including the death of a loved one or a pet, a divorce, or the loss of a home affect the workforce every day. Ashewood Grief and Counseling Services can assist businesses in our community in fostering healing and maintaining a productive work environment as they support their grieving employees.

### When an Employee Suffers a Loss

- Talk with the employee to determine what information will be disclosed to co-workers.
- Learn your organization's policies concerning employee assistance and bereavement leave.
- Be prepared for a range of reactions from your employee, following the loss.
- Expect changes in work performance, such as confusion and lack of concentration.
- Try to be flexible with performance expectations.
- Encourage staff members to offer support to their co-worker. Acknowledge that people are often uncomfortable around others who are grieving.
- Express your sympathy through a personal note or call or an office-wide memorial contribution, card, or floral arrangement, if appropriate.
- Be sensitive to upcoming holidays and anniversaries because the employee will likely have a difficult time with these.
- Discuss concerns brought up by the loss openly with the employee. Offer support for your employee, without sacrificing your organization's healthy work environment.

Ashewood Grief and Counseling Services provides support to anyone in the community who has experienced a loss through death. Ashewood also serves as a resource for co-workers and employers on ways to support a grieving person.

### **Common Reactions to Loss**

Grief is a natural reaction to loss, and each employee will grieve in his or her own way and time. Even when employees show no outward signs of grief, they may be experiencing difficulties and need support.

- Shock
- Anxiety
- Denial
- Withdrawal
- Crying
- Sleep or appetite changes
- Anger
- Fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating
- Lack of or over-attention to detail
- Forgetfulness
- Moodiness
- Deep sadness
- Irritability
- Apathy
- Guilt
- Lack of interest
- Headache or body aches

(Source: NHPCO's *It's About How You Live At Work* series.)

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