

THE GRIEF PROJECT

Open Source Policy



Grief is a universal experience. By the age of 20, 63% of people say they have attended a funeral, with the majority of cases grieving someone close to them - 6/10 say their first significant loss was the death of a grandparent, parent or close relative. Grief can be messy, complicated and it has no timeframe and at Lucky Generals, we're on a mission to humanise grief.

Enter The Grief Project: our social impact initiative dedicated to equipping our agency with the understanding and compassion needed to navigate grief and loss in the workplace and beyond. Our aim is to support our people but also to hopefully share any helpful learnings with others who are looking to adopt more compassionate and inclusive grief policies.

Outlined in the following pages is all the support we are offering our people if they're experiencing a bereavement whilst working at Lucky Generals.



TAKING TIME TO GRIEVE

In the UK there is no legal entitlement to any paid time off when you lose a loved one, outside of a statutory entitlement if you were to lose a child under 18, and the average bereavement leave in UK companies is typically 3-5 days off following the death. If you wanted to take more time off there is no guarantee that this would be paid, raising the question 'can I afford time to grieve?' Some organisations do offer more, up to 2 weeks off to be taken straight after a close relative dies, which feels more generous. But this often comes with the expectation that after those 2 weeks you're 'okay' and back to business as normal.

Grief is not so linear or predictable and we want to hold flexibility for every human experience at the forefront of our policy.

We don't want our people to have to explain their relationship, let alone negotiate their leave, and so we have not defined or limited who would be covered and instead we believe the policy should be built on trust. Therefore, at Lucky Generals, if you experience significant loss you will be entitled to:

1.
Up to 2 weeks fully paid compassionate leave to be taken at any time in the first year following the death of a close loved one.

What counts as a 'close loved one' you may ask? We don't want our people to have to explain their relationship or negotiate their time off and so we chose not to define who could be covered. We've not limited this to only include family, it could be a close friend or someone in your chosen family, and depending on the relationship you may not feel you need the full 2 weeks off. We recognise that sometimes what can help when you're grieving is that moment of normality and distraction that work can bring and so our flexible policy allows our people to take time when it's best for them. We want to create a framework of leave built on trust, to be used as and when our people need it.

and...

2.
An additional 5 individual days paid leave over the next 24 months

The additional 5 days off can be used flexibly in a way that works best for you. It could be used to take a day off at birthdays or anniversaries, a time we know can be extra tough in the first couple of years post loss.

Or perhaps there are religious or cultural moments in the year that are important to observe for you and your family, and you want to use a day to take that time out. Or maybe you're feeling overwhelmed with death admin and could do with a bit of breathing space.

Whatever the reason, we want to support you in taking the time you need.

Grief has many dimensions and hits us all differently and we don't expect anyone to be 'back to normal' just because that traditional mourning period is over. We've stretched our time off to span up to 3 years post the loss of a loved one which can be used flexibly as and when you need it.

What if you need more time?

We acknowledge that the type of relationship or circumstances surrounding a death may mean you need more than 2 weeks off. For example, we acknowledge that the loss of a child will require greater support and flexibility than 2 weeks and you may also be entitled to other leave types. Or if you have experienced loss under sudden or traumatic circumstances, more support may also be needed. If you need more time we would encourage you to speak to People & Culture or any senior member of the agency that you feel most comfortable with.



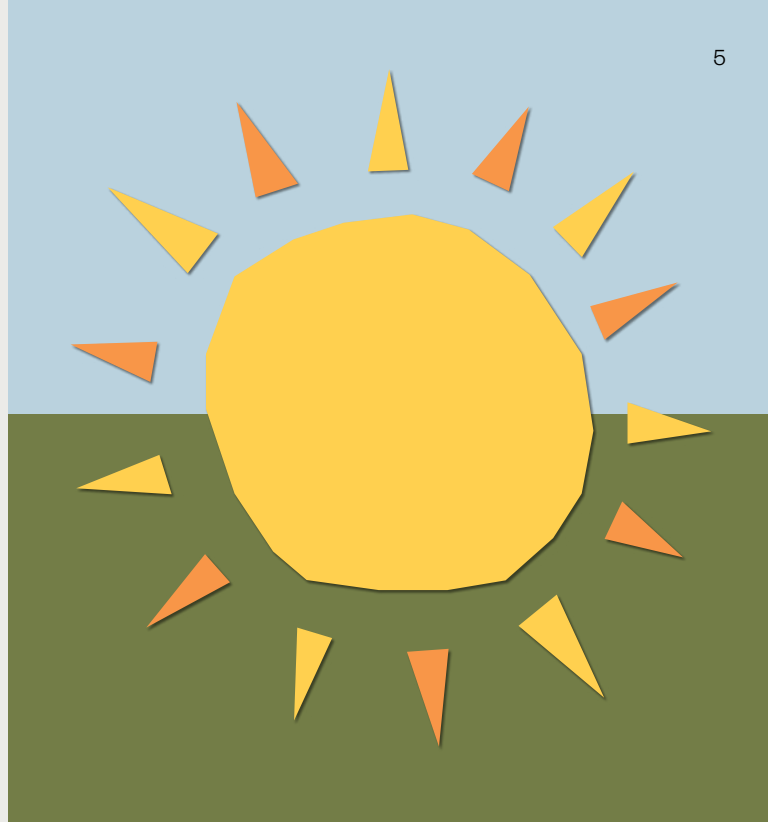
FLEXIBLE WORKING

Grief will present different challenges for everyone and there is a need for more flexibility than ever from us. If you need to travel to relatives and work remotely for a period of time, we will support you. If you need to change your working hours to attend funeral appointments, we will work with you to ensure you can do this. If you want to talk about working more flexibly at a time of loss, please reach out to People & Culture or anyone senior within the agency that you feel most comfortable with.

WELLBEING SUPPORT

At Lucky Generals, everyone is entitled to 12 therapy sessions per year through our wellbeing provider and 4 can be shared with their loved ones. However, we always want to encourage people to use their sessions for mental maintenance and everyday wellbeing as well as dealing with life's tougher times.

We want to avoid a situation where you could experience a loss with little to no therapy sessions left when you need them most.



Therefore, if you've experienced a loss and require more sessions, all you need to do is drop a note to People & Culture who will authorise more for you. We can support you with specialist bereavement counselling, or if you'd prefer to speak with your usual therapist we will arrange an extension of 6 sessions in the first instance.

There are also some really useful free resources aimed to support those dealing with a bereavement:

Good Grief

A community hub of events, talks, books, resources to help you with your own grief or support others with theirs.

Griefcast

Comedian Cariad Lloyd talks to fellow comedians about their grief, balancing the funny with the awful brilliantly.

The Grief Gang

'The gang you never wanted to be part of'. A podcast aimed at normalising and destigmatising grief.

Parent Hood Podcast

In this episode psychotherapist and author Julia Samuels focuses on supporting parents in communicating loss to children.

Additional Wellbeing Support from NABS

This policy was created with advice, input and support from NABS, our industry's dedicated charity, committed to advancing mental wellness in the advertising, media and marketing community. They provide a chatline open to all who may need support (practical and emotional) or just want someone to listen. If you're dealing with grief and loss and want to speak to someone anonymously and separate to work or home you can call NABS' Advice Line 0800 707 6607 between 9am – 5.30pm or email support@nabs.org.uk for compassionate conversations and tailored guidance. You can also sign up to their newsletter here: <https://nabs.org.uk/newsletter/>

As part of our work with NABS, we will also be facilitating training focused on equipping our managers with the tools they need to have conversations on mental wellness, which we hope will further support anyone who may be struggling.

CROSS CULTURAL AWARENESS

Different cultures and religions will observe their own practices and traditions when experiencing death and bereavement, however it's fair to say that the UK's common compassionate leave of 3-5 days off, at a push 2 weeks post death, isn't the most inclusive of difference. For example, the Islamic tradition of visiting loved ones on the 7th and 40th day of mourning as well as the anniversary wouldn't fit in the 'standard' model. Or for example in the Jewish community, there are several periods of mourning post the loss of a loved one and these can vary depending on relationship with the deceased.

And all religious traditions will also vary by community and family.

We want to ensure that all our people have space and time to respect the customs of their own religions and beliefs, and not be confined to an antiquated one size fits all approach that leaves little room for cultural difference and isn't reflective of the society we live in or the company Lucky Generals is. We encourage anyone experiencing grief to share any specific cultural or religious needs so we can support them best at this time.

We hope that the flexible nature of our bereavement leave which can be used over a longer period of time will allow for cultural and religious differences to be accommodated, understood and respected and will ensure our policy is inclusive for all.

‘DEATH ADMIN’ SUPPORT

When a loved one passes away, it’s often not just grief to contend with, but the seemingly endless, often distressing admin that comes with it, particularly if the death was unexpected.

The admin following a loved one’s death isn’t confined to just funeral arrangements (which are no picnic) but can range from applying for probate and registering their death, to the day to day but still challenging tasks of cancelling phone contracts and informing banks.

And with each task having to re-share the painful loss of a loved one with strangers.

According to Exizent’s 2021 Bereavement Study, 87% of those who recently lost someone found dealing with the administrative side of their death stressful, and 40% shared their mental health was affected during the process. Sadly, many of the administrative burdens are unavoidable, but we do want to help make them a little easier and less overwhelming if we can.

Firstly we want to demystify some of the key terminology frequently used when talking about death admin:

- **Will** – a legally binding document created when the person was alive that states what will happen to any assets or possessions after their death.
- **Estate** – a person’s estate is simply the sum of everything they owned when they died, and this can include money, property, personal belongings, shares & investments, money owed to them and life insurance.
- **Probate** – the process of administering the estate after someone dies. This involves organising their assets and distributing them as inheritance, after paying any due taxes and debts. If a will has been written, the person chosen to take on this responsibility will be named. If there is no will, the most ‘entitled’ living relative will assume this role, usually a spouse or a child over the age of 18 and they will need to apply for probate. There is more guidance on applying for probate below.
- **Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)** – a legally binding document that appoints a chosen person to make decisions on behalf of someone else. LPAs typically have charge over finances, property and health & welfare matters.

‘DEATH ADMIN’ SUPPORT

Hopefully we’ve simplified a few terms that you sadly may become familiar with when experiencing a loss, however we want to go a step further. At Lucky Generals we’ve also partnered with Octopus Legacy, a professional provider of Grief Admin support, so everyone can access practical help, advice and administrative assistance through Lucky Generals at no extra cost. The services on offer include:

- Free Estate Planning Consultation
- Free Probate Consultation and discounted Probate Service
- Free online wills & LPAs (+ discounted telephone/video/in person service)
- Additional Bereavement Counselling and Support

Death admin support through Octopus Legacy will be available for all Lucky Generals employees, and you can speak to People & Culture for more information.

There are also lots of useful resources you can share with friends or loved ones who are experiencing their own loss to offer some practical support.

1. [What to when someone dies – Step by Step Guide.](#)
2. [How to verify and register someone’s death](#)
3. [Planning a Funeral](#)
4. [Telling different organisations](#)
5. [Build a picture of their estate](#)
6. [Guide to inheritance tax](#)
7. [Guide to probate](#)

We hope that this policy will provide real practical and pastoral support for anyone at Lucky Generals who may be experiencing grief and if you need any more information or would like to talk about your needs please reach out.

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