

Responding Medical Examiner Investigator:

Case#:

Responding Law Enforcement Agency:

Officer:

Case#:

Phone:

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

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For additional resources, please visit the Oakland County Medical Examiner's webpage or use your phone to scan the QR code below.



**Oakland County Medical Examiner's Office**

1200 N. Telegraph Rd., Building 28 East  
Pontiac, MI 48341

Phone: 248-858-5097 / Fax: 248-452-9173  
Office Hours: Mon – Fri 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Reports of death are taken 24/7.



**INFORMATION FOR THE FAMILY**

On behalf of the Oakland County Medical Examiner's Office, we offer our most sincere condolences to you and your family for the loss of your loved one.

It is our hope that this brochure will assist you during the grieving process and help answer questions about the role of the Medical Examiner.

## **My loved one has died. What do I do next?**

In this time of stress and sorrow, there are several decisions to make. Here are a few suggestions to help guide you and your loved ones through the process.

- »»» Involve your family, friends, and clergy for support. They can assist with decision making as you deal with this tragic and sometimes sudden news.
- »»» Select a funeral home to help you make funeral arrangements and coordinate final disposition of your loved one's remains.
- »»» Once you have chosen a funeral home, the funeral director will make arrangements to pick up and transport your loved one's remains back to the funeral home following the autopsy.
- »»» Keep track of all business cards given to you by law enforcement, medical examiner, ambulance, and funeral home personnel. This will assist you in obtaining any necessary documents.
- »»» Finally, remember to check in on yourself. Stress can come into one's life quickly and unexpectedly. Don't be afraid to use resources available to you in your community.

Visit: [oakgov.com/community/resources](http://oakgov.com/community/resources)

### **Why is the Medical Examiner's Office involved?**

Pursuant to State of Michigan Act 181 1953, the Oakland County Medical Examiner's Office is responsible for investigating and determining the cause and manner of death for violent, sudden, and unexpected deaths occurring in Oakland County.

### **Where was the deceased taken?**

The deceased was transported to the Oakland County Medical Examiner's Office morgue.

1200 N. Telegraph Rd.  
Building 28E  
Pontiac, MI 48341

### **What is an autopsy?**

An autopsy is an examination of the body to determine the cause and manner of death and assess any abnormalities that may be present. A complete forensic autopsy includes a review of the, circumstances involving the death, decedent's medical history, toxicology testing and in some cases microscopic examination. In deaths resulting from violence, other types of evidence may be collected and examined by a crime laboratory or other agency.

### **Will an autopsy always be performed?**

No. In many cases of sudden or unexpected death, evidence of preexisting natural disease or other circumstances make an autopsy unnecessary.

### **Will an examination or autopsy prevent a funeral service or viewing?**

No. These procedures do not prevent the deceased from being viewed or preclude a funeral service.

### **Is it necessary for family to come to the ME's Office to identify the deceased?**

No. In most cases identification is obtained by investigators at the location of death. In cases where positive identification is not obtained, the Medical Examiner may have to obtain the identification by one of the following forensic processes: fingerprint analysis, dental records, DNA, anthropology, x-ray comparison or through medical implants or devices.

### **How long will the decedent remain at the ME's Office?**

Typically, the examination or autopsy will be performed the day following death. The Oakland County Medical Examiner completes autopsies 7 days a week / 365 days a year. Normally the deceased can be released to the funeral home of the family's choice on the day the autopsy is completed.

We understand during this difficult period your family may need more time to prepare. We strongly suggest you apprise the Medical Examiner's office in the event there are any delays in finalizing funeral arrangements.

### **What happens to property?**

Personal items transported with the deceased to the morgue are carefully inventoried. Property is then released to the funeral home when the deceased is picked up.

Please see our resources page for additional information.

### **How do I obtain a copy of an examination/autopsy report?**

The next-of-kin should contact the Medical Examiner's Office to request a copy of the autopsy report. The final autopsy report, including the toxicology report is generally available 12-14 weeks from the date of autopsy. There is no charge for the autopsy report.

Individuals who are not the next-of-kin may request records through the Oakland County Freedom of Information Act web page: [oakgov.com/government/foia](http://oakgov.com/government/foia)

In cases of homicide, medical examiner information and autopsy reports are provided to the prosecutor's office and law enforcement investigating the death, these reports will not be released until the investigation and case is closed.

### **Can I get a preliminary report?**

To ensure that all required information has been received and that conclusions about the cause and manner of death are accurate the Oakland County Medical Examiner does not release preliminary reports.

*Note: Final Autopsy reports are public record and must be released to anyone who properly requests them.*

### **How do I obtain a death certificate?**

The funeral director you have chosen to handle final arrangements can assist you in getting copies of the death certificate. Additional copies of death certificates can be obtained at the Oakland County Clerk's office or select local city clerk's offices based on the place of death.

*Note: only the clerk's office can produce death certificates.*