

# NEWSLETTER

## Occupational Safety & Health Administration

### Grief...why is it so different?



Have you ever looked at your fingerprints and compared them with those of your parents, sibling, or grandparents? Did you ever get it to match exactly? Probably not. The reason is that no two people have identical fingerprints, even if they are related.

Your fingerprints are similar to your grief. No one, not even those that are related grieve the same way you do.

There are many reasons that cause you to grieve differently.

- Individual characteristics or qualities define you and only you. You have your own personality that helps you navigate through the emotions of grief.

For example, are you someone that feels comfortable in speaking with someone about your loss? Do you prefer to hold your emotions in and not speak about your loss? When you are upset, do you tend to make jokes to lighten the mood or are you very serious? Maybe you are someone that cries in the shower, so no one knows? What is your personality and how do you think it helps you deal with your loss?

- The relationship you had with the individual you lost. It is important to know those that have lost a child may grieve differently than someone who may have lost a spouse or parent. The relationship you had with that person has a big role in how you grieve them.
- Your culture or religious beliefs may define how you express grief.
- Your past loss. Have you lost someone before? Was the loss unexpected or tragic or were you prepared for their loss? Are you grieving differently than you did before? Think why this loss may be different than those in your past.
- Do you have a support system? Someone or a group that you can reach out to in your time of need. Perhaps another family member, friend, colleague, or someone in a support group.
- Biological differences. Even hormones have some impact on how you are grieving.

However you grieve it is okay. It's important to know that it is okay to give yourself permission to step back and grieve your loss in a healthy, but personal way, to help you get through the moments and emotions of grief. And of course remember it is okay for your family members to grieve in their way. Just be there for each other through each phases.

### Remembrance

#### Jawaylan T. Patterson Sr., 30 of Ohio



Jawaylan, known as "Way", was a bright and shining star, his smile would light up a room.

He was a precious soul that would give the shirt off his back if you needed it.

Providing for his family was of great importance to Jawaylan.

He was a devoted, dedicated and committed father, supporting his family working in various departments at his employer over the years.

[Read more about Jawaylan.](#)





## Mark your calendars

**Monday, Sept. 29, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. ET (6:00 p.m. CT)**

After a tragic, unexpected loss, you may feel or believe that you are all alone. There are families across the U.S. that stand in your shoes and understand firsthand the devastation you and your family have endured.

OSHA will be hosting meetings for families across the U.S. that have been directly affected by the loss of a loved one due to a work-related incident, illness or disease to come together and connect with each other in your time of need. [Register today to join the meeting.](#)



## A Message To You

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Tonya Ford and I am OSHA's first national Family Liaison, but more importantly, I am a

family member. For over 16 years now, I have connected with families across the U.S. that have lost someone dear to them in a work-related incident. I can empathize with their and your loss because I too lost someone very important. My Uncle Bobby (Robert Fitch) was fatally injured in a work incident after he fell over 80 feet from a belt-operated manlift. Although I will never compare my loss to yours or anyone else's, I know and understand the overwhelming emotions of grief and questions you may have about your loss. I have tried to turn my loss, something so negative, into something positive, offering support, guidance and resources to you and others that have been affected by a work incident. It is important that you know, you are not alone and, I am here for you at a time that is convenient to you-as grief knows no time.

## In Remembrance

Behind every picture of our fallen workers are family members — spouses, children, siblings, grandparents, friends, and coworkers — and you. We recognize you and all our fallen workers on our Workers Memorial Tribute Wall.

We value all our fallen workers and strive to offer you our support, compassion and appreciation. We invite you to share your loved one's photograph with OSHA at [remembrance@dol.gov](mailto:remembrance@dol.gov), as we recognize them on our virtual Workers Memorial Tribute Wall.



Rafeal Diaz, 64  
Florida



Alphonse B. Mbozo, 47  
Maryland



Vincent Mitchell Gordon, 25  
Florida



Larry DePolitte, 74  
Florida



Alyssa Arianna Drinkard, 21  
Georgia



James T. Proud Jr., 49  
New York



Richard R. Gibson, 49  
Pennsylvania



Larry Joe Dalzell, 51  
South Dakota

## Resources For You

Resources are listed below for your convenience. The resources do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of either OSHA or USDOL, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government or OSHA.

Construction Angels:  
[www.constructionangels.us](http://www.constructionangels.us)

Kids' Chance of America:  
[www.kidschance.org/for-families](http://www.kidschance.org/for-families)

National COSH:  
[www.nationalcosh.org](http://www.nationalcosh.org)

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:  
988

United Support & Memorial for Workplace Fatalities (USMWF): [www.usmwf.org](http://www.usmwf.org)



[osha.gov/condolences](http://osha.gov/condolences)  
[osha.gov/workers-memorial](http://osha.gov/workers-memorial)



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