

## Article - Health - General

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§5-309.

(a) (1) A medical examiner shall investigate the death of a human being if the death occurs:

(i) By violence;

(ii) By suicide;

(iii) By casualty;

(iv) Suddenly, if the deceased was in apparent good health or unattended by a physician; or

(v) In any suspicious or unusual manner.

(2) A medical examiner shall investigate the death of a human fetus if:

(i) Regardless of the duration of the pregnancy, the death occurs before the complete expulsion or extraction of the fetus from the mother; and

(ii) The mother is not attended by a physician at or after the delivery.

(b) If a medical examiner's case occurs, the police or sheriff immediately shall notify the medical examiner and State's Attorney for the county where the body is found and give the known facts concerning the time, place, manner, and circumstances of the death.

(c) Immediately on notification that a medical examiner's case has occurred, the medical examiner or an investigator of the medical examiner shall go to and take charge of the body. The medical examiner or the investigator shall investigate fully the essential facts concerning the medical cause of death and, before leaving the premises, reduce these facts and the names and addresses of witnesses to writing, which shall be filed in the medical examiner's office.

(d) The medical examiner or the investigator shall take possession of and deliver to the State's Attorney or the State's Attorney's designee any object or article that, in the opinion of the medical examiner or the investigator, may be useful in establishing the cause of death.

(e) (1) If the next of kin of the deceased is not present at the investigation, the police officer or sheriff at the investigation or, if a police officer or sheriff is not present, the medical examiner or the investigator shall:

(i) Take possession of all property of value found on the body;

(ii) In the report of the death, make an exact inventory of the property; and

(iii) Deliver the property to the appropriate sheriff or police department.

(2) The sheriff or police department shall surrender the property to the person who is entitled to its possession or custody.

(f) (1) If the case involves the unexpected death of a child, the medical examiner shall notify the chairperson of the local child fatality review team for the county in which the child resided.

(2) If the case involves the death of a child and the death is believed to be caused by abuse or neglect, or there is evidence suggesting that the child was a victim of abuse or neglect, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner shall orally report the findings and deliver a copy of the child's final autopsy report to the local department of social services and the local law enforcement agency of the county in which the child last resided in accordance with § 5–704 of the Family Law Article.

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