Dear Family & Friends of NERC’s Incarcerated Adults,

On behalf of NERC please accept our sincerest condolences for your loss. Loosing someone we love is never easy and we understand that it can be challenging coordinating responsibilities when you have a loved one incarcerated.

Throughout this document we will discuss several opportunities that can assist you and the incarcerated adults through this difficult time. We will also cover “frequently asked questions” that my office has received over the years. Some of the procedural processes that we will discuss in this document are guided by DRC Policy 76-VIS-03, Private Funeral Viewing/Bedside Visit, which can be found on: https://drc.ohio.gov/policies/visiting.

Please read through this document carefully and feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Warden L. Eppinger

**WHO TO CALL:**

Please notify NERC staff of a death in the family as soon as you can. Below you will find the appropriate phone number and staff contact to make the notification:

- **NERC Warden’s Office - Mrs. Tomak (M-F):**
  - PH: (216) 777-8150
  - Email: Bethany.Hill@odrc.state.oh.us
  - Hours: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
  - Out of the Office on Federal Holidays

- **NERC Chaplains Office, Mr. Tate (Sunday—Thursday):**
  - PH: (216) 777-8137
  - Email: John.Tate@odrc.state.oh.us
  - Hours: 12:00 PM—8:00 PM
  - Out of Office on Federal Holidays

- **NERC Shift Supervisors (24/7):**
  - PH: (216) 771-6460
  - Press 0 when you hear the recording and request to speak to a shift supervisor.
  - Hours: 24/7

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

- Need When You Call: 2
- Family Member Defined: 2
- Proof of Relationship: 2
- Confirmation of Death: 3
- Incarcerated Adults Participation in Service: 3
- Must Have’s For Web-Based Viewing: 4/5
- Bereavement After Care: 6
- Mental Health: 6
- Bereavement Aftercare: 7
- Religious Services: 7
Information To Have Ready When You Call:

- Name of deceased family member.
- Relationship of the deceased to the incarcerated adult
- Location & contact information of the professional entity that is taking care of the deceased family member. For example: hospital, nursing home, funeral home, or coroner's office.
- Does the incarcerated adult know their loved one has passed?
- If the deceased suffered from a long illness, was the Incarcerated Adult made aware of that illness?

Family Member Defined:

The next step in the process will be for the NERC staff to confirm that the relationship of the deceased meets the criteria of a family member as set in DRC 76-VIS-03. These relationships can be found here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Members</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spouse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grandparent</td>
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<td>Sibling</td>
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<td>Child</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step-Parent</td>
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<td>Step or Half Sibling</td>
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Proof of Relationship:

It is the responsibility of the family of the Incarcerated Adult to provide proof of the relationship (if it has not already been verified). This is done by providing a legal document identifying the relationship to the incarcerated adult. This can be done via a birth certificate and or court documentation (i.e. divorce decree/child support).
Confirmation of Death:

NERC Staff are required to confirm the passing of your loved one with a professional entity. A professional entity can be any one of the following:

- Hospital
- Nursing Home
- Funeral Home
- Coroners Office
- Law Enforcement

Can the Incarcerated Adult participate in the funeral Service?

The NERC Warden’s Office is happy to screen your loved one for eligibility to participate in a web-based funeral viewing. Screening your loved one will **NOT** guarantee that they will receive this opportunity. DRC Policy 76-VIS-03, Private Funeral Viewing/Bedside Visit, has a specific criteria that the applicant must meet to be considered. Ultimately the Warden has the final approval for the viewing.

Due to the time constraints associated with a web-based viewing, it is vital that the notification of a death get to the Warden’s Office as soon as possible.

The Warden’s Office works quickly to screen the applicant. A notification is then communicated to the Incarcerated Adult & their family (if applicable) of the Warden’s Decision.
NERC Staff work diligently with you and your family to set up a web-based funeral viewing.

At the time that the viewing is approved, the Warden’s Office will then discuss with you the technological options. There are a few “must haves” in order to make this work, they are listed below:

1. **Must Have - Location:** The funeral viewing must take place at a professional establishment such as a Funeral Home, Cemetery, Church, etc. Funeral viewings will not be considered if they take place at a personal residence.

2. **Must Have - Designated Family Member:** Family/Friends of the Incarcerated Adult must have a family member/friend designated to facilitate the web-based viewing on your end. This designated family member/friend **MUST** have a valid email address.

3. **Must Have - Broadcasting Equipment:** In some cases the professional entity handling the services of your loved one has video equipment available to broadcast the service to and from NERC. If the funeral home does not have broadcasting equipment. The designated family member assigned to this task must have a device capable of downloading a free application to a device (ex: smart phone, tablet, or laptop). This device with the free downloaded application will be the tool used to broadcast the service.

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**Northeast Reintegration Center**
2675 East 30th Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44115
Phone: (216) 777-8150/Fax: (216) 523-1845

**Mission:** NERC is committed to reduce recidivism through programming, education, and community-based services all while providing a safe environment for staff, community, and residents.
Test Run:

It is recommended that the family member contact the DRC Video Support Team on a DIFFERENT device other than the one they plan to use that day. This will allow the DRC Video Support team to walk them through how to download the application as well as do a test run of the video prior to the event. At the time of the event, they will simply open up the application and we will have your loved one there and ready to view the service.

Allotted Time:

You and your loved one will be granted 60 minutes to participate in a service of the deceased. The exact start and end time is completely up to you but must be determined before the web-based visit is approved.

Must Haves:

Throughout the web-based viewing experience you and your family may have the opportunity to casually interact with the incarcerated adult.

It is required that all individuals involved remain appropriate in their communication to each other as well as their attire. Should the interactions between the parties result in inappropriate behavior the web-based visit will be terminated.

NERC hopes that the web-based viewing experience be healthy, productive, and healing for everyone involved.
Bereavement Aftercare:

The healing process for a bereaved Incarcerated Adult looks different for everyone. NERC has several opportunities for the Incarcerated Adult to seek guidance through the grief process:

NERC’s Mental Health Department:
NERC’s Mental Health Department is comprised of a multidisciplinary group of compassionate and caring employees that have extensive knowledge and experience in guiding the community through a loss while maintaining a healthy state of mind. This is achieved by one on one counseling based off of the Incarcerated Adults needs and desire for said counseling as well as through a staff facilitated support group entitled “Grief and Loss”.

Blue Room:
The Blue Room is a therapeutic room that is evidence based and developed in conjunction with the Cleveland State University Occupational Therapy program. Through research, these rooms have been shown to decrease restraints and isolation, such as restrictive housing incidents. The Blue room is used to help individual's emotional and cognitively regulate themselves through various sensory items. To access the Blue Room, the Incarcerated Adult must simply requesting access from the Mental Health Staff or the Shift Supervisor.

NERC’s Religious Services Department:
NERC’s Religious Services Department is operated by NERC’s Chaplain as well as several dedicated and passionate community volunteers. The religious services department has made several opportunities available for the incarcerated adults to partake. These opportunities are designed to assist the Incarcerated Adults through the bereavement process.