

Dunn County Medical Examiner's Office
615 Stokke parkway
Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751
715-232-1348 715-231-2906

Dunn County Death Reporting Protocol

The Dunn County Medical Examiner's Office is established and operates under provisions of Wisconsin State Statutes and Administrative Rules. The DCME has developed this protocol for the reporting of all reportable deaths in accordance with Chapters 59,69,and 979 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, and DHSS Rules 131 and 135. Local policy of the DCME Office is also included.

A. Reportable Cases

1. Deaths meeting these requisite criteria must be reported immediately to the DCME's Office. In cases where jurisdiction may rest with another county, the DCME's Office will notify the appropriate agency.
2. All physicians and other's having knowledge of the death of any person who has died as a potential result of any of the following circumstances shall immediately report such deaths to the DCME's Office.
 - (a) All deaths in which there are unexplained, unusual, or suspicious circumstances.
 - (b) All Homicides.
 - (c) All Suicides.
 - (d) All maternal deaths following an abortion.
 - (e) All deaths due to poisoning, whether homicidal, suicidal, or accidental.
 - (f) All deaths where an accident or injury process has possibly contributed to the cause of death, whether the injury is or is not the primary cause of death, and regardless of the interval between the injury and death.
 - (g) When there is no physician or accredited practitioner of a bona fide religious denomination relying upon prayer or spiritual means for healing in attendance within 30 days preceding death.
 - (h) When the physician caring for the decedent refuses to sign the death certificate.
 - (i) When, after reasonable efforts, a physician is not available to sign the death certificate.
 - (j) All deaths occurring while the person is in the custody of a law enforcement agency, state / federal department of correction, or any death involving the actions of a law enforcement officer.

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- (k) All deaths occurring in the emergency room or outpatient area of a health care facility, or within 24 hours of admit to a health care facility.
- (l) All deaths associated with a diagnostic, anesthetic, or therapeutic procedure.
- (m) All deaths of public interest, including infectious disease, communicable conditions and or terrorism.
- (n) If a death is a miscarriage and 20 weeks or more have elapsed between the mother's last normal menstrual period and delivery, or the stillborn weighs at least 350 grams and the delivery was unattended by a physician or practitioner.
- (o) All deaths occurring in a place other than a hospital or nursing home, that are not registered with a Hospice program licensed by the State Dept. of Health and Social Services, HSS 131. (A physician may pronounce death based upon information given to him/her by a registered nurse of the Hospice program who shall be present at the site of death.)
- (p) All deaths of a child under the age of seventeen years, unless a physician certifies the manner of death as natural. (Non- coroner/ medical examiner physicians are limited to certifying any death as natural or pending only).
- (q) All deaths attributable entirely or in part to work place factors.
- (r) All cases in which human or unidentified remains are discovered outside of a cemetery or documented burial plot.

B. Procedures

- (a) In the case of a death reportable under Section A, the body shall not be moved, altered, or manipulated in any way without prior authorization of the Medical Examiner or Deputy Medical Examiner. Scene and potential evidence preservation shall be given the highest priority.
- (b) It is unlawful to embalm or perform an autopsy upon the body of any person whom is reportable to the ME due to any of the aforementioned circumstances unless authorization has been obtained by this office.
- © No person may be cremated within 48 hours following death. All such bodies shall be viewed by the ME or DME, and only then will

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a permit to cremate be issued after a personal investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death.

- (c) Any person having knowledge that a body will eventually be cremated should make an effort to contact the ME or DME prior to removing the decedent from Dunn County.
- (d) The Dunn County Medical Examiner or a Deputy Medical Examiner can be contacted through the Dunn County 911 center. The telephone number is 715-232-1348. Administrative questions can be fielded to Gary Ridings at 715-231-2906 during regular Sheriff's Dept. hours of operation.
- (e) The Dunn County Chief Medical Examiner can also be reached 24/7 at 715-556-1497 (Chris Kruse- cell)

Revised 31 August 2012

Chris H. Kruse, Dunn County Chief ME