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RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: **Entry into Facility - Security Clearances and Identification** **NUMBER: 700.01**

POLICY: All persons entering the security section of any Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner facility shall be satisfactorily identified by on-duty staff and have the appropriate security clearance. Persons permitted entry shall be in a law enforcement uniform or wear identification which plainly distinguishes who they are and/or their specific business in that facility.

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

1.0 **Entry into and exit from the facility:**

1.1 All normal entry into, and exit from, the facility shall be done through the lobby. Sheriff's Department personnel also may enter and exit the facility by using the designated staff entrances.

2.0 **Identification:**

2.1 Law enforcement personnel in uniform and Building Services maintenance personnel in uniform need no additional identification.

2.2 Shoulder patches must be visible at all times.

2.3 Nametags must be worn at all times.

2.4 All non-uniformed personnel assigned to work in the facility should wear visible, acceptable identification at all times while inside the secure area of the facility.

2.5 All other Sheriff's Department employees in civilian clothes shall wear visible, acceptable identification at all times while inside the secure area of the facility.

2.6 The employees escorting visitors **should** remain with them at all times while inside the secure area of the facility.

3.0 **Acceptable forms of identification:**

"Identification" which must be visibly worn while inside the secure area of the facility is limited to:

Clear plastic "pocket badges" issued to Sheriff's Department administrators and Facility or Bureau Commanders;

Brown plastic "pocket badges" issued to Sheriff's Deputies, Investigators, Sergeants and Lieutenants;

TITLE:	Entry into Facility/Identification	NUMBER: 700.01
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Laminated blue "Visitor" badges with pocket clip, Form 252-14.

Laminated RCRMC, or Mental Health badges with pocket clip.

Laminated Riverside County Sheriff's Department identification cards.

4.0 **Visitor badges:**

- 4.0 All escorted official visitors must wear a "visitor" badge.
- 4.1 Visitor badges are designated law enforcement, and non law enforcement.
- 4.2 Visitor badges shall be obtained at the front counter within the facility lobby, and returned to the same location upon leaving.
- 4.3 The visitor shall sign in on the visitor log prior to obtaining the badge, and provide a reason for the visit.
- 4.4 The employee providing the badge should obtain a piece of personal property from the visitor, i.e.; CDL, keys etc... The property should then be exchanged for the badge upon the visitor leaving the facility.

5.0 **Entry into morgue:**

- 5.1 All visitors intending on entering the morgue shall first comply with all provisions of this policy & procedure (700.01).
- 5.2 The morgue supervisor shall control who enters the morgue.
- 5.3 All visitors shall be escorted to the morgue with the knowledge of the morgue supervisor. Entry should be via the locker rooms.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	After Hours Telephone Coverage	NUMBER: Policy # 700.02
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POLICY: Deputy Coroners and Coroner Technicians shall be responsible for answering the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau telephones after business hours, including weekends and holidays. When they cannot answer the telephones, the responsibility shall be that of the coroner technicians.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Answering the telephones after hours:

- 1.1 Deputy Coroners and Coroner Technicians should answer the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau telephones after business hours, including weekends and holidays when they are in the building.
- 1.2 The Coroner Technicians will be responsible for answering the telephones and dispatching the Deputy Coroners while they are in the field or on-call.
- 1.3 In the event that either the Coroner Technicians or Deputy Coroners cannot answer the telephones, they should divert the telephones (night line) to Sheriff's dispatch. Dispatch will then contact the on-duty deputy coroner via cell phone when a call has been received.
 - 1.3.1 The last employee leaving the Perris facility should contact Sheriff's dispatch at [REDACTED], upon forwarding the night line.
 - 1.3.2 Dispatch should be provided with the name of the on-duty deputy coroner and a cell phone number for contact.
 - 1.3.3 In the event dispatch is unable to contact the deputy coroner, they will telephone the on-call coroner sergeant.
- 1.4 The Indio facility should forward the phones to the Perris facility whenever personnel are out of the office.
 - 1.4.1 **Procedures for Diverting Phones from Indio to Perris:**
 - Phones can only be diverted to Perris from the Indio receptionist phone, [REDACTED]
 - Press buttons labeled, [REDACTED], cancel night, trf to Perris," in

- succession, one after the other.
- Receiver does not need to be picked up to complete process.
- Press “C” to hang up.

1.4.2 **Procedures to Cancel Call Divert from Indio to Perris:**

- Press buttons labeled, [REDACTED] cancel Perris, trf to night,” in succession, one after the other.
- Receiver does not need to be picked up to complete process.
- Press “C” to hang up.

2.0 **Procedure for Diverting to Sheriff’s Dispatch from Perris:**

2.1 The following procedure can only be performed on the telephone in Perris via the clerical line [REDACTED]

2.1.1 To Divert (During **Dayshift** Hours 0800-1700 hours):

- Buttons are located on the right side of the phone panel.
- Press the “Dispatch” button.
- Press the “D1” button.

2.1.2 To Cancel Divert (During Dayshift Hours 0800 -1700 hours):

- Press the “Dispatch” button.
- Press the “D2” button.

2.1.3 To Divert (During **Nightshift** Hours 1700 – 0800 hours or holidays or weekends):

- Buttons are located on the left side of the phone panel
- Press the “Access 3” button.
- Press the “N1” button.

2.1.4 To Cancel Divert (During Nightshift Hours 1700 – 0800 hours or holidays or weekends):

- Press the “Access 3” button
- Press the “N2” button

2.1.5 Employees should always test the transfer by calling the main number in Indio, or the night line in Perris. Likewise, when canceling call divert, the phone lines should be tested to ensure divert has been canceled.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Recording Daily Attendance	NUMBER: Policy # 700.03
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POLICY: Employees shall record daily attendance hours on Bureau approved forms unless otherwise specifically excluded.

REFERENCE: General Orders 205.00 through 205.07

PROCEDURE:

- 1.0 **All hourly-classified employees shall sign in** at the beginning of their shift and sign out at the end of their shift on the approved Daily Attendance Log.
 - 1.1 This includes all Clerical, Accounting, Coroner Technicians, and other support personnel.
 - 1.2 This excludes Deputy Coroner series and pathologists (professional series).
 - 1.3 Employees are not required to sign in and out for lunch.
 - 1.4 Daily logs will be located in the following areas respective of work assignment : Coroner Admin West, Coroner Admin East, Accounting and Morgue.
 - 1.5 After supervisory review, a designated employee in each area will be responsible for forwarding the logs on a daily basis to the Coroner/PA Accounting payroll personnel.
- 2.0 **Completion of Daily Attendance Log:**
 - 2.1 The log shall be used for a 24.0 hour period beginning at midnight (0000 hours) and conclude at 2359 hours.
 - 2.2 Employees reporting for duty shall complete the log by signing in the date, time (military time) and record their signature (which must be legible).
 - 2.3 Employees going off duty shall complete the date, time (military) and initial in the appropriate box.
 - 2.4 The respective supervisor shall review the log on a daily basis and make any applicable notations in the overtime and comment boxes, i.e., sick leave 4.0 hours etc.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Computer back-up	NUMBER: Policy # 700.04
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POLICY: The information on the server is vital to the daily operation of the bureau. This information shall be backed up on tape daily, Monday-Friday.

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

1.0 The back-up tape is to be changed daily:

- 1.1 The tape back-up is located in the telephone data room.
- 1.2 The key to the telephone data room is located in the lock box within the supply room.
- 1.3 It is the responsibility of the accounting section to change the tape.
- 1.4 The tape is changed weekly.

2.0 In the event of problems:

- 2.1 The accounting staff shall check the tape drive each morning, to insure the tape has ejected.
- 2.2 If the tape has not ejected, contact the help desk at TSB [REDACTED]

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Updating case information	NUMBER: Policy # 700.05
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner utilizes a central database for case information. This data base contains information such as; decedent identity, injury information, cause of death, toxicology, etc... It is imperative that this information is not only accurate, but timely, in order to answer questions on a daily basis. This database shall be updated as soon as new case information is received.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 First report of death:

- 1.1 Upon the initial report of a death, the Deputy Coroner shall obtain a case number.
- 1.2 The Deputy Coroner will enter the following information into the database; Decedent's name, date and time reported, person making the report, place of death, manner of death if known, and disposition of remains.

2.0 Updating case information:

- 2.1 The updating of case information is an on-going process that is shared by several people. Deputies are responsible for updating the database as new information becomes available.
 - 2.1.1 The morgue staff shall enter cause of death information on cases which are brought in for autopsy / consultation.
- 2.2 If a Deputy Coroner completes an affidavit amending the cause of death, the Deputy Coroner shall update the database with the cause, manner of death, and injury information if applicable.
- 2.3 All information shall be updated without delay.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU

Administrative

TITLE:	Petty cash fund	NUMBER: Policy # 700.06
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POLICY: This policy establishes the requirements for maintaining and using the Coroner's Bureau Petty Cash Fund. In day to day operations, the Coroner's Bureau must purchase small items under \$100.00. The petty cash fund is not a substitute for effective planning for normal supply purchases. It is to be used sparingly and only when there is a genuine need.

REFERENCE: RSD Form 308/RSD Form 309

PROCEDURE:

1.0 **Responsibilities:**

- 1.1 The person making the purchase is responsible for obtaining a legible receipt from the place of purchase.
- 1.2 Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all uses of the petty cash fund are legitimate and necessary. Supervisors are also responsible for ensuring that the intent of this policy is met when using the petty cash fund.
- 1.3 A senior accounting assistant is responsible for maintaining the petty cash fund.
- 1.4 The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau Commander is responsible for approving all disbursements of funds, and ensuring accurate accountability of the fund.
- 1.5 The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau petty cash fund must be deposited back into the Sheriff's Revolving Account and re-issued to each commander whom is assigned to the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau.

2.0 **Procedures:**

- 2.1 Any full-time Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau staff member may request to use petty cash to make a purchase.
- 2.2 A supervisor must approve all petty cash expenditures, prior to making the purchase.
- 2.3 The staff member requesting reimbursement is responsible for obtaining a legible receipt from the place of purchase.
- 2.4 The staff member requesting reimbursement is responsible for accurately completing a petty cash voucher (RSD Form 308, Annex A). The staff member shall submit the petty cash voucher to his / her supervisor for approval.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Petty cash fund	NUMBER: Policy # 700.06
2.5	A supervisor shall initial and date the completed petty cash voucher in the justification area. The supervisor shall check with Sheriff-Coroner accounting staff, to determine the appropriate budget object code to which to charge the purchase, and write this code on the RSD Form 308. The supervisor shall then submit the petty cash voucher to the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau Commander for final approval.	
2.6	The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau Commander shall approve or disapprove the reimbursement. a. If the Petty Cash Voucher is approved, the Coroner's Bureau Commander will forward it to the Senior Accounting Assistant for disbursement. b. If the Petty Cash Voucher is disapproved, the Coroner's Bureau Commander will contact the submitting employee and approving supervisor.	
2.7	Upon receipt of an approved petty cash voucher, the senior accounting assistant will ensure that a legible receipt is attached to the voucher and supports the disbursement.	
2.8	Upon making a disbursement, the senior accounting assistant shall make an entry on a petty cash reconciliation Log (RSD Form 309, Annex B). This log shall be updated upon each disbursement.	
2.9	After petty cash reconciliation log entry has been made, the senior accounting assistant will enter the amount spent, and maintain a current audit of the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau budget.	
2.10	When petty cash on hand reaches \$100.00 or less, the senior accounting assistant shall complete the petty cash reconciliation log and submit it to the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau Commander for signature.	
2.11	The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau Commander shall send the completed reconciliation through the chain of command to the chief deputy of the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau for final approval.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Disaster Plan	NUMBER: Policy # 700.07
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner Mass Fatalities and Disaster Response Plan can be implemented at any time. Requests shall be made via chain of command to the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau Commander.

REFERENCE: Sheriff-Coroner Mass Fatalities & Disaster Response Plan

Refer to the Sheriff-Coroner Mass Fatalities and Disaster Response Plan.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Volunteers	NUMBER: Policy# 700.08
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau may utilize citizen volunteers to augment the staff in the performance of generalized duties. Volunteers with specialized skills or expertise may also be employed to assist the Department in its mission.

REFERENCE: Riverside County Sheriff General Orders section 1300.00

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Applicants:

- 1.1 All volunteer applicants shall complete a Departmental application packet.
- 1.2 A complete and thorough background investigation shall be completed by the designee of the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau Commander.
- 1.3 Upon completion of the background investigation, the investigator shall make a recommendation as to whether or not the volunteer is employed. The final decision rests with the bureau commander.

2.0 Duty time:

- 2.1 Volunteers shall wear a Riverside County Sheriff photo I.D. at all times, unless in an approved uniform.
- 2.2 Volunteers may wear a uniform as long as the purchase has been approved by the facility commander.
- 2.3 Uniforms are the same as a Deputy Coroner, with the exception of a "volunteer" rocker below the shoulder patch on each arm. Generally, the purchase of a uniform is authorized after it is shown that the volunteer will take the position seriously, and remain in the program long enough to be beneficial to the Department. Volunteers working within the Forensic Center morgues will be provided scrubs.
- 2.4 Volunteers shall schedule their duty time with the volunteer coordinator.
- 2.5 Volunteers shall keep track of their hours, and report those hours at the end of each month to the volunteer coordinator.
- 2.6 With the approval of the volunteer coordinator, volunteers may perform office duties, work along side Deputy Coroners in the field, and assist within the forensic center.

Note: Volunteers go through an abbreviated background investigation. Volunteers who have full unrestricted access shall have a complete and thorough background completed at a level equal to a full time sheriff's employee.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Volunteers	NUMBER: Policy# 700.08
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3.0 Problems with volunteers:

- 3.1 Employees shall immediately report any problems with a volunteer to their supervisor, who in turn will notify the volunteer coordinator.
- 3.2 Volunteers are “at will employees”, and shall be released from their duties with the Sheriff-Coroner’s Bureau if necessary.
- 3.3 All uniforms, I.D. cards, and anything else issued to the volunteer remains the property of the Sheriff-Coroner, and shall be returned upon dismissal of the volunteer.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Board of Medical Quality Assurance	NUMBER: Policy # 700.09
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POLICY: When the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau receives information that is based on findings that were reached by, or documented and approved by a board-certified, or board-eligible pathologist indicating that a death may be the result of a physician's or podiatrist's gross negligence or incompetence, a report shall be filed with the Medical Board of California.

REFERENCE: 802.5 Business & Professions Code

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Potential medical malpractice by physician:

- 1.1 If a Deputy Coroner receives information that a death may be a result of negligence or incompetence on the part of a physician, he / she shall immediately report the circumstances to his / her immediate supervisor.
- 1.2 The supervisor will evaluate the incident, and notify the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau Commander via chain of command.

2.0 Documentation:

- 2.1 As in any Coroner's Case, proper documentation is necessary. Medical records, history etc. shall be obtained as soon as possible.
- 2.2 The deceased shall be transported to the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center for review by a pathologist.

3.0 Reporting:

- 3.1 Once a pathologist has confirmed that gross negligence or incompetence on the part of a physician may have contributed to the death, the report shall be made to the Medical Board of California.
- 3.2 Reports are made on the approved form, provided by the State of California.
- 3.3 Sheriff-Coroner clerical shall type the form. Once the information has been provided all reports, and the reporting form shall be reviewed by the Commander prior to being sent to the medical board. The Commander or the Chief Deputy shall sign the complaint letter to the medical board.
- 3.4 Sheriff-Coroner clerical will then send the form and relevant reports to the Medical Board of California.

- 3.5 All reports made to the California State Medical Board, shall be tracked by Sheriff-Coroner clerical staff.
- 3.6 A copy of the reporting form shall be placed in the decedent's file.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Court orders for documents	NUMBER: Policy # 700.10
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau shall control the release of reports, photographs, and records.

**REFERENCE: Riverside County Sheriff General Orders sections 900.00, 901.00
Code of Civil Procedure Section 1985.3, 1985.6 and 129**

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Subpoena of records:

- 1.1 Subpoenas must be filed with a California court with a valid court case number.
- 1.2 Upon receiving a subpoena, it shall be date stamped and then given to the designated OAI in clerical at the Perris Forensic Center. Clerical will be responsible for gathering the records, (anything outside of the "Coroner's Packet") and sending them out. If the requested reports have not been completed, clerical shall coordinate the completion with the appropriate supervisor.
- 1.3 Medical records shall not be released. They must be obtained directly from the medical institution.

2.0 Photographs:

- 2.1 If photographs are requested, copies shall be made. Negatives shall not be released.
 - 2.1.1 The cost of the photographs should be the burden of the requester.
 - 2.1.2 Photographs require a court order, (signed by a judge), if requested by other than law enforcement.

3.0 Pathology Material:

- 3.1 No pathology material should be released without a subpoena or prior approval by the Bureau Commander.

2.0 Release of records:

- 2.1 No reports / records shall be released without the approval of a supervisor.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Training	NUMBER: Policy # 700.11
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau shall ensure that employees receive the training necessary to perform their duties.

REFERENCE: Riverside County Sheriff's General Orders section 212.00, Sheriff-Coroner training manual.

PROCEDURE:

1.0 New hire coroner technicians:

- 1.1 Coroner Technicians go through an extensive eight-week training program within the forensic center.
- 1.2 Trainees are assigned to work alongside a tenured employee.
- 1.3 Coroner Technicians shall demonstrate competency in the following areas prior to being released from trainee status; X-rays, accepting & releasing bodies, opening & closing bodies, preparing specimens, routine operations of the forensic center.
- 1.4 Each day, trainees will need to demonstrate competency in the areas in which they were trained. Once competent, they and the supervisor will sign the Daily Training Record.
 - 1.4.1 Daily Training Reports shall be completed by the supervisor/FTO, documenting the day of training.
 - 1.4.2 Trainees shall initial and date each page of their Daily Training Reports.
- 1.5 All Daily Training Records and associated training documentation shall be stored at Ben Clark Training Center upon completion of training.

2.0 New hire deputy coroners:

- 2.1 Deputy Coroners go through a ten to twelve week training program, including 2-4 weeks of shadowing with an FTO. In addition there should be a one week familiarization within the forensic center.
- 2.2 Deputy Coroners are assigned to a training supervisor and/or an FTO.
- 2.3 Trainees work alongside a tenured deputy coroner.

2.4 Each day, trainees will need to demonstrate competency in the areas in which they were trained. Once competent, they and the supervisor will sign the daily training record.

2.4.1 Daily training reports shall be completed by the supervisor/FTO, documenting the day of training.

2.4.2 Trainees shall initial and date each page of their Daily Training Reports.

2.5 A training record will not be signed by the supervisor until the trainee has shown competency.

2.6 All Daily Training Records and associated training documentation shall be stored at Ben Clark Training Center upon completion of training.

3.0 **In-service training:**

3.1 Prior to signing up for on-duty training, the employee shall get approval from his / her immediate supervisor.

3.2 All personnel shall participate in weekly, monthly, & video training as directed. Sign in logs shall be completed to document all training sessions.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Purchase of reports	NUMBER: Policy # 700.12
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner's bureau shall control the release of reports on all cases which fall into their jurisdiction.

REFERENCE: Riverside County Sheriff's General Orders section 901.00

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Reports available for release:

- 1.1 A "Coroner's Packet" generally consists of three documents; Deputy Coroner's report, autopsy protocol, & toxicology report. A Coroner's Packet may be without an autopsy protocol and/or toxicology report depending on the level of forensic involvement.
- 1.2 No other items within the file shall be released without a subpoena, or supervisor's approval, i.e.; photos, medical records, law enforcement reports.
- 1.3 Reports shall not be released prior to the entire "packet" being complete unless specifically approved by the Bureau Commander, Chief Deputy, or their designee.
- 1.4 In the case of a homicide, the law enforcement agency may request that Sheriff-Coroner reports are not released based on the possibility of jeopardizing the investigation.
 - 1.4.1 In this case, law enforcement shall provide a written request based upon Ca. Govt. Code 6254(f).
 - 1.4.2 Upon receipt of the request, no information contained within Sheriff-Coroner reports shall be released without the consent of that law enforcement agency.
 - 1.4.3 This includes cause of death. If a cause has been determined, the death certificate shall go out as "pending".
 - 1.4.4 Prior to the release of any homicide reports, the Sheriff-Coroner's record staff shall check with the respective law enforcement agency.
 - 1.4.4.1 At the time of autopsy, a representative from the investigating law enforcement agency will be presented with the "Confidentiality of Information Form." The original form will be placed in the case file. Clerical staff will ensure a copy of the form is placed in the "Info Hold Request" binder, which is stored at the front desk.
 - 1.4.4.2 There will be an index page in the front of the binder that shall serve as a quick reference to show which cases have been held, declined

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Purchase of reports	NUMBER: Policy # 700.12
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or released. It will be the responsibility of the clerical staff to maintain the index page. The index page will include the following sections:

Coroner Case Number
Date hold initiated
Initiating party with phone number and email address
Date hold released
Releasing party (name) and Coroner employee confirming release

- 1.4.4.3 The "Info Hold Request" binder will have three sections: Requests to withhold information, forms where the agency declined to withhold information, and forms where holds have been lifted by the requesting agency.
- 1.4.4.4 Upon completion of the Deputy Coroner's investigation, prior to turning in the case file for final approval, it shall be the responsibility of the Deputy Coroner in Indio to contact the investigating agency and inquire as to the status of the information hold. In Perris, the O.A. assigned to handle subpoenas will contact the investigating agency and inquire as to the status of the information hold. If the agency requests to maintain the hold, the Deputy Coroner/O.A. shall make a note of their contact in the case notes section of the Coroner database. If the hold is lifted, the Deputy Coroner/O.A. shall note it in the Coroner database and the "Info Hold Request" binder.
- 1.4.4.5 If a release on the hold is authorized, it shall be noted in the Coroner database and on the index page of the "info Hold Request" binder. The notation should include the date of release, who authorized the release, and the Deputy Coroner's initials and ID number.

1.5 *No reports / records shall be released to the public without the approval of a supervisor.*

2.0 Procedure for purchase:

- 2.1 The Sheriff-Coroner reports are public record, and are available for release upon written request and payment of \$23.00 in the form of cash or US Postal Money Orders. Any other forms of payment, such as a personal check, require approval from supervision.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Purchase of reports	NUMBER: Policy # 700.12
2.2	A County of Riverside official receipt shall be completed when an employee accepts payment.	
2.3	The request, along with the payment shall be submitted to clerical, who will then process the reports.	
2.4	If one or more of the requested reports have not been completed, a letter shall be sent to the requesting party by clerical. This letter will explain the delay in processing the reports.	
3.0	<u>Exceptions to payment:</u>	
3.1	Reports may be released to law enforcement, or other governmental agencies free of charge, providing that agency has a vested interest in the death investigation.	
3.2	Agencies shall still provide written request for the reports, i.e.; e-mail, or request on agency letterhead.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Access of files	NUMBER: Policy # 700.13
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau commander shall safeguard all information which comes into the bureau's possession.

REFERENCE: Riverside County Sheriff's General Orders section 901.00

PROCEDURE:

1.0 **Removal of files:**

1.1 Sheriff-Coroner case files shall not leave the facilities without the consent of the bureau commander.

1.1.1 This includes the original contents of a case file. Copies may be made and released in accordance with P&P 700.12, or utilized in the process of a death investigation.

1.2 Active files shall be kept in the front file room (#119), unless being worked on by a deputy coroner, clerical staff, or supervision. Any other location requires supervisor approval.

2.0 **Filed cases:**

2.1 Stored case files that have been approved by supervision shall not leave the file room/cabinet, without being signed out by the employee.

2.1.1 This shall include the reason for removing the file, date & time.

2.2 Items shall not be removed from the file, in lieu of signing the file out.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Firearms / weapons	NUMBER: Policy # 700.14
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POLICY: All firearms / weapons shall be retained / transported in a safe manner, in accordance with Departmental procedures. The destruction of guns and any other weapon shall be accomplished through total destruction, such as melting. The Penal Code directs persons on the process of how firearms in possession of law enforcement personnel shall determine eligibility for release of requested firearm(s). Guns cannot be put into Department service without approval from the Sheriff.

REFERENCE: Department Directive #98-013, #95-032, Penal Code 12021.3, P&P 702.33

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Transportation / retention:

- 1.1 Firearms shall be unloaded prior to transportation from the scene, (noting the firing order of the weapon, and the position of the rounds, photographs should be taken).
- 1.2 Once the firearm has been unloaded, personnel shall disable the weapon by securing a plastic tie through the firing mechanism in the following manner;
 - 1.2.1 Hold open the cylinder on a revolver with a swing open cylinder, and hold the hammer back on a fixed cylinder revolver.
 - 1.2.2 Hold the slide back and prevent insertion of a magazine on a semi-automatic pistol.
 - 1.2.3 Hold the slide back on semi-automatic / pump shotguns.
 - 1.2.4 Keep the barrel from being locked into place on break open weapons.
 - 1.2.5 Hold the bolt open on bolt action weapons.
 - 1.2.6 Hold the slide back and prevent insertion of a magazine on magazine feed, and tube feed rifles.
- 1.3 Weapons are not to be stored, or accepted for storage at the forensic centers unless they are unloaded, and secured with plastic ties.
- 1.4 All firearms shall be transported, stored, and released in approved firearm boxes.
 - 1.4.1 The firearms shall be secured to the box with plastic ties, so as to not bounce loose.
 - 1.4.2 Pertinent case information shall be written on the box by the employee, including chain of custody.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Firearms / weapons

NUMBER: Policy # 700.14

1.4.3 *The only exception to this procedure is if the weapon is not able to be unloaded due to a malfunction. In this case, the Deputy Coroner should attempt to have the Sheriff's Forensics place the weapon in a "hot box". In this case forensics would take possession of the weapon and make it safe. The weapon would then be released back to the Sheriff-Coroner for disposition. If the Deputy Coroner is unable to make the weapon safe, or obtain a "hot box" he/she should contact supervision.*

2.0 Authority for destruction:

2.1 The authority to dispose of a firearm / weapon shall be given to the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau in writing from the next of kin of the deceased.

2.1.1 In cases of suicide, the Deputy Coroner should inquire as to whether the family desires the weapon.

2.1.2 The Deputy Coroner should explain that the weapon will be destroyed per Departmental procedures, that they are not sold.

2.1.3 The next of kin shall sign a bureau "firearms disposition" letter. The letter shall describe the firearm / weapon in detail; make, model, serial #, & caliber.

2.2 If the firearm has gone unclaimed, and the Deputy Coroner has not had contact with family, a letter shall be sent, return receipt requested, stating the weapon will be destroyed if not claimed within thirty days.

2.2.1 If no response, the weapon shall be destroyed after the thirty-day period.

3.0 Gun releases:

3.1 Firearms that may be legally possessed can be released to next of kin after a thirty-day period from the event, providing the next of kin is an adult and legally able to possess a firearm.

3.1.1 If a firearm is retained as an implement of suicide, as outlined in P&P 702.33, the firearm shall not be released prior to 30 days and only after the following has occurred:

3.1.1.1 The morgue supervisor or his/her designee shall send a certified letter to the next of kin indicating how they can apply, through the Department of Justice (DOJ), to recover the firearm. (Copy of sample letter and DOJ Form is attached to this policy.) DOJ Forms and applications can be found at: <http://ag.ca.gov/firearms>, under

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Firearms / weapons	NUMBER: Policy # 700.14
	General Information – Forms and Publications – Law Enforcement Gun Release Application.	
	3.1.1.2	Ensure the firearm is no longer needed as part of any death case investigation.
	3.1.1.3	The next of kin shall sign for the firearm on the coroner's receipt for which it was originally accepted. If next of kin is legally incapable of possessing the firearm, the case shall be referred to supervision for disposition.
	3.1.1.4	No illegal weapon shall be released. Employees shall ensure that the weapon is not illegal as outlined in 12020 PC, 12200 PC, and 12276 PC.
	3.1.1.5	Ammunition should not be released at the same time as the firearm.
	3.1.1.6	Ensure the person requesting the item qualifies to receive the item:
	3.1.1.7	The person is over 18 years old; verified with governmental identification (i.e.: U.S. Military ID, driver's license, etc)
	3.1.1.8	The person has the applicable Department of Justice approval letter.
4.0	<u>Special Considerations:</u>	
4.1	All other release procedures and documentation for release of property shall be followed, to include, but not limited to, signature for the property by the releasing employee and the receiving individual and appropriate entry into the database for tracking.	
5.0	<u>Disposal:</u>	
5.1	A firearm may be destroyed in the following circumstances;	
5.1.1	A signed letter authorizing destruction has been received from the decedent's next of kin.	
5.1.2	180 days has passed since a letter was sent to the next of kin, stating the firearm would be destroyed if not claimed in 180 days.	
5.1.3	The firearm is illegal as stated in California Penal Code 12020.	

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TITLE:	Firearms / weapons	NUMBER: Policy # 700.14
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5.2 In all cases, the firearm must be run first to see if it is stolen.

5.3 The firearm shall be listed on the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau "firearm disposal log".

5.3.1 The firearm shall be described in detail; make, model, serial #, caliber.

5.3.2 The stock, barrel, or butt of the firearm shall be wrapped with masking tape. The Sheriff-Coroner's case number shall be written boldly in red ink on the masking tape. This will designate that the weapon is held for destruction.

5.3.3 The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau shall dispose of firearms through Sheriff's Forensics of either the Jurupa or Indio stations. Appointments must be made with the forensics supervisor, prior to the delivery of any firearms. Sheriff-Forensics shall be provided with a copy of our completed "firearm disposal log".

5.3.4 A copy of the "firearm disposal log" shall be attached to the respective letter authorizing destruction; these items shall become a permanent part of the Sheriff-Coroner case file. The original "firearm disposal log" shall be retained within the property room.

6.0 **Miscellaneous Weapons:**

6.1 Other weapons, such as knives etc. may be disposed of in similar fashion.

6.2 The Deputy Coroner or next of kin may note the disposal on the original receipt, no formal letter is necessary.

6.3 The weapons shall be wrapped in masking tape, with the case number and "destruction" in red ink.

6.4 These weapons can be transported to Sheriff's Forensics and disposed of through a contracted disposal company.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Guidelines for Referring Cases to the Public Administrator NUMBER: Policy # 701.15

POLICY: In certain situations Deputy Coroners may be required to refer cases to the Public Administrator's Bureau for the purpose of locating next-of-kin and controlling the estate of the deceased. A referral form shall be completed for all cases referred to the Public Administrator's Bureau. The form provides a standardized method for referring all case types.

REFERENCE: California Government Code 27491.3, P&P 702.03

PROCEDURE:

1.0 General Guidelines:

- 1.1 The investigating deputy shall refer cases to the Public Administrator's Bureau without delay in which legal next-of-kin cannot be located or established.
- 1.2 The case information shall be completed using the Coroner database. Handwritten forms are not acceptable.
 - 1.2.1 The form shall be typed in the event of a computer failure.
 - 1.2.2 A single staple shall be placed in the upper left-hand corner to attach the pages together.
- 1.3 Completed referral forms shall be given to the investigation supervisor for approval.
- 1.4 Approved referral forms shall be initialed by the investigation supervisor and returned to the investigating deputy who will then make a copy of the referral for the file and submit the original to the Public Administrator's clerical personnel.
 - 1.4.1 Copies of referral forms shall be stamped with a "COPY" stamp, or have the word "COPY" handwritten in the upper right hand corner of the form in RED ink only.

2.0 Notification of Referral:

- 2.1 The referring deputy shall notify the morgue supervisor and the clerical personnel responsible for coordinating the release of remains that the case was referred to the Public Administrator's Bureau. Notification shall be made by E-mail including the date and time the referral was completed.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Child death review (CDRT)	NUMBER: Policy # 700.16
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau shall refer all deaths of 17 years and younger to the Child Death Review Team (CDRT).

REFERENCE: California Penal Code section 11166.9, SB525

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Reporting:

1.1 Deputies shall complete a Sheriff-Coroner C.D.R.T. reporting form on all decedents age 17 or younger. The form should be completed as soon as possible.

1.1.1 It is important that the deputy completes all information which is requested on the form. This form becomes a part of the case file. A copy shall be provided to the supervising office assistant.

1.2 It shall be the primary responsibility of the Administrative Deputy Coroner to act as a liaison to C.D.R.T. The Administrative Deputy will attend all C.D.R.T meetings and be prepared to provide all coroner related information to the team. In the absence of the individual assigned as the Administrative Deputy Coroner, an investigations supervisor shall appoint a replacement.

2.0 Abuse & neglect:

This section was deleted.

3.0 C.D.R.T. meetings:

3.1 C.D.R.T. meetings are held monthly at the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center in Perris.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Employee evaluations	NUMBER: Policy # 700.17
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POLICY: All Department employees shall be evaluated on their job performance each year by their immediate supervisor in accordance with Departmental General Orders.

REFERENCE: Riverside County Sheriff's Department General Orders section 209.00

PROCEDURE:

1.0 **Evaluation preparation:**

- 1.1 Supervisors shall complete evaluations on Department approved forms, 216A, & 216B.
- 1.2 The criteria for proper completion of the performance evaluation is explained in Departmental Directive #92-035.
 - 1.2.1 Performance evaluations shall be in compliance with this directive.

2.0 **Attachments:**

- 2.1 A printout of the employee's current driving record shall accompany the performance evaluation.
- 2.2 The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau supplemental evaluation report shall also be attached to the completed evaluation.
 - 2.2.1 Each section within the supplemental evaluation report shall be reviewed with the employee.
 - 2.2.2 Once the supervisor has confirmed that the employee has reviewed the sections, the employee shall initial each category of each section, confirming that they possess the knowledge of that section.
 - 2.2.3 The supervisor shall then sign the report along with the employee.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Foreign nationals	NUMBER: Policy # 700.18
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau shall make all death notifications of foreign nationals to the respective consulate.

REFERENCE: The U.S. Department of State publication "Consular notification and access" January 1998

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Foreign national:

- 1.1 For the purposes of consular notification, a foreign national is any person who is not a U.S. citizen. A person who is a lawful permanent resident alien, who has a resident alien registration card, (green card), retains their foreign nationality and must be considered a foreign national for purposes of consular notification.
- 1.2 All foreign nationals are entitled to consular notification and access, regardless of their visa or immigration status in the United States.
- 1.3 Undocumented migrants have the same rights to consular assistance, as do legal foreign national residence and visitors from foreign countries.
- 1.4 There is no reason, for purposes of consular notification, to inquire into a person's legal status in the United States.

2.0 Consulate notification:

- 2.1 When a government official becomes aware of the death of a foreign national, consular officials must be notified.
 - 2.1.1 The Sheriff-Coroner will be responsible for notifications.
- 2.2 When guardianship or trusteeship is being considered with respect to a foreign national who is a minor, or incompetent, consular officials must be notified.
- 2.3 Determine the foreign national's country. Without other information, assume this is the country on whose passport, or other travel documents the foreign national travels.
- 2.4 All death notifications shall be deemed as mandatory, whether or not the country is on the mandatory list.

3.0 Documentation:

- 3.1 The investigating Deputy Coroner shall make the notification as soon as possible, once citizenship has been determined.

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TITLE:	Foreign nationals	NUMBER: Policy # 700.18
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- 3.1.1 If possible, this notification should be done by fax on the department approved form.
- 3.1.2 This fax notification becomes a part of the Sheriff-Coroner case file.
- 3.1.3 If fax notification is not possible, the notification shall be made verbally. The deputy coroner shall then complete the attachment and write, "verbally notified".
- 3.1.4 When any documents are sent to a foreign embassy, an electronically scanned copy shall be forwarded to Coroner Supervision and Administration (lieutenants and captain).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: **Death Certificates and EDRS**

NUMBER: Policy # 700.19

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau shall issue a death certificate on all cases that are classified by the Bureau as a "regular" case. Death certificates shall be certified by physicians on "medical" cases.

REFERENCE: Government Code 27491, Numerous Health and Safety Codes (refer to Death Certificate Handbook available on EDRS), EDRS Participation Agreement

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS):

- 1.1 EDRS is the State of California's system for electronic death certificate origination and registration as well as amendment origination and registration.
- 1.2 Access to EDRS is accomplished for Coroner Bureau employees by setting up a user account by completing and signing a Participation Agreement. All use of EDRS shall be in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy that is part of the Participation Agreement. The Acceptable Use Policy includes areas covering Password Protection, Computer and Data Security, Incident Reporting, Security and Confidentiality Requirements, etc.
- 1.3 California law defines individuals who can obtain authorized copies vs. informational copies of a death certificate. The use of EDRS and death certificates in the Coroner's Bureau shall be strictly for the purpose of official Coroner business only and copies of death certificates shall not released outside of the Coroner's Bureau.
- 1.4 The Coroner's Bureau has its own EDRS administrator. All new accounts, account maintenance, password changes and other issues with the system should be addressed through the bureau's administrator first and if he or she is not available, through the EDRS help desk in Sacramento, telephone [REDACTED]
- 1.5 Further information including simplified user guides can be found on the EDRS general website - **www.edrs.us**
- 1.6 The EDRS production website address is – **<https://ca.edrs.us>**
- 1.7 The EDRS training website address is – **<https://ca-train.edrs.us>**

2.0 Death certificates:

- 2.1 Death certificates are attested electronically when done in the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS).
 - 2.1.1 The Coroner's Bureau will utilize the EDRS as much as possible. The EDRS may never be utilized by all mortuaries. Old style typed death certificates may

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occasionally be seen and can be signed manually, especially in the case of a family member handling arrangements themselves.

2.1.2 EDRS does not support fetal death certificates. They must be typed manually.

2.2 Causes of death will be determined by the deputy coroner via an attending physician telephone consultation or by the forensic pathologist by use of an autopsy or consultation. Upon determination of the cause, the deputy coroner or forensic center staff will update the Coroner case management database with the cause of death, and all other pertinent information, including information on which doctor determined the cause, how determined (autopsy (A), consult (C) or attending physician (P)., when the autopsy or consultation was performed, and where it was performed. A supervisor will review all death certificate worksheets for accuracy. The supervisor shall ensure that all statistical coding in the database is accurate and appropriate. If manner of death is in question, the supervisor will consult with the deputy coroner.

2.2.1 Once the investigation has been completed, it will be the responsibility of the deputy coroner to determine the manner of death. The manner of death will be determined based on the findings of the scene investigation, pathological/medical findings (through autopsy or consultation), toxicological findings, and any other information available. The manner of death is not a "ruling," but merely an opinion. The determination of the manner of death by the deputy coroner is an administrative function. The determination of the manner of death is a process that involves a high degree of analytical skill. While there are industry-accepted norms and standards for the certification of death, the Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner staff will evaluate each case on its own merit and determine the manner of death based on the individual facts.

The manner of death shall be determined by the totality of information, to include medical history, law enforcement information, scene investigation and pertinent history from family or friends. A deputy coroner may seek guidance in the mannering of a death from Sheriff-Coroner forensic pathologists and bureau supervision.

2.2.2 In the case of a Coroner Review death (see Policy number 702.23), all of the facts of the case will be presented to the Sheriff-Coroner by a panel of experts, which will include a forensic pathologist, a forensic toxicologist, a deputy coroner, and the coroner's lieutenant. After the presentation of the facts by a panel of experts, the Sheriff-Coroner will then determine the manner of death.

2.2.3 As a general rule, deaths will be classified as one of the following manners:

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- 2.2.3.1 Natural – When the death is caused exclusively by disease or illness. If any type of injury hastens the death, the manner of death is not natural.
 - 2.2.3.2 Accident – Unintentional instances when the death is caused by trauma, however remote.
 - 2.2.3.3 Suicide – When the death is caused by an act of the decedent with the intent to kill himself/herself.
 - 2.2.3.4 Homicide – When the death is at the hands of another, other than by accident. Intent is not an issue when classifying a death as a Homicide.
 - 2.2.3.5 Undetermined – When a reasonable classification cannot be determined.
 - 2.2.3.6 Pending Investigation - In most instances, a Pending manner of death is the result of a cause of death that has yet to be determined. Other times, the cause of death may be known, but further investigation is needed by either the deputy coroner or law enforcement to determine the manner of death. If the cause of death has been determined and the manner of death is Pending, the death certificate should be issued with the cause and manner of death both listed as Pending.
- 2.3 The clerical staff will fax completed DC worksheets to the respective mortuary.
- 2.4 The mortuary will complete a death certificate, either manually or on EDRS. They will bring a manually prepared certificate to one of the Coroner forensic centers for a deputy's signature or the electronically prepared certificate will appear on EDRS once it is ready for attestation (electronic signature) by a deputy coroner.
- 2.4.1 A copy of the completed death certificate will be made and placed in the Sheriff-Coroner case file.

3.0 Eight Day Filing of Death Certificates:

- 3.1 California Health and Safety Code section 102775 requires that death certificates be filed with Vital Statistics on all cases within eight calendar days of being pronounced dead or found dead.
 - 3.1.1 Deputy coroners shall monitor their cases on the "out boards" and do necessary follow up including filing of the death certificate.

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NUMBER: Policy # 700.19

- 3.1.2 All death certificates, except fetal death certificates, filed by the Coroner's Bureau will be done on the EDRS. Always refer to current EDRS "simplified guidelines" on the general EDRS website for instructions, if necessary.
- 3.1.3 Fetal death certificates shall be typed and the guidelines in the Vital Statistics handbook need to be followed carefully. A Permit for Disposition **(PDF format)** also needs to be completed and both documents are faxed to the local vital statistics office for FAX filing.

4.0 Amendments:

- 4.1 On cases where the cause and/or manner of death are initially "Pending" and the cause and/or manner of death have now been determined, an amendment must be issued to the death certificate.
 - 4.1.1 With the exception of fetal death certificates, all amendments will be done on the EDRS. Always refer to current EDRS "simplified guidelines" on the EDRS general website for needed guidance.
 - 4.1.2 All amendments are to be completed in a timely manner. If the deputy coroner assigned to the case is off on vacation or extended leave, a supervisor shall ensure that the amendment process is completed.
 - 4.1.3 In an effort to better track causes of death and amendments, causes of death will first be provided to a Coroner Sergeant who will track receipt of the cause of death and provide it to the deputy coroner assigned to the case. Coroner Sergeants are also responsible to follow up in EDRS to ensure the amendment has been completed, submitted and registered.

5.0 Jurisdiction Relinquished Cases:

- 5.1 On deaths that occur outside of Riverside County in which this bureau assumes jurisdiction for the investigation and/or autopsy, and this bureau issues the death certificate, the death certificate shall reflect the Coroner File Number from the Coroner's Office that relinquished jurisdiction.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Organ and Tissue Procurement

NUMBER: Policy # 700.20

POLICY: It is the policy of the Riverside Sheriff-Coroner to make every effort possible to facilitate the procurement of eyes, tissues, bones and organs from cases that fall under the jurisdiction of the Coroner. Coroner personnel shall work to accommodate the recovery per the family's wishes while not jeopardizing the medicolegal death investigation.

REFERENCE: 7155.7 Health and Safety Code

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Initial Death Report:

- 1.1 Upon completing the initial death report, deputies shall indicate known requests or restrictions dealing with the procurement of eyes, tissues, bones or organs.
 - 1.1.1 This initial status may be based upon the family's wishes or the type of case involved.
 - 1.1.2 Depending upon the type of case or requests, restrictions may include full or partial body, head, or torso.
 - 1.1.3 Once the procurement organization reviews the case, they will make contact with the deputy coroner. **In all cases,** the deputy coroner shall obtain authorization from a Sheriff-Coroner supervisor, as well as a forensic pathologist prior to giving permission to recover organs and/or tissue. This applies to Coroner cases, as well as potential Coroner cases.

2.0 Case History:

- 2.1 In order for the pathologist to make a competent decision with respect to organ or tissue recovery, they must be provided with sufficient case history. Therefore, prior to contacting a pathologist for authorization, the deputy coroner shall obtain a complete medical history for the decedent including any recent medical procedures that may have been performed. This may require consultation with the personal physician to obtain an accurate history.
 - 2.1.1 One Legacy shall complete a "Coroner's Release Form" for possible organ/tissue donors. This form will indicate what organs/tissues are being requested. The supervisor shall complete the bottom portion of the form indicating all who (pathologist, supervisor and/or administrator) were consulted, whether or not the release was approved and any special restrictions/requests that were made. The supervisor will then fax a copy back to One Legacy, maintaining a copy for the case file.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Organ and Tissue Procurement

NUMBER: Policy # 700.20

- 2.2 The deputy coroner shall be able to provide a detailed account of any law enforcement involvement in the case.
- 2.2.1 If law enforcement is conducting a criminal investigation into the death, the deputy coroner shall contact the case agent to see if the agency has any concerns over the procurement, making sure that it will not jeopardize their investigation.
- 2.2.1.1 In cases where evidence may need to be collected prior to or during organ procurement, Sheriff-Coroner Administration shall predetermine the best method for that collection. This collection may be made by a deputy coroner or referred to the law enforcement agency.
- 2.2.2 This information must be timely and may require physicians and/or law enforcement personnel to be called after hours.
- 2.2.3 In most cases, the procurement organization will have medical history and law enforcement information prior to making initial contact with the deputy coroner. However, this information is often second and third hand. The responsibility lies with the deputy coroner to verify the validity of this information prior to contacting the supervisor and pathologist.

3.0 Authorization:

- 3.1 Once the deputy coroner has obtained and verified the information, he/she shall contact a Sheriff-Coroner supervisor, who will review the administrative aspects of the request. If the supervisor approves the request, he/she will then contact a forensic pathologist (the chief forensic pathologist shall be called between the hours of 2300-0700).
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of the pathologist to address the specific medical issues with the deputy coroner for the purpose of obtaining the necessary information to render an informed decision on eye, tissue, bone and organ procurement.
- 3.2.1 The pathologist has the option of requesting direct contact with the procurement agency and/or the law enforcement agency for clarification.
- 3.2.2 In the event, the pathologist has administrative or investigative concerns in authorizing the procurement, he may consult with the chief forensic pathologist, who may then consult with coroner administration.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Organ and Tissue Procurement

NUMBER: Policy # 700.20

3.2.3 The pathologist shall defer organ procurement in cases where it may obstruct the ability to determine the cause, manner, mechanism or mode of death.

3.3 The unidentified shall not be considered for organ and/or tissue procurement.

3.4 A consent form from an authorizing party, in accordance with California Health and Safety Code Sections 7150.15 & 7150.40, shall be provided to the Coroner's Bureau for review. Authorizing party may be legal next of kin or self-authorization prior to death from the decedent. Although a self-authorization may be available, a diligent search for legal next of kin shall be conducted. In lieu of legal next of kin, authorization may be granted in the case of a Registered Donor.

4.0 Special Considerations:

4.1 Procurement in the following situations is not automatically deferred. Although, these cases warrant special attention as they involve several different aspects of the medicolegal death investigation.

4.1.1 Known or suspected homicides. Delayed deaths, or those occurring within the hospital, e.g., brain death, will receive greater consideration for procurement over those deaths occurring at the scene of the incident. The decision will be based partially on length of time within the hospital, the documentation of injuries, and other factors. In these types of cases, authority for organ procurement shall only be given with agreement by the pathologist and approval by Coroner's Administration (e.g. Lieutenant or Captain).

4.1.1.1 If organ procurement in these types of cases is approved, the pathologist or Coroner's Admin may direct a pathologist (or his designee) to attend with a Deputy Coroner and/or supervisor for direct oversight of the organ procurement process and with the specific purpose to stop such procurement, while in process, if information dictates the need for further review by coroner staff.

4.1.2 Known or suspected child abuse and neglect, such as when the injuries are consistent with Shaken Baby Syndrome, depending on the interval between injury and death and medical documentation of injuries.

4.1.3 Infants and children, such as injuries due to known accidental mechanisms.

4.1.4 Known or suspected therapeutic complications.

4.1.5 Cases having known or suspected medicolegal implications, e.g., pedestrian struck by motor vehicle.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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- 4.1.6 Suspected undetermined causes of death.
- 4.1.7 Brain death following collapse for reasons not apparent.
- 4.1.8 Public Administrator cases.
- 4.1.9 Coroner Review cases, depending on the interval between injury and death, medical documentation of injuries, and circumstances surrounding the death. The Coroner commander and chief pathologist's approval is required in these cases.

5.0 Use of Alternative Facility for Organ and/or Tissue Procurement

- 5.1 It may be necessary for a donor to be moved from a medical facility or the Coroner's Bureau to an authorized surgical facility site for recovery of organs and/or tissues. Transportation to an alternative surgical site shall only be allowed for recovery from deceased persons or donors declared legally dead via two brain death pronouncements. No other donors will be authorized for transportation to an alternative site.
- 5.2 In the event a request is made to transport a donor to an alternative surgical site, Coroner supervision will ensure the following:
 - 5.2.1 Organ/Tissue Donor Authorization Form is completed and signed by family authorizing the transportation of the donor to an alternative surgical recovery site.
 - 5.2.2 The transportation of a donor to an alternative surgical site will not impact the medicolegal and/or criminal investigation. If there is an open criminal investigation, law enforcement shall be notified of the request to move a donor to an alternative site.
 - 5.2.3 Photographs and/or video recording shall be obtained of all recoveries performed at an alternative surgical site.
- 5.3 Upon completion of organ and/or tissue recovery, the donor remains, if necessary, shall be transported back to the Coroner facility. Remains shall be sealed in a body bag prior to transportation from the alternative surgical site. Transportation of a donor to and from the Coroner's Bureau shall be coordinated with Coroner supervision prior to transportation.
- 5.4 Decedent's personal property shall be collected by the deputy coroner or released to the next of kin prior to being transported to the alternative recovery site. No personal property shall be transported and/or handled by procurement staff on cases that fall

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: Organ and Tissue Procurement

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under the jurisdiction of the Coroner.

6.0 Procurement:

- 6.1 Once commenced, the procurement procedure shall not proceed to completion, (cease all actions) and the Sheriff-Coroner shall be immediately notified if any injury, disease or finding is discovered during the procedure that is not reasonably explained by the preliminary investigation and discussion between the procurement agency and the Sheriff-Coroner.
- 6.2 The following information shall be documented in writing and photographed, and procedures performed, where appropriate, by the procurement organization and provided to the Sheriff-Coroner.
 - 6.2.1 The presence of any significant, abnormal or unexpected findings, especially those findings that may be altered as a result of the procurement (including organ, tissue, skin, body cavity and soft tissue findings).
 - 6.2.2 The volume in cubic centimeters (cc) and description (serous, thick, clear, purulent, serosanguinous, clotted, etc.), of any body cavity blood or liquid accumulation (i.e., pleural, pericardial, peritoneal), found at time of the procurement.
 - 6.2.3 The presence of palpebral or bulbar conjunctival petechiae, hemorrhage or other significant findings in the eyes, if the eyes or corneas are considered for removal.
 - 6.2.4 The presence of antemortem injury to organs, vessels, or tissues in close proximity to the areas of procurement.
 - 6.2.5 If the heart is procured as a tissue specimen (i.e., not for whole organ, homologous transplant) following authorization for release by the Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner, then the procurement agency shall provide the Sheriff-Coroner with a detailed cardiac pathology report, microscopic glass slides and residual heart tissue. These items shall be obtained by the procurement agency from an appropriate laboratory (e.g., Cryolife, Inc.), one approved by the Sheriff-Coroner.
- 5.3 At the request of the organ procurement organization, except in those cases described in section 3.3 above and tissue procurement cases, when the pathologist has deferred the procurement of one or more organs, the pathologist shall be present during the procedure to recover the organ(s) (per Health & Safety Code 7155.7).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: Organ and Tissue Procurement

NUMBER: Policy # 700.20

- 5.3.1 In cases where the pathologist must be present during the procedure, the on-call pathologist shall attend, unless directed otherwise by the chief forensic pathologist.
- 5.3.2 The pathologist shall be given a minimum of two hours notice prior to the procedure taking place.
- 5.3.3 In the event that the pathologist attends the procurement, the pathologist shall document in writing, the nature of the agency's requests, the disposition of those requests, and any additional information pertinent to the Sheriff-Coroner investigation. The supplement shall be submitted to Sheriff-Coroner administration for filing.

6.0 Expenses:

- 6.1 In the event a pathologist and/or deputy coroner must be present during an organ procurement procedure, the procurement organization shall be required to reimburse the Sheriff-Coroner for associated expenses. The minimum billable hours shall be two hours.
 - 6.1.1 Deputy coroner's time shall be billed at top step pay scale plus benefits, as determined by Riverside County.
 - 6.1.2 Forensic pathologist's time shall be billed at top step pay scale plus benefits, as determined by Riverside County.
 - 6.1.3 Vehicle mileage shall be reimbursed at the normal contract mileage rate for unmarked vehicles, as determined by Riverside Sheriff's Department.
- 6.2 Personnel responding to a facility in reference to an organ or tissue procurement shall complete an expense form submitting it to accounting through chain of command. This form shall be completed at the end of the employee's shift.
 - 6.2.1 The employee completing the expense form shall indicate on the form whether or not the time spent on the case was normal duty hours or overtime.
- 6.3 In the event the Organ Procurement Organization requests the remains be transported between Coroner Facilities (Indio to Perris, for example) the supervisor shall complete the transfer expense form and turn in to accounting within the same shift.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Mail handling	NUMBER: 700.21
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POLICY: There is the potential for the introduction of biological agents into the workplace via the U.S. mail. Employees shall be aware of these hazards when opening and processing mail. Mail delivered by the internal county system does not necessarily apply to this procedure.

REFERENCE: Departmental Directive #01-039 "How to handle Anthrax and other Biological Agent Threats", by, Dr. Gary M. Feldman, dated October 16, 2001

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Designated employees:

- 1.1 The number of personnel assigned to open incoming mail should be kept to a minimum.
- 1.2 The clerical section shall be responsible for obtaining the mail, opening, and dispersing to other employees.

2.0 Designated area:

- 2.1 A room isolated from the normal workplace traffic should be used for the opening of mail.
 - 2.1.1 The work supply/mail room has been designated for the opening/sorting of mail within both the Perris & Indio Forensic Centers. No other area is authorized for use.

3.0 Employee guidelines:

- 3.1 Employees should wash their hands prior to, and after handling the mail.
- 3.2 Personnel opening mail should not eat or drink while performing that task.
- 3.3 If an employee, who is assigned to open mail, has an open cut on his/her hand, the use of latex gloves is recommended.
- 3.4 The Governor's Office of Emergency Services has not recommended the use of surgical masks or goggles for mail opening. However, should an employee desire to use them, they will be provided.
- 3.5 When the U.S. mail arrives at the facility, the clerical staff shall take the mail directly to the work/supply mail room and begin processing it.

3.5.1 At the Indio Forensic Center, the mail is delivered to a secure mailbox within the parking lot. Clerical staff will remove it from the mailbox and take it directly to the work/supply mail room.

3.6 Should a suspicious object or substance be detected that cannot be identified, the following steps should be taken;

3.6.1 A Supervisor shall immediately be notified, respond and assess the situation.

4.0 **Identifying suspicious mail:**

4.1 The following are some characteristics to look for when sorting mail. The presence of one or more of these items may not necessarily deem the mail to be contaminated. However, awareness should be raised and may then warrant further investigation.

4.1.1 Excessive postage.

4.1.2 Handwritten or poorly typed addresses.

4.1.3 Incorrect titles.

4.1.4 Title, but no name.

4.1.5 Misspellings of common words.

4.1.6 Oily stains, discolorations or odors.

4.1.7 No return address.

4.1.8 Excessive weight.

4.1.9 Lopsided or uneven envelope.

4.1.10 Excessive security material such as masking tape, string, etc...

4.1.11 Visual distractions.

4.1.12 Marked with restrictive endorsements, such as "Personal" or "Confidential."

4.1.13 Shows a city or state in the postmark that does not match the return address.

5.0 **Dealing with contaminated mail:**

5.1 Do not shake or empty the contents of any suspicious envelope or package.

5.2 Place the envelope or package in a plastic bag or some other type of container to prevent leakage of contents.

5.2.1 If a container/bag is not readily available, then cover the item with anything (paper, clothing, trash can, etc...), and do not remove the cover.

5.3 Evacuate the room, close the door, and keep others from entering. The building may need to be evacuated, as the contaminate could circulate through the ventilation system.

5.4 Wash your hands with soap and water to prevent spreading any powder/contaminates to your face.

5.5 Notify law enforcement.

5.6 Make a list of all people who were in the area when this suspicious letter or package was recognized. Provide this list to public health officials and law enforcement officials.

5.7 Never try to clean up any powders/liquids that may spill out of any suspicious letter/package.

6.0 Administrative Mail:

6.1 All mail addressed personally to a supervisor or above shall be delivered to that person unopened.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Case Files

NUMBER: Policy # 700.22

POLICY: The intent of this policy is for the Sheriff-Coroner to safeguard confidential information of the deceased. However, still maintaining relevant medicolegal public information within the case files, that may be released pursuant to the California Public Records Act.

REFERENCE: California Government Code; 6253(a), 6254(a)

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Approval of reports:

- 1.1 Supervisors shall approve all "regular" Coroner reports upon completion by the Deputy Coroner.
 - 1.1.1 Coroner Corporals may approve medical, A.O.D., or other reports.
- 1.2 All requested reports shall be approved by a supervisor prior to being released.

2.0 Content of case files:

- 2.1 The following items shall remain part of the permanent case file;
 - 2.1.1 Deputy Coroner's Report
 - 2.1.2 Autopsy Protocol
 - 2.1.3 Toxicology Report
 - 2.1.4 Pathologists sketch & notes
 - 2.1.5 Related reports; Odontology, Anthropology, Neuropathology
 - 2.1.6 Request for Release of Remains
 - 2.1.7 Decedent identification; CR1001
 - 2.1.8 Coroner property receipt; 292-23
 - 2.1.9 Death Certificate
 - 2.1.10 Morgue receiving sheet; CR1006 & transportation paperwork
 - 2.1.11 All photos

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Case Files

NUMBER: Policy # 700.22

2.1.12 Fingerprints

2.1.13 CAL ID submission form; AFIS-001

2.1.14 CDRT case information; CR1003

2.1.15 Child Death Scene Protocol; CHS 4439

2.1.16 Case time & expense record

2.1.17 Public Administrator Preliminary Report; 292 PA #80

2.1.18 Press Release; CR1002

2.1.19 Suicide notes

2.1.20 All external and internal correspondence

2.1.21 Sheriff-Coroner; Request for Documents form

2.1.22 Original deputy coroner report used for triage briefing

2.2 Clerical should purge files of all other documents upon final approval of the deputy's report.

2.2 All Coroner Review files shall be purged by the Coroner Review Deputy. These files shall include all items mentioned in 2.1, in addition to the following;

2.2.1 Chief's Text, law enforcement timeline, Deputy Coroner's timeline

2.2.2 Press clippings related to case

3.0 Pre-2002 cases:

3.1 All Coroner case files from years prior to 2002, shall be purged in the same manner as mentioned above when reviewed, re-opened, or released to the public, or outside agencies.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Processing of Autopsy Protocols/Toxicological Reports, and other Forensic Pathology Reports.	NUMBER: Policy # 700.23
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POLICY: In order to maintain integrity and control over autopsy protocols, toxicological reports, and other forensic pathology reports, the Sheriff-Coroner has established processing procedures wherein the original copies of the pathology and toxicological reports will be kept separate from the case file until the case is completed.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Autopsy Protocol:

- 1.1 The pathologist shall digitally record each Autopsy Protocol report on the day of the autopsy, or within 24 hours in exceptional circumstances.
 - 1.1.1 The digital recording shall be forwarded to a medical transcriptionist assigned to one of the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Centers.
 - 1.1.2 The transcriptionist shall transcribe the recording, or assign it to another medical transcriptionist.
- 1.2 After the Autopsy Protocol has been typed, the pathologist shall proof read and correct the draft version and return corrected version to the medical transcriptionist within 30 days of the date it was typed.
 - 1.2.1 In the case where the Autopsy Protocol is completed by a medical transcriptionist from another facility/location, he/she shall upload the completed Autopsy Protocol to the Share Drive under the appropriate Doctors' Protocols file. Case number(s) of completed protocols will be emailed to the lead transcriptionist, who will then give the autopsy packet to the pathologist, indicating the protocol is ready for review on the Share Drive.
- 1.3 Once the transcriptionist makes the corrections, the forensic pathologist will return the autopsy packet to the transcriptionist and sign off on a printed version of the Autopsy Protocol, within 90 days of the autopsy date. The final version shall be saved on the Coroner's Bureau computer server to the directory of the respective pathologist.
 - 1.3.1 Coroner reviews, homicides, criminal investigations, and other special requests by law enforcement shall take priority over other cases and should be completed within 60 days from the autopsy date.

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RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: Processing of Autopsy Protocols/Toxicological Reports, and other Forensic Pathology Reports.

NUMBER: Policy # 700.23

- 1.4 The pathologist shall sign the original of the completed Autopsy Protocol. The medical transcriptionist shall make one copy of the signed original and forward both to the clerical supervisor. The original autopsy protocol along with autopsy notes, diagrams, and the "Worksheet and Inventory" form shall be maintained in a locked cabinet separate from the case file. The other signed copy shall go into the case file.

- 1.4.1 The clerical supervisor shall place the original copies into the case file once the investigation is closed.

2.0 Toxicological Report:

- 2.1 All original toxicological reports shall go directly to the clerical supervisor at the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center in Perris.

- 2.1.1 He/she shall make copies for the case file.

- 2.2 The original report shall be kept in a locked cabinet separate from the case file.

- 2.2.1 The clerical supervisor shall place the original copy into the case file once the investigation is closed.

3.0 Associated Forensic Reports:

- 3.1 The originals of all associated forensic reports such as neuropathology, DNA analysis and anthropology, shall be handled in the same manner as section 2.0 of this policy.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Storage of Deputy's Reports on Computer Server

NUMBER: Policy # 700.24

POLICY: In an effort to readily make corrections and access death reports, Deputy Coroner's reports shall be stored on the Sheriff-Coroner file server.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 **Files:**

1.1 Each deputy coroner has an assigned sub-directory on the shared drive of the Sheriff-Coroner computer server.

2.0 **Storage of Reports:**

2.1 Upon creation, reports shall be saved to their sub-directory.

2.2 Deputies shall **not** protect their reports, with, or without passwords.

3.0 **Approving reports:**

3.1 Supervisors shall approve completed reports; refer 700.22, section 1.0 of this P&P.

3.1.1 Supervisors may make corrections directly to the saved reports as necessary, or write the corrections on the hard copy of the report and return it to the deputy for corrections.

3.1.1.1 In each case the deputy coroner shall confirm that the saved report on the computer server is their final approved report.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Notification of Critical Incidents

NUMBER: Policy # 700.25

POLICY: The administration of the Coroner/Public Administrator shall be immediately notified of any incident having the potential to impact the Division's operation or that of the Sheriff's Department.

REFERENCE: Department Standards Manual Policy 361

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Guidelines of situations where administration should be notified:

- 1.1 Any death involving a current or retired Department member.
- 1.2 Any death involving a current or retired Department member's immediate family.
- 1.3 Any death involving a county/city official (Judge, department director, present or past Board of Supervisor member, etc.) or their immediate family member.
- 1.4 Any death involving a member of another law enforcement agency or immediate family member, (This would include an injury as well to either parties).
- 1.5 Any incident likely to attract the attention of the news media where the Coroner/PA operations are likely to be impacted.
- 1.6 Any mass casualty incident, (5 or more).
- 1.7 Any incident concerning the Department's or Coroner/PA Division's policy, programs, procedures or directives.
- 1.8 Any employee personnel matters (Examples: Significant injury, substantial loss, sexual harassment, discrimination or any personal matter where the employee is unable to come to work).
- 1.9 Any Coroner Review Case.
- 1.10 Any use of force by Coroner/PA members.
- 1.11 Any incident with a high degree of potential for civil liability.
- 1.12 Any vehicle accident or significant damage to county property.

2.0 Notification:

- 2.1 Personnel shall immediately notify their immediate supervisor.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Notification of Critical Incidents

NUMBER: Policy # 700.25

- 2.1.1 If the employee's immediate supervisor is off-duty, the on-duty or on-call supervisor shall be notified.
- 2.2 Supervisors shall immediately notify Coroner/PA Administration of incidents as the situation warrants.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Media Room reservations

NUMBER: Policy # 700.26

POLICY: Both Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Centers have media rooms that have been designated for training, conferences or meetings. The Sheriff-Coroner allows other Sheriff stations or County agencies to utilize these rooms providing there is no negative impact on Coroner operations.

REFERENCE: N/A

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Media rooms must be reserved in advance:

- 1.1 Upon request for a room, the requester needs to complete a "Media Room Reservation Request" form.
 - 1.1.1 All areas of the form need to be completed, such as the purpose of the reservation and duration needed.
 - 1.1.1.1 Reservations will not be accepted more than sixty-days in advance.
 - 1.1.1.2 Reservations may be cancelled by Coroner's Bureau Administration in the event of an emergency or unforeseen circumstance that affects the operation of the Coroner's Bureau.
 - 1.1.2 The completed request needs to be approved by the respective Coroner's Bureau office.
 - 1.1.2.1 This approval may be made by either clerical or supervision and should be based upon the availability of the room and the needs of the Bureau.
 - 1.1.2.2 The completed form, approved or denied, becomes part of the media room reservation book.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administration

TITLE: Subpoena Procedures

NUMBER: Policy # 700.27

REFERENCE: 1328(e) P.C. and Riverside County Sheriff DD#06-003

POLICY: In order to ensure proper service and obedience to all incoming subpoenas for personnel assigned to the Sheriff/Coroner's Bureau, the following procedure shall be followed.

PROCEDURE: Subpoena Procedures

1.0 Accepting Subpoenas for Service:

- 1.1 A clerical employee of the Coroner's Bureau shall be assigned as the primary subpoena representative.
- 1.2 Upon receiving a subpoena, the clerical employee shall check the schedules to confirm availability of the person being served, and ensure there is at least five-day notice prior to the court date.
- 1.3 In the event the notice is short of the five days, or the person being served is unable to attend due to scheduled vacation or training, the subpoena shall be returned to the District Attorney clerk.
- 1.4 The clerical employee shall make a copy of the subpoena; attach an Officer confirmation sheet to be signed by the employee confirming their receipt of the subpoena.
- 1.5 The subpoena clerical employee shall place a copy of the subpoena in the subpoena book and log, which is maintained in the Perris Coroner's Bureau.
- 1.6 The clerical employee shall attach a copy of the employee's confirmation sheet to the subpoena once received.

2.0 Employee's Responsibility after receiving a Subpoena:

- 2.1 Employees shall call the District Attorney's office between 1600-1630 hours, the day prior to attending in order to ensure that their presence is still needed. The subpoena call off number is [REDACTED].
- 2.2 If the case was called off, the employee needs to mark the subpoena as called off, noting the time and date and return it to the clerical employee assigned to subpoenas.

3.0 Civil Subpoenas: Federal and State; (Civil subpoenas are handled in the same manner as any criminal subpoenas, **(EXCEPT))**

- 3.1 Process server must have a check for the \$275.00 (one-day witness fee accompanying the civil subpoena)

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: Subpoena Procedures

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- 3.2 Process server is to be issued an Official County Receipt (OCR) for the \$275.00 fee.
- 3.3 An Official Court Verification Sheet (OCVS) is to be completed. The OCVS is then to be forwarded to Sheriff's Accounting and Finance along with a check and a copy of the subpoena.
- 3.4 The original subpoena and a copy of the OCVS is then given to the employee.
 - 1. If an employee receives the OCVS only, he/she is not to appear in court until the actual subpoena is received.
 - 2. Following the court appearance, the employee is to complete the OCVS, attach a copy of the subpoena, and forward both to accounting and finance no later than five days after the court appearance.
 - 3. If the court appearance has been canceled, the employee will indicate on the OCVS, the subpoena has been canceled and how notification of the cancellation was received. A copy of the subpoena is to be attached to the OCVS and forwarded to Accounting and Finance.

4.0 Subpoenas Received via Fax:

- 4.1 A subpoena received via the fax machine must comply with the five-day advance notice rule. The subpoena is processed in the same manner as any criminal subpoena.
 - 1. If the court appearance date is prior to the five days, the subpoena clerk is to fax the subpoena back to the sender explaining why the subpoena was not accepted.
 - 2. If the advance notice is given, the subpoena is processed in the same manner as any criminal subpoena.

5.0 Subpoenas Received via U.S. Mail or Central Messenger:

- 5.1 Is to be processed in the same manner as any criminal subpoena

6.0 Summons and Complaint:

- 6.1 A summons and Complaint is for a civil case, which also involves the department. These are not subpoenas; however, we will accept these for the employees of the office.
 - 1. Upon receipt, make three copies, place one copy in the employees file, one copy goes to the lieutenant, and the other is to be processed in the subpoena book.
 - 2. The original summons is sent to Sheriff's Administration.

7.0 Documents/Record Subpoenas (Duces Tecum): (Coroner Records only)

- 7.1 If an employee is served with a Subpoena Duces Tecum, they should immediately:

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TITLE: Subpoena Procedures

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1. Collect \$15 for service of the subpoena
2. Note somewhere on the face of the document the date, time and location regarding the receipt of service (i.e., time stamp...)
3. Forward the request to the subpoena clerk for processing.

8.0 Pitchess Motion:

- 8.1 If an employee is served with a "Pitchess" motion, they should immediately:
 1. Note somewhere on the face of the document the date, time and location regarding the receipt of service (i.e., time stamp...)
 2. Notify supervision, and the Administrative Investigations Unit by calling either [REDACTED]. Be prepared to provide Deputy's name, Defendant's name, Court, date and time of court case, the Attorney's name and date and time received.
 3. The original document should be provided to the Deputy.

9.0 Subpoena Record Keeping:

- 9.1 One binder will be maintained with the month's subpoenas. This binder will be located at the Perris Forensic Center.
- 9.2.1 At the end of each month the past subpoenas will be moved to another binder and retained for a period of two years. At the conclusion of two years the subpoenas will be destroyed.

10.0 Out of State Subpoenas:

- 10.1 In the event a Sheriff-Coroner employee receives a subpoena for/from a previous employer's case, the following guidelines shall be followed;
 - 10.1.1 The employee will utilize his/her time banks if the other agency is paying for his/her appearance.
 - 10.1.2 The employee will testify and travel on County time if he/she is not compensated for the testimony by the requesting law enforcement agency.
 - 10.1.2.1 All travel and associated expenses are the responsibility of the requesting law enforcement agency.
 - 10.1.3 The Sheriff-Coroner will provide the employee with adequate time to testify and travel to and from.

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TITLE: Triage and Post Triage Meetings

NUMBER: Policy # 700.28

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner reviews every Coroner's case wherein a Sheriff-Coroner pathologist shall be providing a cause of death. The review is done in order to determine what level of forensic science is necessary to determine the cause of death. Criteria should be based upon circumstances of death, medical history, manner and mode of death, as well as death scene investigation. This review process shall be referred to as, "Triage."

REFERENCE: California Govt. Code 27491, 27491.25

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Triage Committee:

1.1 At a minimum, a Sheriff-Coroner pathologist and sergeant should be involved in the triage process. Optimally, a representative from Coroner administration, the Chief Forensic Pathologist, an investigations sergeant and morgue sergeant should be participating. On weekends, the on-duty sergeant will conduct the triage process with the on-duty pathologist. In the absence of a sergeant at the Perris facility, the on-duty sergeant in Indio will conduct the triage process, by phone, with the on-duty pathologist. In the absence of an on-duty sergeant either in Perris or in Indio on the weekend, the on duty pathologist will conduct the triage process with the on-call sergeant.

2.0 Triage Process:

2.1 Triage will occur daily, excluding holidays. All cases on the "In Boards" will be reviewed. The exception being those cases that need follow-up or those that will be signed out.

2.1.1 The coroner technician on Saturday morning and Sunday morning will obtain the required documentation of newly received cases for the weekend triage pathologist to review, with the sergeant. The coroner technician will deliver the documentation to the pathologist and once triage is complete, the documentation will be returned to the technician for proper processing.

2.1.2 On weekends, if a pathologist feels an external examination is appropriate, and the sergeant believes an autopsy is warranted, then the case will be held over for a committee review or call the Lieutenant for direction. If the pathologist feels an autopsy is warranted, and the sergeant initially offers an external examination, then an autopsy will occur.

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- 2.2 Triage will take place at the Perris Forensic Center at 0800 hours. Cases for both Indio and Perris will be triaged at the same time. Triage time may be adjusted by Coroner's Bureau administration as needed.
 - 2.2.1 Case load and/or availability of pathologist(s) shall never be a determining factor as to whether a case will be autopsied or external examination.
- 2.3 Upon taking a case that needs to be triaged, the deputy coroner shall place the initial case information pages, along with a comprehensive narrative contained within the case notes section, in the triage tray.
 - 2.3.1 The case information sheet should be complete with all pertinent information to the case, including medical history, medications and complete details of the injury or illness, if known.
 - 2.3.2 Medical records should be attached in order to triage the case.
 - 2.3.3 The sergeant (or his/her designee) preparing triage, should pull the paperwork from the triage tray comparing it to the "In Boards." The sergeant should then ensure that all the cases have paperwork, printing those that are lacking.
 - 2.3.4 The sergeant (or his/her designee) should self review the cases prior to triage in the event follow-up is needed in order to answer basic questions.
 - 2.3.5 The sergeant (or his/her designee) in charge of triage should be responsible for ensuring that a case is ready for review prior to submitting it to the committee (refer to 6.0 of this Policy).
- 2.4 A "Case Review Log" is located in the pathology conference room. This binder contains a record of all cases triaged throughout the calendar year. Previous years are also maintained within separate binders in the conference room.
 - 2.4.1 A representative of the triage committee should complete the case review log on a daily basis as the cases are triaged.
 - 2.4.1.1 Information contained on the log consists of those in attendance, case numbers triaged, whether it was decided to autopsy or consult each case and what toxicology if any was ordered.
- 2.5 The sergeant, or person leading triage, will go line by line on the "In Boards," providing a brief synopsis of the case. This should include circumstances of death and medical history.

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- 2.6 The attendees will discuss each case and come to a consensus as to whether an autopsy or external examination is appropriate. They should also determine if toxicology is necessary and if so, to what extent.
 - 2.6.1 Just because a case is being reviewed, does not mean a determination needs to be made. Cases should be sent back to a deputy if additional history, records or scene information is needed.
- 2.7 Following triage, the chief forensic pathologist, or his representative, will assign the cases to the pathologist(s) for the day. This is to include both Indio and Perris.

3.0 Autopsy:

- 3.1 Following is a list of those types of cases that are generally autopsied. Although, this is based upon the presumption of a recent injury. Depending upon the circumstances, a delayed death of several days, weeks, months or even years could result in a determination by external examination. The triage committee needs to consider the available medical documentation and the benefit, if any, in performing an autopsy.
 - 3.1.1 Homicide
 - 3.1.2 Traffic (driver)
 - 3.1.3 Traffic (pedestrian)
 - 3.1.4 Suspected overdose (suicide or accident)
 - 3.1.5 Aircraft
 - 3.1.6 Coroner Review
 - 3.1.7 Gunshot (penetrating wound, suicide or accident)
 - 3.1.8 Drowning
 - 3.1.9 Electrocution
 - 3.1.10 Severely decomposed
 - 3.1.11 Burned and/or charred
 - 3.1.12 Sudden unexplained infant/child death

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3.1.13 Unidentified

3.1.14 Suspected aspiration

3.1.15 Falls or jumpers

3.1.16 Parachutist

3.1.17 Hyperthermia or hypothermia

3.2 In the event the triage committee decides to externally examine a case, and the pathologist who is assigned the case would rather perform an autopsy, the case can be automatically elevated to an autopsy.

3.3 If the triage committee decides to autopsy a case and the pathologist would rather perform an external examination, it must go back through the triage process along with the pathologist's argument supporting the change.

4.0 External Examination:

4.1 Following are cases wherein a Sheriff-Coroner pathologist will generally determine the cause of death by external examination. The Sheriff-Coroner will always err on the side of caution and perform an autopsy if there is any question that an external examination may not provide adequate documentation for a specific case.

4.1.1 Traffic (passenger, with compelling trauma)

4.1.2 Traffic (driver, delayed death with medical documentation)

4.1.3 Hanging (inside secured property, presence of suicide note)

4.1.4 Gunshot (suicide or accident with perforating wound)

4.1.5 Apparent naturals

4.1.6 No medical history, un-witnessed collapse over 65 years

4.1.7 No medical history, witnessed collapse over 60 years, depending on circumstances

4.1.8 Medical history, un-witnessed collapse, case by case

4.1.9 Medical history, witnessed collapse, case by case

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4.1.10 Morbid obesity, case by case

5.0 Partial Autopsy

5.1 The Sheriff-Coroner does not perform partial autopsies, with one exception. Penetrating gunshot wound suicide deaths may be considered for partial autopsy by the triage committee, on a case by case basis. The Sheriff-Coroner will always err on the side of caution and perform a full autopsy if there is any question that a partial autopsy may not provide adequate documentation of the specific case.

5.1.1 Penetrating gunshot wound suicide deaths, in which a projectile is still present in the head, may be considered by the triage committee for partial autopsy. No other cases shall be considered for partial autopsies.

5.1.2 An autopsy protocol shall be generated by the forensic pathologist, documenting any partial autopsy.

5.1.3 Coroner Reviews of cases in which the manner of death is unclear shall not be considered for partial autopsy.

5.1.4 Partial autopsies shall only be considered on a case by case basis, wherein sufficient evidence exists to support the death as a suicide (scene circumstances, prior suicide attempts, suicide note, suicidal ideations, etc.)

6.0 Toxicology:

6.1 Generally, the Sheriff-Coroner runs one of two toxicology panels, coroner or comprehensive.

6.2 In accordance with California Government Code 27491.25, those deaths resulting from a motor vehicle accident, drivers, passengers and pedestrians shall automatically receive a blood alcohol screening. Typically, drivers and pedestrians will receive a coroner panel. A blood alcohol screening can be performed in place of a coroner panel, such as with passengers, at the discretion of the triage committee.

6.2.1 If the decedent had been hospitalized, the toxicology should be run on admit blood.

6.3 Comprehensive panels are run on Coroner Review cases and most children.

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- 6.4 It is often necessary to run drugs that are not covered in the coroner panel. Additional tests may be added to toxicology panels as needed; Example, "coroner +." If the case warrants running several separate tests, it is often more cost effective to run the comprehensive panel as opposed to coroner +.
- 6.5 At times, results of toxicology will not affect the cause of death or manner. An example would be a suicide by gunshot or hanging. In situations such as this, toxicology should not be run

7.0 Therapeutic Complications:

- 7.1 Post-operative and/or post-procedure deaths are often reported to the Sheriff-Coroner, especially if the death was within twenty-four hours of the procedure.
 - 7.1.1 Medical records are an integral part of these investigations. These cases should not be reviewed until complete documentation is available in order to make an educated decision.
 - 7.1.2 The Sheriff-Coroner may be the final authority in determining whether a death is natural or as a result of a therapeutic complication, (medical misadventure). Notwithstanding a clear indication that the death was a result of natural causes, the Sheriff-Coroner should confirm that gross negligence, medical misadventure and/or incompetence on the part of the physician did not play a part in the death.

8.0 Post Triage Meetings

8.1 Purpose:

- 8.1.1 The Riverside County Sheriff's Department – Coroner's Bureau is committed to provide the most complete and accurate cause and manner of death on every case investigated under the jurisdiction of the Coroner. This process is being put in place to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the scene investigation, pathology investigation and all corresponding reports. This meeting is designed to ensure that the autopsy or consultation findings match that of the scene investigation, and to ensure that both the investigations and pathology departments of the Coroner's Bureau are conducting thorough and complete investigations.

8.2 Participation:

- 8.2.1 In Perris, all available sergeants, doctors and administration should attend the daily Post Triage Meeting (PTM). In Indio, the doctor(s) will meet with the on-

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duty sergeant daily upon completion of all assigned cases. As well, any on duty deputy coroner who has a case being presented should be present, if available.

- 8.2.1.1 The sergeant(s) are to review and be familiar with the investigation side of each case being presented. Sergeants should discuss all recent cases with deputy coroners going off duty for any concerns or points of concern on cases that will be triaged for the day.

8.3 Meeting Time:

- 8.3.1 Post Triage Meetings will be scheduled to take place daily at each forensic center, with the exception of weekends and holidays. All cases triaged on weekends will be reviewed on the Monday following. If an attending pathologist has a previous commitment that would prohibit them from attending the meeting, they may take their assigned case(s) to the Chief Forensic Pathologist, or his designee, who will present the results of the autopsy/consultation at the PTM.

8.4 Perris Case Work Flow:

- 8.4.1 Upon completion of the autopsy/consultation, the pathologist will take the paperwork back to their office for dictation and documentation purposes. The pathologist will bring the case paperwork with them into the PTM. The cases will be presented one at a time and reviewed for completeness and accuracy. The PTM is an opportunity to discuss cause and ensure scene investigations are consistent with each other. This will assist in determining a clear and accurate manner of death. Once the PTM committee agrees that the case is ready for release, the paperwork will be initialed (in the three designated areas along the bottom of the Worksheet and Inventory Form) by the sergeant or lieutenant present who will be completing the death certificate worksheet. Once all the cases have been reviewed, the paperwork will be taken to the morgue and given to the Coroner Technicians, who will make appropriate copies and input the cause of death into the Coroner database. Copies of the Worksheet and Inventory (WI) forms on autopsy cases, along with all medical records, and the original consultation paperwork will then be given to the initialing sergeant or lieutenant who will manner the case and print the DC worksheets from the Coroner database. Once the DC worksheets are printed, the approving supervisor will initial the upper right corner and then deliver the approved DC worksheets to the OA assigned to mortuary releasing. The copies of the WI forms will then be left in the assigned deputy coroner's mailbox.

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Once all copies are made, the original WI forms on autopsy cases will be taken by the coroner technicians to the medical transcriptionist who will hold them for the pathologist pending approval of the final autopsy protocol. Once the final protocol is completed, the transcriptionist will take the completed protocol to the OA assigned to accept them who will then time/date stamp the protocols and distribute them to the assigned deputy coroner.

8.5 Indio Case Work Flow:

8.5.1 Indio cases will be reviewed with the on-duty sergeant assigned to Indio who will call Perris and relay the information from their PTM to the sergeant or lieutenant heading up the PTM in Perris who will add the result to the daily log. If no sergeant is on duty in Indio, then the forensic pathologist will contact the Perris office and review the cases with any available sergeant or lieutenant. Paperwork will follow the same workflow as described above for Perris cases and stated below in the work flow chart.

8.6 Pending Case Work Flow:

8.6.1 When a forensic pathologist is ready to certify the cause of death on a pending case they will generate an e-mail to all the sergeants and lieutenant(s) indicating that they are ready to certify the case. The e-mail will contain the decedent's name and case number. E-mails received prior to 1100 hours may be reviewed the same day that the e-mail is sent out with the exception of weekends and holidays. Upon review by the PTM committee, the case will be initialed by the handling sergeant or lieutenant and given back to the pathologist for delivery to the medical transcriptionist, who will then distribute the original paperwork along with the amended cause of death worksheet to the investigations sergeant assigned to handle these cases. The assigned sergeant will deliver the paperwork to the deputy coroner assigned the case for manner and amendment of the death certificate.

8.7 Undetermined Case Work Flow:

8.7.1 Undetermined cases will first be reviewed by the forensic pathology staff for completeness and accuracy prior to being brought to the PTM committee. The workflow of undetermined cases will follow the same workflow as pending cases above once the undetermined review is completed.

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TITLE: Security Clearance

NUMBER: Policy # 700.29

REFERENCE: None

POLICY: Due to the sensitive nature of information and items in the Coroner's Bureau facilities, all Non-Sheriff's Department personnel who have access to Coroner facilities shall be subject to a Security Clearance check.

PROCEDURE:

1. Dissemination of Security Clearance Packets.

- 1.1 It will be the responsibility of a Coroner Sergeant to oversee the Security Clearance program.
- 1.2 There will be a record kept of all persons who receive a Sheriff's Department Security Clearance packet. The record will be kept electronically on the Coroner's Bureau Server. Only persons designated by the program coordinator may disseminate security clearance packets.

2. Security Clearance Investigations.

- 2.1 Once a security clearance packet has been returned by an applicant, it will be reviewed for completeness by the program coordinator. The date that the packet is returned will be noted on the Security Clearance log.
- 2.2 The program coordinator will conduct a cursory check of the applicant's DMV record, local wants and warrants, parole record, firearms record, and restraining order record. When the packet has been reviewed, and the checks have been completed, the program coordinator can approve a temporary work status.
- 2.3 The program coordinator will assist with arranging a Livescan fingerprint appointment for the applicant.
- 2.4 Once Livescan results are received from both FBI and DOJ, the coordinator will complete a security clearance report for the Bureau Lieutenant to review. Upon review, it shall be forwarded for the Bureau Commander's approval.
- 2.5 Results of the security clearance investigation, along with a digital photograph of the applicant will be stored on the Coroner's Bureau Server.

3. Follow up and upkeep.

- 3.1 The program coordinator will periodically check with all entities that contract for services within Coroner Bureau facilities to update employee access lists. A partial list of these agencies will include:
 - a. Organ Procurement Organizations
 - b. Custodial / Janitorial Services

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c. Contract Transportation Companies

- 3.2 If an employee has been terminated from the contract organization, the program coordinator will ensure that the data base will reflect that the employee has been terminated. The coordinator will then disseminate the information to the rest of the Bureau to ensure that the individual no longer has access to Bureau facilities.

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TITLE: Significant Incident Report

NUMBER: Policy # 700.30

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau recognizes the need to keep administrators within the Department informed of significant incidents. The purpose of the Significant Incident Report is to provide Administration with timely information in order to respond to inquiries from the general public, the media, and other governmental entities and officials. The report is designed to provide timely information needed to manage the Department affairs as it pertains to sensitive issues.

REFERENCE: Department Directive #DD02-016

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Definition:

- 1.1 Significant and/or Unusual Events: As it relates to the Coroner's Bureau, all county-wide cases or incidents that the Department has an active role or involvement which include:
- Coroner Review Cases
 - Homicides
 - Multiple fatality incidents
 - High profile deaths
 - Certain baby or children deaths
 - Major damage to county property, including vehicles
 - Incidents presumed, or known, to cause high public interest or media inquiries

2.0 Responsibilities:

- 2.1 It will be the responsibility of a sergeant to complete the Significant Incident Report, and forward it to Administration and other designated personnel.
- 2.2 The report will be marked and treated as CONFIDENTIAL.
- 2.3 The Significant Incident Report will be completed and sent out via e-mail between midnight and 0700 hours of each day.
- 2.4 The report should be sent out on e-mail format and not sent as an attachment.
- 2.5 Personnel completing the report shall ensure information that is included on the log will not compromise a criminal investigation.

3.0 Procedures:

- 3.1 The sergeant assigned to complete the Significant Incident Report shall gather pertinent information prior to submitting the log and complete the following each evening before the log is sent out:

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- 3.1.1 Review the database to determine what will qualify for inclusion.
- 3.1.2 Review recent press releases.
- 3.1.3 If other supervisor's on duty, contact them for input.
- 3.1.4 Evaluate the information's sensitivity and the affect its release will have on an investigation. No information that may adversely affect a department investigation shall be released.
- 3.1.5 Forward the Significant Incident Report via e-mail to the designated distribution list: Sheriff, Undersheriff, Assistant Sheriffs, all Chief Deputies, Coroner's Captain, Lieutenants assigned to the Coroner's Bureau and sergeants assigned to the Coroner's Bureau.
- 3.1.6 A resident's address shall remain confidential and shall be referred to by rounded off block numbers; if used at all (e.g.: 800 block of Redlands Ave)
- 3.1.7 Include the ending case # for the day.
- 3.1.8 The Significant Incident Report shall cover the time frame for 24 hrs. (e.g.: 3/13/08 at 0001 – 3/13/08 at 2400 hrs.

4.0 Sample Format:

Confidential
Sheriff's Incident Report

Date: March 14, 2008

Station: Coroner's Bureau

Person Reporting: Lieutenant Cynthia Wait

Summary:

March 14, 2008:

About 2308 hours, a homicide was reported from the city of La Quinta. Male, in his early twenties found deceased in a vehicle of apparent bullet wound(s). CHU investigating.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: Release and Security of Medical Records

NUMBER: Policy # 700.31

POLICY: The Coroner's Bureau will take an active role in ensuring security and confidentiality of medical records in their control. The release and security of these records will be done in accordance with Government Code Section 27491.1 and HIPPA regulations.

REFERENCE: GOV. CODE 27491.1, HIPPA, AG's Opinion 99-619

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Release of Records:

- 1.1 Following Gov Code 27491.1: "In all cases in which a person has died under circumstances that afford a reasonable ground to suspect that the person's death has been occasioned by the act of another by criminal means, the coroner, upon determining that those reasonable grounds exist, shall immediately notify the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the criminal investigation... The report shall state the name of the deceased person, if known, the location of the remains, and other information received by the coroner relating to the death, **including any medical information of the decedent that is directly related to the death.** The report shall not include any information contained in the decedent's medical records regarding any other person unless that information is relevant and directly related to the decedent's death.
 - 1.1.1 When a death occurs as a result of a known or suspected criminal act, investigating agencies may request the medical and psychiatric report be released to them as part of the criminal investigation.
 - 1.1.2 The Coroner's Bureau may release medical and/or psychiatric records of a decedent to law enforcement agencies or the District Attorney's Office, only in those deaths that are known or suspected to be criminal in nature.
 - 1.1.2.1 Any request by a law enforcement agency for medical records of a death that was not deemed to be criminal in nature will be denied; unless accompanied by a court order.
 - 1.1.2.2 Once a request has been denied, that law enforcement agency should be directed to the entity that has the original medical records.
- 1.2 Copies of medical and/or psychiatric records will only be released to the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over that criminal death and only upon the case agent's specific, written request.

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- 1.2.1 Records released to law enforcement agencies will be released through existing protocols for releasing records; via the Supervising Office Assistant (SOA), his/her designee, or a Lieutenant/Coroner Lieutenant or higher.
- 1.2.2 Only records relating to the death shall be released.
- 1.2.3 Only copies of the medical records will be released.
- 1.3 Medical records shall not be included into any report that may become public record and law enforcement should be notified of such upon release to the law enforcement agency.

2.0 Security of Records:

- 2.1 The Coroner's Bureau will take an active stance to ensure the security and confidentiality of all medical records.
 - 2.1.1 Any file that contains medical records should be secured in a designated locked location within the bureau when not actively being worked on.
 - 2.1.2 Files should be secured when deputies are not at their workstations or not actively working on an investigation.
- 2.2 Medical information can be accessed through the Coroner Bureau's database. Due to this, employees shall be given a logon name and a password unique only to them.
 - 2.2.1 To ensure limited access to the database, employees should log off their computers when not at their workstations and at the end of their work day.
 - 2.2.2 Passwords and logons should not be shared with any other person except when necessary to update the security features or as directed by a superior.
 - 2.2.3 No visitor is allowed access to medical records or coroner case files or databases without the specific authorization or oversight of a coroner bureau supervisor.
 - 2.2.4 Non-essential employees, not requiring medical information of decedent's to conduct their job function(s) such as Sheriff Service Officers, shall not be given a password to access the Coroner database that holds such information.
- 2.3. Entry into a Coroner building shall be controlled by a locking device (i.e: password-protected keypad or department issued key).

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- 2.3.1 If an employee is separated from service or employment contract for any reason the door codes, gate codes and keys will be changed immediately.
- 2.3.3 All visitors will enter into the facility through the front entrance and check in with the receptionist during normal business hours.
 - 2.3.3.1 Entry into the facility by a visitor after hours shall enter only with approval of an on-duty employee.
- 2.3.4 All visitors will sign in and be issued a visitor's badge. Visitors to the facility shall have either a visitor's badge or official credentials visible at all times while in the facility.
- 2.4 Organ and Tissue Procurement employees, Health Department personnel, Cancer Research personnel, Consumer Affair personnel, Drug Enforcement Agency or contractual bureau employees (i.e.: cleaning crew, building services, equipment maintenance personnel) will be granted access into the facility while conducting official business.
 - 2.4.1 Outside organization employees may only enter through the front door or morgue entrance to the facility. Contractual employees may enter through locations pre-designated with them as approved.
 - 2.4.2 Outside organization employees will sign in with the receptionist at the front desk. If entry occurs after normal business hours, the outside agency employee will require access by an on-duty Coroner Bureau employee. The Coroner's personnel should ensure they sign into the facility.
 - 2.4.3 Outside organization employees will have access to a specific workstation in order to complete their work. That workstation will have limited access to the Coroner Bureau's database and shall not be allowed to access any information unrelated to their official business.
 - 2.4.3.1 Outside organization employees will be issued a generic logon and password, specific for the company, to be used at their workstation. After they are finished at their workstation, the computer should be logged off.
 - 2.4.3.2 No outside organization employees will print or download any information from the Coroner database without approval of Coroner Bureau Administration.

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2.4.3.2.1 Outside organization employees should get medical records through the families they work with and not through Coroner personnel, unless accompanied by a court order or as described in subsection 1.1.2.

3.0 Retention of Records:

3.1 After a deputy's report has been approved, and the investigation complete, medical records should be purged from the decedent's file.

3.1.1 The SOA, or their designee, will ensure the medical records have been purged from the file.

3.1.1.1 The SOA, or his/her designee, shall then file the case in the designated secure (locked) room within the bureau.

4.0 Training on Security and Release of Records:

4.1 This policy will be reviewed annually with all Coroner Bureau employees. The employee will sign off on the review.



SHERIFF-CORONER

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

STANLEY SNIFF
SHERIFF-CORONER

TO: SHERIFF-CORONER, County of Riverside

Decedent's Name _____ Coroner File #: _____

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF DECEDENT'S MEDICAL RECORDS

I certify that I am a peace officer in the State of California and I am investigating the death of the above listed decedent. It is my belief that the decedent died under circumstances that afford a reasonable ground to suspect the person's death has been occasioned by the act of another by criminal means, or the Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner notified me that the person's death was criminal in nature. The decedent died in the County of Riverside and/or the Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner has jurisdiction of the remains of this decedent. It is my belief that my agency has jurisdiction over the criminal investigation of this death; therefore, I am requesting that the medical and/or psychiatric records be released to me pursuant to **Section 27491.1, California Government Code, State of California.**

I understand upon acceptance of these medical records that they are confidential in nature and shall only be used in conjunction with my criminal investigation. I further understand that these medical records shall not be included into any criminal report that may become public record, and that the records I receive from the Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner may not be all medical records, just the medical records they have in their possession. Pursuant to **The California Attorney General's Opinion 99-619**, the criminal investigator who takes custody of these records will ensure the records will be kept confidential and only be shared with the District Attorney's Office, if the case is reviewed for prosecution.

After the records are no longer needed, they may be brought back to the Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner's Office to be destroyed or the requesting agency will destroy the records.

_____ I hereby request that the Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner release all medical records in their possession for the above listed
Initial decedent and understand the confidentiality of such records.

Print Name _____ Signature _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____

Agency _____ Telephone Number _____

Identification Number _____

VERIFICATION OF IDENTITY: I certify that I have verified the identity of the above named party.

Verification of identity was made by:

_____ Identification card or driver's license issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles that is current or was issued during the
Initial preceding five years. NUMBER _____

OR

_____ Identification Card issued by a California Law Enforcement agency.
Initial NUMBER _____

Person verifying identity: _____ Title _____ Date ____/____/____
Print Name/initial



CORONER BUREAU TOUR

Request Form

Today's Date: _____

The following group or Individual has requested a tour:

Group/Individual: _____

Requested Tour Date/Time: _____

Number of Participants: _____

Comments: _____

***** SERGEANT VERIFICATION *****

Sergeant Name: _____ Date: _____

Complies with Policy # 700.32 ☐

Recommend Tour: Yes ☐

No ☐

Category: Juvenile ☐

Civilian ☐

Law Enforcement ☐

Medical/Other Agency ☐

Comments:

***** COMMANDER DECISION *****

APPROVED ☐ Initials: _____

DENIED ☐ Date: _____

Comments: _____



CORONER BUREAU TOUR

Waiver and Agreement

The Sheriff-Coroner is willing to allow me to tour the Coroner Facility, and observe and accompany personnel during the performance of their official duties on the conditions set forth below;

I do hereby agree:

I. Compliance with Coroner Tour Rules, Laws, and Regulations:

That I shall comply with the following dress code for visitors touring the facility for educational purposes: The official/formal uniform of the school or academy-OR-professional casual business attire: Sleeved collared shirts or blouses, long pants or dresses, and closed toe shoes. No offensive clothing, shorts, or open toed shoes are permitted.

That I shall not photograph, video record, videotape, or otherwise film at any time while inside the Forensic Facility. The Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner has the authority to confiscate any recording equipment used in violation of this agreement and will be returned upon departure of the Forensic Facility.

That I understand decedent confidentiality rights are protected under state law. Any information obtained while in the Forensic Facility shall be considered private and confidential and treated as such.

That inappropriate behavior, such as joking, laughing, or general inattentiveness will result in removal from or termination of the tour.

II. Signature and Waiver:

I declare under penalty of perjury, that I have carefully read and understand the contents of this document, and agree to adhere to those agreements contained herein.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Print Agency/School Name: _____

ADMINISTRATIVE VERIFICATION	
Coroner Official Verifying form:	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Tours, Presentations & Autopsy Viewing

NUMBER: Policy # 700.32

POLICY: The Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner recognizes the importance of providing education and training to those in the medical and law enforcement professions. In addition, community outreach and education provides the residents of Riverside County with an understanding of Coroner operations and is a vital tool in connecting with the public. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to facilitate tours, presentations, and when applicable, the viewing of autopsies, while protecting the confidentiality of deceased persons, as well as case integrity.

REFERENCE: California Government Code 27491.45(a)(1) & California Code of Civil Procedures 129

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Request for Tours/Presentations/Autopsy Viewing:

- 1.1 All tours, presentations, and/or autopsy viewings shall require prior approval from Coroner's Bureau administration.
- 1.2 Tour requests should be placed with the Administrative Deputy Coroner, who will forward the request to the Commander, via chain of command, using the Tour Request Form (700.32 attachment 1).
- 1.3 Tours may be restricted or suspended at any time due to staffing shortages or high case volume.
- 1.4 No tour will be conducted unless all participants agree to the conditions of the tour and sign a Coroner Tour Waiver and Agreement Form (700.32 attachment 2).
- 1.5 All tour participants shall be briefed on the rules and regulations of the facility, including decedent confidentiality and all applicable laws and policies.
- 1.6 Tours may be terminated at any point for security, confidentiality, or other reasons.
- 1.7 Tour preference will be given to residents of, or schools located within Riverside County.

2.0 Definitions:

- 2.1 Tours are classified into four categories: Juvenile, Civilian, and Law Enforcement/Medical/Other Agency, and Commander.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Tours, Presentations & Autopsy Viewing

NUMBER: Policy # 700.32

- 2.2 Regardless of the category, tours must be in keeping with the intended purpose of providing education, training, or diversion to individuals or groups wherein Coroner operations has a relevant or direct association. Due consideration should be made to individuals or groups with no nexus to Coroner operations to determine the relevance of providing a tour, as well as what category should be provided, against the privacy of deceased persons and case integrity.

2.2.1 Juvenile: Tours requested by either Riverside County or non-county departments or agencies for the purpose of augmenting a cadet academy, educational program, or diversion program which serves to change criminal behavior or motivate juveniles to a career in law enforcement or coroner operations.

These tours will be limited to the following procedures and conditions:

- All participants and parents/legal guardians must sign waiver
- Tours are done on a strictly voluntary basis
- Tours normally only consist of a special presentation with minimal graphic photographic images. Any changes require Coroner's Bureau Administration approval.
- Tours may include an orientation of the Forensic Facility, but normally will not allow juveniles into the morgue section of the facility.
- Autopsy viewing is strictly prohibited

2.2.2 Civilian: Standardized tour/presentation for the general public, age 18 and over, either groups or individuals. May be conducted at Forensic Facility or at an off-site location (i.e. Trauma Intervention Program (T.I.P.) presentations at hospitals). Civilian tours may also include Grand Jurors, City councils, media/press, other county departments, criminal justice classes, EMT classes, or other courses with interest in coroner operations. These tours will be limited to the following procedures and conditions:

- All participants must sign waiver
- Tours normally consist of a presentation and orientation of the Forensic Facility, to include viewing area outside Pathology
- Access to morgue requires approval of Coroner's Bureau Administration
- Autopsy viewing must be approved by Coroner's Bureau Administration

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Tours, Presentations & Autopsy Viewing

NUMBER: Policy # 700.32

2.2.3 Law Enforcement/Medical/Other Agencies: Tours for adults, age 18 and over, either groups or individuals, Riverside Sheriff or other law enforcement agency, such as academy students, deputy district attorneys, etc. In addition, students in medical courses, including LVN, RN, Paramedic, and other relevant courses may be included in this group at the discretion of Coroner Bureau administration. These tours will be limited to the following procedures and conditions:

- All participants must sign waiver
- Tours may consist of a presentation, tour of entire facility, and/or an autopsy viewing, at the discretion of Sheriff-Coroner administration

2.2.4 Commander: Personal tour given by the Facility Commander, tour content and areas to be toured may vary and are at the Commander's discretion.

- All participants must sign waiver

3.0 General Restrictions:

3.1 The following restrictions apply to all categories of tours and shall be stressed to each participant of a tour to ensure safety of participants, decedent confidentiality and case integrity. These restrictions shall also be outlined in the Coroner Tour Waiver and Agreement Form.

3.2 All participants must dress in appropriate attire. This is a public facility and decedent family members, as well as other members of the community, regularly enter this facility. Therefore, clothing should be conservative, no shorts, open-toed shoes, short skirts, hats, etc. shall be permitted. Clothing that refers to gang affiliation, display sexual or lewd comments/pictures, or has the potential to be offense shall not be permitted. Participants who fail to comply with the dress code will be denied the tour.

3.3 Electronic devices or recording devices shall either be locked in participant's vehicles or stored in a secure location in the Forensic Facility for the duration of the tour, excluding law enforcement personnel. Absolutely no photographs are allowed to be taken inside the Forensic Facility and no recording of any kind is allowed.

3.4 Inappropriate behavior, such as joking, laughing, or general inattentiveness will result in removal from or termination of the tour.

3.5 Weapons are not allowed in the Forensic Facility (knives, firearms, etc.), excluding law enforcement personnel or those with valid CCW permits (must have permit on person).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Tours, Presentations & Autopsy Viewing

NUMBER: Policy # 700.32

3.6 All case information should be considered confidential and not open for public release.

3.7 Instructors or class coordinators must be present for the entire tour. The Instructor or class coordinator are ultimately responsible for all their students in attendance.

4.0 Conducting the Tour:

4.1 The Administrative Deputy Coroner should perform all tours, presentations, or autopsy viewings, unless otherwise approved by Coroner Bureau Administration.

4.2 Tour restrictions will be reviewed with all participants by the Administrative Deputy Coroner or designee. The staff member will ensure all participants understand and adhere to these restrictions at all times.

4.3 The signed Tour Agreement and Waiver Forms will be collected and checked for completeness. Forms not completely filled out will not be accepted and the participant will be denied a tour unless corrected.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: BULLETIN BOARDS

NUMBER: Policy # 700.34

POLICY: The Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner provides bulletin boards throughout the Bureau for the posting of current events, employee achievements, schedules, and union related material for employees. Information is restricted to appropriate, work-related information.

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Posting Documents:

- 1.1 Documents posted on or removed from any bulletin board will be done so by, or with, the permission of Coroner Administration. Postings will be monitored by Coroner Administration for appropriateness and timeliness.
- 1.2 A bulletin board is dedicated to employee union postings in the break room and will be managed by the union representatives. Postings must be appropriate and timely.
- 1.3 Inappropriate documents, cartoons, jokes, or photographs will not be posted on any bulletin board.
- 1.4 Bulletin boards will be maintained in a neat, orderly fashion.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Stand-by time	NUMBER: Policy # 701.01
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POLICY: Sergeants, deputies, and/or coroner technicians shall be assigned stand-by time based upon needs of the Bureau. Stand-by time is normally done on a rotation basis. Stand-by employees shall be governed by all the same policies and procedures when called out on stand-by, as during regular duty hours.

REFERENCE: Riverside County Sheriff's General Orders section 205.00, County Ordinance #440

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Stand-by:

- 1.1 A Deputy or Sergeant may take a county vehicle home at the beginning of his / her stand-by time. The vehicle shall be returned to the forensic center as soon as possible following the shift. If the deputy does not take a vehicle home, he/she should live close by the forensic center, as to reduce response time if called out. Coroner Technicians being called in to transport cases should respond to the forensic center to retrieve the transportation vehicle.
- 1.2 All overtime shall be approved by a supervisor. However, when on stand-by, it is assumed that employees will be getting called out. Normal roll outs need not be approved by a supervisor. As in any case, lengthy cases, out of the ordinary cases, and high profile cases, should be reviewed via a supervisor.
- 1.3 Employees on call/stand-by who respond to a call shall immediately notify a Supervisor in the following cases; Homicide, Coroner Review, death of a law enforcement officer, death of a department employee, and any case that has the potential for public or media attention (five + fatalities, high profile, etc), or any other critical incident.
- 1.4 Employees who have been called out while on stand-by, shall notify the on coming Supervisor of all call outs, and the status of their health as it pertains to hours of sleep within the last twenty-four hours.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Vacation	NUMBER: Policy# 701.02
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POLICY: Seniority is the deciding factor for vacation. Seniority is defined as a combination of job class, time in job class and continuous length of service with the County, equating to a numerical factor. Those requests submitted at the beginning of the (but no later than January 15th), shall be scheduled and granted based upon requests, seniority, and staffing. Every effort will be made to accommodate those employees who do not select vacation dates by January 15th. However, selections later than January 15th cannot be guaranteed.

REFERENCE: Riverside County Sheriff's Dept General Orders Section 200.05

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Seniority factors:

1.1 Three conditions are to be considered in computation of seniority.

1.1.1 Job class

1.1.2 Time in job class

1.1.3 Continuous length of service with the County.

2.0 Computations:

2.1 "Job class" is the position code of the class, multiplied by a value of three (3). The job class number to be used in the formula must be obtained from the most current copy through County Human Resources.

2.2 "Time in job class" is computed in years, or 10th there of, using whole months, multiplied by a value of two (2).

2.2.1 1-15 days; Do not count that month.

2.2.2 16 days or more; Add that month.

2.3 "Continuous service with the County", expressed in years, or 10th there of, multiplied by a value of one (1).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Vacation	NUMBER: Policy# 701.02
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2.4 Example:

"Job class" range	37511 x 3=	112533
"Time in class" in years	14 x 2=	28
"Time with County"	20 x 1=	20

Numerical seniority factor 112581

3.0 Vacation schedule:

- 3.1 A schedule is posted in January of each year. Employees must submit memorandums to their immediate supervisors requesting vacation throughout the calendar year. These memorandums should include three choices for vacation, listed in numerical importance.
- 3.2 The posted vacation schedule will reflect approved vacations, attempting to provide each employee with his / her priority choice considering seniority.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Overtime	NUMBER: Policy # 701.03
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POLICY: "Cuff time" is expressly prohibited. "Cuff time" is defined as an agreement between a manager and an employee, that the employee would work documented overtime, and not be financially compensated. The manager and the employee agree that time off would be taken at a future date to compensate for the hours of overtime worked. The manager keeps a record of the overtime. Employees shall be financially compensated for overtime worked. All overtime shall be approved in advance of being worked.

REFERENCE: Riverside County Sheriff's Dept. Field Operations Manual section 402.06

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Overtime approval:

- 1.1 All overtime worked shall first be approved by a supervisor, this includes an extended shift where the employee may be out on a call, and not be back before the end of his / her shift. *The only exception to this is outlined in stand-by time, section 701.01 of this P&P manual.*
- 1.2 If a supervisor is not on-duty, the on-call supervisor shall be called by the employee.
- 1.3 The employee shall be able to provide the supervisor with the reason for the overtime, and approximate duration.

2.0 Supervisor's considerations:

- 2.1 Can the function be accomplished by the next shift?
- 2.2 Can another employee perform this function on regular duty time and relieve the employee requesting the overtime?
- 2.3 Is it in the best interest of the public and the department that this function be accomplished now?

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Personnel duties / responsibilities	NUMBER: Policy # 701.04
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POLICY: Personnel are expected to function within the job class description to which they have been employed. Duties and assignments may vary based on the needs of the Department, and at the direction of the Bureau Commander.

REFERENCE: County of Riverside job specifications

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Coroner Technician; class code 37498:

- 1.1 Under general supervision, gathers and processes evidence connected with determining the cause and mode of death, and the identity of decedents in cases under the Sheriff-Coroner's jurisdiction.
- 1.2 Assists Pathologists in performing autopsies.
- 1.3 Performs a variety of clerical work.
- 1.4 May video tape, or photograph autopsy procedures.
- 1.5 Receives, logs, and processes bodies, including weighing, undressing, verifying toe tag number, bag seal numbers, associated paperwork, and fingerprinting as they arrive at the Sheriff-Coroner facilities.
- 1.6 As directed, releases bodies to mortuaries including verifying toe tag numbers, and other associated paperwork.
- 1.7 Inventories personal property of the deceased and properly stores it.
- 1.8 Dispatches Deputy Coroners to death scenes and maintains radio / phone contact while they are in the field.
- 1.9 Receives telephone inquiries, receives and documents information on cases over the phone from families, law enforcement personnel, mortuary staff, and doctors.
- 1.10 May be directed to respond to death scenes, perform tasks associated with collection and transportation of remains to a Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center.
- 1.11 Duties may also include, but are not limited to;
 - 1.11.1 Set up equipment, instruments, and solutions in preparation of autopsies.
 - 1.11.2 Open and close bodies.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Personnel duties / responsibilities	NUMBER: Policy # 701.04
	1.11.3 Obtain blood and fluid samples.	
	1.11.4 Excise and weigh organs and record figures.	
	1.11.5 Label and store specimens.	
	1.11.6 Prepare tissue specimens.	
	1.11.7 Maintain facility and equipment in a safe and sanitary condition.	
	1.11.8 Clean and sterilize equipment and instruments.	
	1.11.9 Maintenance and operation of equipment including, but not limited to, Lodox Machines, Randox, CT Scanner, and Dexcom.	

2.0 Deputy Coroner; class code 37501:

- 2.1 Under general supervision, conducts investigations to determine the cause and mode of death, and the identity of decedents in cases under the Sheriff-Coroner's jurisdiction.
- 2.2 Receives reports of death from physicians, law enforcement, hospital personnel, and other persons.
- 2.3 Determines whether deaths are within the legal jurisdiction of the Sheriff-Coroner.
- 2.4 Initiates investigation at the scene of death to determine if death is due to homicide, suicide, accident, or from non-traumatic causes.
- 2.5 As necessary, secures physical, scientific, and pathological evidence such as clothing, weapons, drugs, body fluids, and specimens.
- 2.6 Fingerprints decedents and attempts to verify identities through various investigative channels.
- 2.7 Interviews witnesses, locates relatives, and makes timely notifications of death.
- 2.8 Confers with physicians reference medical history and causes of death.
- 2.9 Provides the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Centers with thorough investigations, in order to triage cases.
- 2.10 Determines if cases fall within the jurisdiction of the Public-Administrator and refers cases in a timely manner.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Personnel duties / responsibilities	NUMBER: Policy # 701.04
2.11	Inventorizing and Safeguarding decedent's personal property.	
2.12	Affixing Toe tags to remains to ensure proper tracking and identification.	
2.13	Securing and preserving evidence relevant to the death investigation, including affixing a numbered seal to body bags when necessary.	
2.14	Testifies in court.	
2.15	Prepares thorough reports and signs death certificates.	
2.16	May be called upon to provide training, and directions to trainees, coroner technicians, and volunteers.	
2.17	May be directed to respond to death scenes, perform tasks associated with collection and transportation of remains to a Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center.	
3.0	<u>Coroner Corporal; class code 37502</u>	
3.1	Under general supervision, to serve as a lead worker on an assigned shift, and to provide entry and journey level personnel with initial and ongoing field and office training.	
3.2	Perform the same functions as that of a deputy coroner, as well as those assigned by a supervisor.	
4.0	<u>Coroner Sergeant; class code 37503:</u>	
4.1	Under direction, to plan, organize, and supervise the work of Deputy Coroners, and coroner technicians.	
4.2	Trains and instructs personnel in the proper method of completing Sheriff-Coroner functions.	
4.3	Assists subordinates with problems as they arise.	
4.4	Answers complaints and questions from the general public and others.	
4.5	Orders supplies and equipment.	
4.6	Prepares work schedules and responds to staffing needs.	
4.7	Prepares payroll reports.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Personnel duties / responsibilities	NUMBER: Policy # 701.04
4.8	Conducts personnel investigations as directed.	
4.9	A Coroner Sergeant may also assume the functions of a Deputy Coroner as necessary.	
4.10	Complete evaluation reports on subordinates as directed within Departmental General Orders.	
4.11	Other duties as assigned.	

4.0 Administrative Deputy Coroner:

- 4.1 The deputy coroner assigned to the administrative position will be assigned to a Coroner Supervisor and have the following responsibilities.
 - 4.1.1 Preparing and presenting Coroner Review Cases. This responsibility will include responding to death scenes and conducting an administrative review of the investigation for the presentation to the Sheriff-Coroner and Grand Jury. A response to Coroner Review scenes outside the deputy's normal shift hours is not mandatory. Overtime pay will be authorized should the deputy elect to respond.
 - 4.1.2 Assists with conducting security clearance backgrounds on custodian and contract transportation employees, Coroner volunteers, and other individuals as assigned.
 - 4.1.3 Developing and presenting training to medical institutions.
 - 4.1.4 Developing and presenting public presentations.
 - 4.1.5 Organizing, developing, and implementing Coroner programs.
 - 4.1.6 Planning and coordinating special Coroner operations.
 - 4.1.7 Representing the Coroner's Bureau on various departmental committees.
 - 4.1.8 Perform same functions as that of a Deputy Coroner when assigned by a supervisor, to include working investigations as needed.
 - 4.1.9 Completes BCIA forms and reports in custody deaths to the Department of Justice within 10 days of the death.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Personnel duties / responsibilities	NUMBER: Policy # 701.04
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4.1.10 Completes In Custody Death information forms for posting and updates upon completion of Coroner Review Process.

5.0 Sheriff's Records Clerk II, Class Code 13865:

- 4.1 Provides clerical support of the Coroner's Bureau.
- 4.2 Answers incoming telephone calls and greets people entering the lobby
- 4.3 Assists callers by answering questions or directing calls
- 4.4 Accepts mail and packages:
 - 4.4.1 Opens, date stamps, and distributes mail (refer to P & P 700.21)
- 4.5 Works with mortuaries:
 - 4.5.1 Assists mortuaries regarding release status and procedures.
 - 4.5.2 Verifies paperwork and faxes death certificate worksheets.
 - 4.5.3 Provides information regarding date and time of death and doctor information.
 - 4.5.4 Using the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS), monitors death certificates; giving clearance numbers, assigning deputy coroner's to sign death certificates.
 - 4.5.5 Use information from the death certificates to complete information into the coroner database system.
- 4.6 Accepts Subpoenas:
 - 4.6.1 Receives subpoena requests for reports; criminal and civil
 - 4.6.2 Sends reports per subpoena guidelines
 - 4.6.3 Receives subpoenas and arranges for depositions and courtroom testimony
 - 4.6.4 Receives subpoenas and requests for photographs and blood splits
- 4.7 Receive and Receipt Public Requests for Coroner Reports:
 - 4.7.1 Enters requests into coroner database system

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Personnel duties / responsibilities	NUMBER: Policy # 701.04
	4.7.2 Ensures reports are made ready for release	
	4.7.3 Mail requests when reports are completed	
4.8	Assists Law Enforcement and District Attorney's Offices	
	4.8.1 Receives and sends reports, photos, and cause of death to assist in their investigation.	
	4.8.2 Works with law enforcement concerning confidentiality holds and the release of cause of death and injury information for death certificates.	
	4.8.3 Works with law enforcement and the District Attorney's Office concerning the release of reports in homicide or suspicious cases.	
4.9	Assists hospitals and medical offices obtain cause of death and reports as needed.	
4.10	Runs statistical information as requested.	
4.11	Protect, preserve, and file paperwork generated by this office.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR
Personnel

TITLE:	Personnel duties / responsibilities	NUMBER: Policy # 701.04a
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5.0 Estate Investigators; class code 37521:

- 5.1 Under general supervision, performs fieldwork in investigations of estates of deceased persons; assists in the management and protection of estate properties.
- 5.2 Locates and makes death notifications to next of kin. Interviews and advises heirs on estate matters and procedures. Explains protocol of the Public Administrator Bureau.
- 5.3 Assists families in obtaining information on the Indigent Burial/Cremation Program.
- 5.4 Conducts interviews of friends, neighbors, doctors, landlords, etc., to obtain information regarding decedent.
- 5.5 Searches and photographs residence for wills, family information, valuables, cash, legal and fiduciary documents, stocks, bonds, jewelry, weapons/firearms, burial instructions and other personal effects.
- 5.6 Inventories and tags property.
- 5.7 Packs and delivers property to warehouse/accounting for safekeeping.
- 5.8 Verifies insurance, pensions, bank accounts, loan vesting, and vehicle ownership.
- 5.9 Contacts State Controller concerning unclaimed property.
- 5.10 Contacts Title Company to determine ownership of real property.
- 5.11 Inquires as to veteran status of decedent.
- 5.12 Investigates business establishments owned by decedent.
- 5.13 Maintains detailed history of events regarding the investigation and presents verbal and/or written recommendations.
- 5.14 Performs other related duties, as required.

6.0 Deputy Public Administrator, class code 37523:

- 6.1 Under general supervision, administers estates of deceased persons by managing estate assets, securing personal property, handling notes and mortgages, pays insurance premiums, collects receivables, negotiates leases and rentals of property, and sales real estate.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR
Personnel

TITLE:	Personnel duties / responsibilities	NUMBER: Policy # 701.04a
6.2	Meets and corresponds with heirs, relatives, attorneys, other governmental agencies, title companies, banks, etc.; examines creditor's claims for validity and form.	
6.3	Upon appointment by court as administrator, determines assets to be converted, transfers control of stocks and bonds to Public Administrator's control, conducts sales of personal and real property, secures contents of safe deposit boxes.	
6.4	Reviews investigation reports; performs or supervises preliminary appraisals of estates.	
6.5	Applies for insurance, social security, veterans, and other benefits; arranges for funerals; reviews, approves, or denies County Indigent Cremation and/or Burial applications.	
6.6	Prepares detailed reports of transactions affecting each estate as required by law; directs the preparation of fiduciary tax returns; reviews inquiries and prepares responses for persons interested in status of estate.	
6.7	Supervises the operations of a business or closes a business down when it is in the interest of the estate; notifies law enforcement agencies to monitor vacant property.	
6.8	Represents the Public Administrator in court and acts for the Public Administrator as directed.	
6.9	Performs other related duties as required.	
7.0	<u>Supervising Deputy Public Administrator, class code 37527:</u>	
7.1	Reviews cases referred to the Public Administrator's Bureau and makes assignments to the appropriate Deputy Public Administrator as needed after the Estate Investigator has completed their investigation.	
7.2	Under direction, to plan, organize, and supervise the work of Deputy Public Administrators and clerical support for conformance to time schedules, state codes, and Bureau policies and procedures; trains and assists staff in administrative procedures, the techniques used in estate investigation to determine decedent's assets and the methods of probating decedents' estates.	
7.3	Evaluates the performance of assigned staff as directed.	
7.4	May serve as the estate administrator for the more complex cases.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR
Personnel

TITLE:	Personnel duties / responsibilities	NUMBER: Policy # 701.04a
7.5	Evaluates modifications in office systems and procedures and makes recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the section; prepares correspondence and reports.	
7.6	Coordinates with other sections within the Bureau in the assignment of staff to public actions; attends departmental and Bureau staff meetings.	
7.7	Assists subordinates with problems as they arise.	
7.8	Answers complaints and questions from the general public and others.	
7.9	Prepares work schedules and responds to staffing needs.	
7.10	Conducts personnel investigations as directed.	
7.11	May also assume the functions of a Deputy Public Administrator as necessary.	
7.12	Performs other related duties, as required or assigned.	

8.0 Estate Property Technician, class code 15829:

- 8.1 Under general supervision, responsible for the proper identification, storage and maintenance of personal property belonging to estates.
- 8.2 Inventories personal property belonging to estates as required.
- 8.3 Verifies property received in warehouse.
- 8.4 Assists Estate Investigators and Deputy Public Administrators in performing searches of decedent residences.
- 8.5 Delivers personal property to warehouse.
- 8.6 Searches, inventories, and maintains estate vehicles.
- 8.7 Maintains estate keys (i.e., residence, vehicles, others)
- 8.8 Assists contract auctioneer in estate sales.
- 8.9 May arrange for disposal of hazardous materials.
- 8.10 Arranges for delivery or shipment of property as directed.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR
Personnel

TITLE:	Personnel duties / responsibilities	NUMBER: Policy # 701.04a
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8.11 Performs other related duties, as required and assigned.

9.0 Accounting Technician I, class code 15915:

9.1 Monitors accounts payable and accounts receivable for County vendors and estates.

9.2 Calculates an average of interest on local banks to determine best interest to pay on estate funds and distributes interest among all estates.

9.3 Invests estate funds in CDARS Program as needed.

9.4 Balances bank statements and monitors daily balances.

9.5 Balances warehouse sales reports and disburses sales proceeds to appropriate estates.

9.6 Prepares financial reports on banking activity.

9.7 Monitors saferoom and verifies inventories of cash items and saferoom items.

9.8 Monitors and inputs payroll information for Coroner and Public Administrator personnel.

9.9 Prepares reports for Medi-Cal reimbursement and unidentified persons reimbursement.

9.10 Calculates and prepares State Sales Tax Reports.

9.11 Gathers accounting information for annual budget preparation.

9.12 Prepares annual Form 1099's for Public Administrator vendors.

9.13 Coordinates with Panoramic Computer Company for software issues through telephone/email contact.

9.14 Supervises employees and prepares performance evaluations.

9.15 Prepares revenue and expenditure reports.

9.16 Performs other duties as required.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR
Personnel

TITLE:	Personnel duties / responsibilities	NUMBER: Policy # 701.04a
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10.0 Senior Accounting Assistant, class code 15913:

- 10.1 Monitors accounts payable and accounts receivable for County vendors and estates.
- 10.2 Balances warehouse sales reports and disburses sales proceeds to appropriate estates.
- 10.3 Monitors saferoom and verifies inventories of cash items and saferoom items.
- 10.4 Monitors and inputs payroll information for the Coroner and Public Administrator's personnel.
- 10.5 Monitors and maintains estate real property insurance.
- 10.6 Orders Coroner/Public Administrator's supplies including morgue supplies and equipment.
- 10.7 Prepares annual Form 1099's for Public Administrator's vendors.
- 10.8 Prepares Auditor's deposits.
- 10.9 Monitors petty cash and revolving fund accounts.
- 10.10 Performs other duties as required and assigned.
- 10.11 Runs sick leave profiles on employees, as requested.

11.0 Office Assistant III, class code 13866:

- 11.1 Provides clerical support for the Public Administrator's Bureau.
- 11.2 Screens telephone inquiries to the Public Administrator's Bureau.
- 11.3 Sorts the Public Administrator/decedent mail received on a daily basis.
- 11.4 Composes routine correspondence and extracts information for the preparation of court forms and other court documents.
- 11.5 Prepares Department of Vehicle forms for the transfer of ownership.
- 11.6 Inputs all referrals made to the Bureau.
- 11.7 Takes information for referrals over the telephone.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR
Personnel

TITLE:	Personnel duties / responsibilities	NUMBER: Policy # 701.04a
11.8	Inputs disposition authorizations into the indigent tracking computer program.	
11.9	Prepares monthly billings/letters to families reimbursing the indigent burial fund and tracks receipts.	
11.10	Prepares files, completes "Report of Investigation" form.	
11.11	Files.	
11.12	Assigns referrals to the Estate Investigators and OSC's to Deputy PA's.	
11.13	Runs CLETS/DMV information and searches Ancestry and Accurint for family members, etc.	
11.14	Prepares annual reports using data personally compiled.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Shift assignments / rotation	NUMBER: Policy # 701.05
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POLICY: Shift assignments, and the rotation of shifts, are based upon the needs of the Department, and are at the direction of the Bureau Commander.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 **Shift assignment:**

- 1.1 Seniority does not apply to shift preference.
- 1.2 Written requests for shift change may be made to the employee's immediate supervisor.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Vehicles	NUMBER: Policy # 701.06
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POLICY: Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau vehicles are only to be used for work related functions. Employees shall not drive vehicles without the knowledge of a supervisor.

REFERENCE: Riverside County Sheriff General Orders section 403.00

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Checking out vehicles:

- 1.1 A vehicle must be signed out by the employee prior to driving it. If no supervisor is on-duty, the act of signing out the vehicle will suffice for "knowledge of a supervisor".
- 1.2 Vehicles shall be checked out prior to driving. Employees are responsible for assuring that safety equipment is operational and the vehicle is in running condition ie; check oil, tires, lights, etc...
- 1.3 If a lube is due, or other mechanical repair is necessary, the employee shall write the vehicle up for service, and notify his / her supervisor.

2.0 Emergency lighting:

- 2.1 Some Sheriff-Coroner vehicles are equipped with emergency lights / sirens.
 - 2.1.1 **At no time**, shall Coroner Sergeants, Deputy Coroners, Coroner Techs, or clerical staff, activate the forward red lights, or siren. Activating the siren and / or red lights constitute an "emergency response".
 - 2.1.2 The rear flashing amber light may be activated for safety reasons, i.e.; accident scene on a roadway.

3.0 On-call:

- 3.1 Deputies who are on-call, are authorized to take a vehicle home.
- 3.2 Safety considerations should be given as to the location where vehicles are parked and secured. Deputies shall assure that windows are fully closed and doors locked.
 - 3.2.1 Unless the County vehicle is parked in a locked garage, all County equipment shall be removed from the vehicle at night, or when parked for an extended period of time.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Vehicles	NUMBER: Policy # 701.06
	3.2.1.1	Property to be removed shall consist of cell phone, camera, personal identification, weapons, Department/Bureau phone rosters and badge.
	3.2.1.2	Items such as body bags, first aid kits, etc... may remain in the vehicle.

4.0 Damage:

4.1 All damage to vehicles shall be immediately reported to a supervisor.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE: **Sign In/Out Board**

NUMBER: Policy # 701.07

POLICY: Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau personnel are to account for their location when on duty and must be readily reached in person, by phone, or radio while on duty.

PROCEDURE:

1.0 In/Out Board Online

- 1.1 Deputy Coroners, Forensic Pathologists, Estate Investigators, Sheriff Service Officers, and Supervisors (SOA, Sergeants, Lieutenants, Chief Pathologist and Captain) will be responsible for signing in/out of the office on the online status board specified for such use. Designated employee shall sign "in" and "out" from their assigned duty station.
 - 1.1.1 The sign in/out board will be located on the internet and can be accessed by any computer with the ability to log onto the internet.
 - 1.1.2 Upon arrival to the office, designated staff shall launch Internet Explorer and go to the web site [REDACTED]. Staff will log onto the secured site by typing in their unique user name and password. Staff will then indicate their availability by clicking on the "Change My Status" link on the home screen and selecting "In" from the drop down options. Staff will then log out of the web site and close Internet Explorer.
 - 1.1.3 Upon leaving the office, designated staff shall log back into the web site [REDACTED] and indicate they are "In Field" and will additionally indicate the location they are destined to as well as an anticipated return time.
 - 1.1.4 Deputy Coroners will also indicate in the comments section the cell phone number they can be reached at as well as the location they are en route to and the nature of the call (e.g. 1234 Any Street, Riverside - Homicide).
 - 1.1.5 This procedure will be followed for days off also. On the last work day of the week, the designated employee shall indicate they are "Out" and the return date/time.
 - 1.1.6 Once signed "Out" to the field, should an employee change locations, he/she shall call clerical staff (or any available coroner staff) and advise them of the needed change to the board Perris - [REDACTED] and Indio - [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Sign In/Out Board	NUMBER: Policy # 701.07
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1.1.7	All other staff shall report their absence from the office to their immediate supervisor or any other supervisor in the absence of their immediate supervisor.
1.1.8	Staff should not remain logged onto the In/Out Board web site [REDACTED] for prolonged periods of time. Staff may periodically log onto the web site, as described above, to check the status of other employees or supervision, but should log off once completed.
1.1.9	A large LCD display will be mounted on the south wall of the Investigations bureau in Perris, which will remain on during regular business hours. This display will be attached to a computer in the clerical store room, which will be logged onto the In/Out Board web site and displaying the Company Kiosk screen. Clerical staff will be responsible for turning this computer on and logging into the In/Out Board web site at the beginning of the business day. Upon close of regular business, clerical staff will log out of the In/Out Board web site, turn off the computer and shut down the LCD display.
1.2	In/Out Boards online offers a calendar feature that will allow the user to schedule events in advance that will automatically change the user's status to a pre-selected choice. Use of this feature is restricted to incidental events like meetings, court, days off, vacation, etc. This feature is not to be used to pre sign in or out for regularly scheduled shifts. Employees are required to log onto the web site upon start of their shift and upon completion of their work day and manually change their status.

POLICY: All deaths reported to the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau shall be documented on approved forms.

REFERENCE: None

DEFINITIONS:

1.0 **Report Forms:**

This policy has been redacted. Effective the date of this update, the Case Management System used by the Coroner's Bureau does not number printed report forms.

All approved Sheriff's Forms will be used when appropriate.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Case Type Definitions

NUMBER: Policy # 701.09

POLICY: All deaths reported to the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau are either a medical or regular case type.

REFERENCE: None

DEFINITIONS:

1.0 Case Types:

- 1.1 Medical Case: Defined as those cases that are reportable to the Sheriff-Coroner, but where a physician signs the death certificate and not a deputy coroner. The case information is generally limited to the necessary information to sustain a medical case.
- 1.2 Regular Case: Defined as those cases that are reportable to the Sheriff-Coroner and requires a deputy coroner to sign the death certificate. These cases generally require a greater depth of investigation and a report narrative needs to be written. A narrative report is not required, but may be necessary, as determined by the Deputy Coroner and/or Coroner supervision, on Primary Medical Doctor Certifications (PMD CERTS), wherein the Deputy Coroner obtains a cause of death from the primary or attending physician.
- 1.3 Pending Case: Defined as those cases where the death is not clearly classified as a medical or regular case at the time the death is initially reported.
- 1.4 Other Case: Defined as those cases that do not fall within the definition of a medical or regular case, e.g., non-human remains, assisting other departments (AOD).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Cover Sheet – Form Number CR1000

NUMBER: Policy # 701.10

POLICY: A cover sheet shall be included with all regular case investigations. This form serves to record the cause and manner of death as well as show what other individual Sheriff-Coroner's reports are contained in the case file and completed for a case.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 General Guidelines:

- 1.1 The cover sheet form shall be completed and submitted by the investigating deputy as soon as the cause and manner of death are known.
- 1.2 The cover sheet form shall be completed from information within the Coroner Case Management System.
- 1.2 The cover sheet form is not required on medical and "other" cases.
- 1.3 The cover sheet form shall be attached to the front of a report package when the case is submitted for approval by a supervisor.

2.0 Cover Sheet Content:

- 2.1 All information for the cover sheet is automatically pulled from the Initial Death Report, Form CR1000A. Deputies should assure that the form contains the following information prior to being approved by a supervisor.
- 2.2 Decedent full name.
 - 2.2.1 Last name in capital letters followed by the first name. When known, always use the full legal name. Do not use nicknames or abbreviated names such as Doug for Douglas.
- 2.3 Sheriff-Coroner case number.
- 2.4 Sex, age and date of birth.
- 2.5 Residence address including city, state and zip code.
- 2.6 Death information to include address, city, state, zip code, date and time of death.
- 2.7 Injury information, if applicable location, date and time.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Cover Sheet – Form Number CR1000

NUMBER: Policy # 701.10

- 2.8 Cause of death and related information exactly how it would appear on the death certificate.
- 2.9 Attached reports.
 - 2.9.1 Indicate the other Sheriff-Coroner's reports that are included with the case by checking the appropriate box(es).
- 2.10 Manner of death.
 - 2.10.1 The manner of death shall be indicated, e.g., Accident, suicide, homicide, natural, or undetermined.
- 2.11 Reviewed/approved by and date.
 - 2.11.1 The Supervisor shall sign and date the form upon the case being reviewed. The Lieutenant or Captain (or their designee) approving the report shall sign and date the form when approved.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Coroner Investigation of Death Report

NUMBER: Policy # 701.11

POLICY: A Coroner Investigation of death report shall be completed for all deaths reported to the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau. This form provides a standardized method for recording all case types.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 General Guidelines:

1.1 On all initial calls the investigating deputy shall complete the Coroner Investigation report form.

1.1.1 This does not preclude the completion of other related forms, e.g., case time and expense record, child death form and sudden unexplained infant death protocol.

1.2 The Coroner Investigation report shall be completed in the Coroner Case Management System.

1.2.2 An investigation narrative form shall be used for any required narrative.

1.3 The Coroner Investigation report form shall be updated as new information becomes available. This shall be the responsibility of the investigating deputy coroner as long as the case is open. Once the case is closed, mode and manner of death has been established, clerical staff shall make any necessary updates.

2.0 Timeline for Completion:

2.1 The Coroner Investigation form shall be completed during the employee's shift on the day the case was received.

3.0 Coroner Investigation Report Directions:

3.1 The deputy should tab through every box on the form, ensuring that the criteria is completed in each area if the information is known.

3.1.1 Depending upon which office handles the investigation, the deputy shall insert the geographical office boundary for where the death occurred. This may differ from the actual office location where the investigator is assigned.

3.1.2 The "Rollout" box shall be checked if the deputy responded to the death scene.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Coroner Investigation of Death Report

NUMBER: Policy # 701.11

- 3.1.3 All cases where the decedent is 14 years of age and older will have the decedent's name searched in the Sheriff's Department Data Warehouse for possible warrants. The "Warrant Search Completed Date" and "Warrant Found" fields will be filled in on all cases once identification is confirmed. The "Who Notified (Sheriff ID#)" field will be completed on all cases where the decedent is found to have a warrant listed within Data Warehouse. Notification shall be made to the Sheriff's Information Services Bureau (ISB) via the 24 hour notification line immediately upon determining a warrant exists within Data Warehouse.
- 3.2 The "Case notes" section is only to be used for internal communication between staff regarding the case.
- 3.3 The "Brief Investigative Summary" and "Medical History/Medications sections are to be used for any relevant information used to support the course of the investigation."
 - 3.3.1 In the case of a medical, deputies need to insert the necessary information within the Summary section in order to establish that case as a medical and not a regular case. If the "Narrative Not Required" box is checked, the Summary and Medical History/Medications section will not be redacted from the report in the event that the case is requested.
 - 3.3.2 Unless the "Narrative Not Required" box is checked, the Summary and Medical History/Medications sections will be redacted from the Public Coroner Investigation report released upon request.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Investigation Narrative

NUMBER: Policy # 701.12

POLICY: An investigation narrative shall be used to record the details of the death investigation. This is required on all regular cases and is optional on medicals and "others".

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 General Guidelines:

- 1.1 The investigation narrative form accompanies the initial death report form.
- 1.2 The investigating deputy is responsible for accurately recording the facts of an investigation in a concise narrative form.
- 1.3 All investigation narratives shall be completed in the Coroner Case Management System. Handwritten narratives are not acceptable.
 - 1.3.1 The narrative shall be typed in the event of a computer failure.
 - 1.3.2 The font for narratives shall be Arial size 18.
- 1.4 The investigation narrative shall also be completed when there is supplemental information to report on a case.

2.0 Timeline for Completion:

- 2.1 The investigation narrative form is to be completed during the deputy's shift unless delaying the completion is approved by a supervisor.

3.0 Investigation Narrative Directions:

- 3.1 Within the header of the narrative form, it should indicate whether it is an initial or supplemental report.
- 3.2 The decedent's full name should be entered in the header. When known, always use legal names.
- 3.3 Case file number.
 - 3.3.1 Enter the case file number separating the case year and file number by a hyphen.
- 3.4 Narrative section.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Investigation Narrative

NUMBER: Policy # 701.12

3.4.1 For all regular non-rollout cases, the investigation narrative at minimum shall include the following section headers;

3.4.1.1 Initial information obtained, (including medical history).

3.4.1.2 Medications.

3.4.1.3 Documentation, (copies of medical records, etc..).

3.4.1.4 Cause of death statement: "Consulted with attending physician" or "Referred to Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center for determination."

3.4.1.4.1 For medical/hospice cases: "Mortuary to consult with attending physician".

3.4.1.5 Deputy's name and date.

3.4.2 For all regular rollout cases, the investigation narrative at minimum shall include the following section headers;

3.4.2.1 Initial information obtained.

3.4.2.2 Scene description/details.

3.4.2.3 Medications.

3.4.2.4 Documentation, (copies of medical records, photos, etc...).

3.4.2.5 Deputy Coroner's external examination of remains, (Including body position and clothing description, rigor and livor mortis, body/ambient temperatures, method used and time taken, identifying marks scars tattoos, trauma, decomposition and other observations.

3.4.2.6 Cause of death statement: "Consulted with attending physician" or "Referred to Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center for determination".

3.4.2.7 Transportation.

3.4.2.8 Deputy's name and date.

3.5 Other information may be added at the discretion of the investigating employee or at the discretion of the supervisor.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Investigation Narrative

NUMBER: Policy # 701.12

- 3.6 Other section headers may be used within the narrative at the discretion of the investigating deputy.
- 3.7 Summarizing information contained in other Sheriff-Coroner reports is not necessary within the investigation narrative, e.g., autopsy protocols or toxicology reports.
- 3.8 When recording supplemental information, section headers shall be used for each section that pertains to the information being added.
- 3.9 At the end of any narrative report, the reporting deputy shall type their name, identification number and date prepared.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Medical Narrative –

NUMBER: Policy # 701.12a

POLICY: A medical case is defined as a reportable death that was a result of natural causes where the attending physician is signing the death certificate.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Narrative Report:

1.1 As of July 01, 2003, deputies are no longer required to complete an investigation narrative for cases certified by the attending physician.

1.1.1 The case summary serves as the complete report for medical cases.

1.1.2 Deputies have the option of writing a full narrative if the case warrants additional investigation narrative.

2.0 Generating Medical Report:

2.1 These cases will be classified as PMD/CERT cases.

2.2 Within the "Case Notes" section, deputies are required to insert enough information to support the case as a medical.

2.2.1 Within the "Initial Circumstances" section deputies need to include initial information such as Hospice, Dr. will sign D/C, found unresponsive by neighbor, etc...

3.0 Printing Forms:

3.1 Select the medical form when the print screen appears. All the necessary information will be pulled from the initial death report and added to the medical form.

4.0 Case Files:

4.1 A case file shall be created for PMD/CERT cases, containing a CCMS print out and a working copy of the death certificate.

5.0 Dual Signatures:

5.1 Dual Signatures on death certificates are no longer required on cases where physician attendance is greater than 60 days.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Medical Narrative –

NUMBER: Policy # 701.12a

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Medical History / Cause of Death Forms

NUMBER: Policy # 701.12b

POLICY: Deputy Coroners may use bureau-approved forms for gathering medical information from decedent's attending physicians.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Medical History Form:

1.1 Deputy Coroners may provide the attached Medical History Form (CR1000D) to a decedent's attending physician in order to facilitate ascertaining the decedent's medical history. A copy of the CR1000D is attached to this policy for reference.

1.1.1 Deputy Coroners shall not blindly fax the CR1000D to a physician. The form should be used to document a conversation with a physician or to expedite the relay of information from the physician, should he/she be too busy to speak with the Deputy on the phone.

1.1.2 Once the physician completes and returns the CR1000D, it shall be retained in the case file.

1.1.3 The CR1000D is not an attachment to the CR1000B (narrative). Information from the CR1000D can be referenced in the Deputy Coroner's narrative.

2.0 Cause of Death Form:

2.1 Deputy Coroners may provide the attached Physician Cause of Death form (CR1000E) to the decedent's attending physician in order to facilitate and document obtaining the physician's opinion as to the cause of death in a regular, physician sign-out case. A copy of the CR1000E is attached to this policy for reference

2.1.1 Deputy Coroners shall not blindly fax the CR1000E to a physician. The form should be used to document a conversation with a physician or to expedite the relay of information from the physician, should he/she be too busy to speak with the Deputy on the phone.

2.1.2 Once the physician completes and returns the CR1000E, it shall be retained in the case file.

2.1.3 The CR1000E is not an attachment to the CR1000B (narrative). Information from the CR1000E can be referenced in the Deputy Coroner's narrative.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Uniforms	NUMBER: Policy # 701.13
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POLICY: The position of deputy coroner is a uniformed position. Any exception shall be at the direction of the bureau commander.

REFERENCE: Department uniform manual, Department General Orders section 208.00

PROCEDURE:

1.0 On Duty Attire

- 1.1 While on duty, whether in the office, or in the field, deputies shall be in uniform or appropriate civilian attire.
- 1.2 Deputies shall maintain their uniforms and civilian attire in a presentable manner, ie; cleaned & pressed.

2.0 **Uniforms:**

- 2.1 If wearing the Department uniform, Deputy Coroners shall wear a Sheriff's Department class "A", class "B", or class "C" uniform while on duty.
 - 2.1.1 Class "C" uniforms shall not be worn during public presentations.
- 2.2 Class "A, B & C" uniforms are supplied by the Department.
- 2.3 Uniforms damaged by normal use, wear & tear, shall be replaced by the Department.
 - 2.3.1 Requests for uniform replacement shall be submitted via chain of command on a form #101.

3.0 **Civilian Attire:**

- 3.1 At the bureau commander's discretion, Deputy Coroners may wear civilian attire while on duty. When in civilian attire, bureau members shall be dressed as follows:
 - 3.1.1 Male bureau members shall wear a long or short sleeved, button down shirt, neck tie, dress or "Dockers" type trousers, appropriately colored socks, and dress shoes. A sport jacket or suit coat may be worn. All clothing shall be moderate in style and color.
 - 3.1.2 Female bureau members shall wear a long or short sleeved, button down shirt, dress slacks or skirt with a hem line of 2" above the knee to ankle length, and closed toe, business appropriate shoes with no greater than a 2" heel. A dress jacket may be worn. All clothing shall be moderate in style and color.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Uniforms	NUMBER: Policy # 701.13
	3.1.3	Male and Female bureau members may wear a civilian jacket or sweater as the weather dictates.
	3.2	Bureau members will follow all current and future General Orders, Department Uniform manuals, and Department Memorandums / Directives regarding that which constitutes appropriate or inappropriate civilian attire.
	3.3	A supervisor may direct an employee to correct inappropriate civilian attire.
	3.4	The bureau commander may authorize temporary changes to this policy, provided those changes do not violate Departmental General Orders (For example, eliminating ties at investigation scenes in hot weather).
	3.5	All Departmental personal appearance and grooming standards apply to Deputy Coroners wearing civilian attire.
	3.6	Civilian attire damaged by normal use, work related damage, or wear & tear shall be the responsibility of the employee.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE:	Duty time	NUMBER: Policy # 701.14
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau shall ensure that employees have ample time off between work shifts.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 **Work period:**

- 1.1 Employees shall not work longer than sixteen hours within a twenty-four hour period.
- 1.2 Employees working sixteen hours in one day, shall not be required to work more than twelve hours the following day unless specific approval is obtained from the Commander or his designees.
- 1.3 Any employee working more than twelve hours, shall not be placed on-call for the following eight hours after they get off work.
- 1.4 Any deviation from this policy shall be at the direction of the bureau commander.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Guidelines for Referring Cases to the Public Administrator NUMBER: Policy # 701.15

POLICY: In certain situations Deputy Coroners may be required to refer cases to the Public Administrator's Bureau for the purpose of locating next-of-kin and controlling the estate of the deceased. A referral form shall be completed for all cases referred to the Public Administrator's Bureau. The form provides a standardized method for referring all case types.

REFERENCE: California Government Code 27491.3, P&P 702.03

PROCEDURE:

1.0 General Guidelines:

- 1.1 The investigating deputy shall refer cases to the Public Administrator's Bureau without delay in which legal next-of-kin cannot be located or established.
- 1.2 The case information shall be completed using the Coroner database. Handwritten forms are not acceptable.
 - 1.2.1 The form shall be typed in the event of a computer failure.
- 1.3 Completed referral forms shall be given to the investigation supervisor for approval.
- 1.4 Approved referral forms shall be initialed by the investigation supervisor and returned to the investigating deputy who will then make a copy of the referral for the file and submit the original to the Public Administrator's clerical personnel.
 - 1.4.1 Copies of referral forms shall be stamped with a "COPY" stamp, or have the word "COPY" handwritten in the upper right hand corner of the form in RED ink only.

2.0 Notification of Referral:

- 2.1 The referring deputy shall notify the morgue supervisor and the clerical personnel responsible for coordinating the release of remains that the case was referred to the Public Administrator's Bureau. Notification shall be made by E-mail including the date and time the referral was completed.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR
Personnel

TITLE:	Purchasing Estate Property/Accepting Gifts	NUMBER: Policy # 701.16
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POLICY: The purchase of estate property, the acceptance of gifts, and the personal use of estate property by employees, their immediate families, or agents of the Coroner/Public Administrator Division are strictly prohibited.

REFERENCE: Government Code Section 27443, General Orders 202.19

1.0 Procedures:

1.1 Purchase of Estate Property

All Coroner/Public Administrator staff members and their immediate families shall comply with Section 27443 of the California Government Code which reads in part:

“Every person holding the office of public administrator, public guardian, or public conservator and any deputy or agent of such officer is guilty of a crime who:

- (a) Purchases, directly or indirectly, the property of any estate or a claim against any estate administered by any public administrator, public guardian, or public conservator in his official capacity, or
- (b) Acts upon any transaction or expenditure in connection with the administration of an estate by the public administrator, public guardian, or public conservator in his official capacity, when he has a financial interest in such transaction or expenditure, or, having knowledge of such interest, is associated in business with anyone who has such an interest...

1.2 Employees of the Coroner/Public Administrator are subject to the above restrictions with respect to the estates administered by the Riverside County Sheriff-Public Administrator’s Bureau (Government Code Section 27443.5).

1.3 Members of an employee’s immediate family shall not be permitted to purchase items of property of any estate under the jurisdiction of this department.

1.3.1 Immediate family is defined as a person’s parents, spouse, children, and siblings.

2.0 Gifts

2.1 Employees of the Coroner/Public Administrator shall not accept gifts from individuals who have purchased items from estates under the jurisdiction of this department, nor shall members of an employee’s immediate family accept such gifts.

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR
Personnel**

TITLE:	Purchasing Estate Property/Accepting Gifts	NUMBER: Policy # 701.16
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2.2 Sheriff's General Orders 202.19 states:

Department members shall not solicit or accept, either directly or indirectly, any gift, pass, gratuity, loan or anything of value, the acceptance of which could influence the action of said member in a police action or which would cast an adverse reflection on the Department or the law enforcement profession.

2.3 Employees of the Coroner/Public Administrator shall not remove for their personal use any items of estate property that may be discharged as being of such little value that they cannot be sold. The Deputy Public Administrator or Estate Property Technician will dispose of such items.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR
Personnel

TITLE:	Public Administrator Duty Officer	NUMBER: Policy #701.17
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will ensure that a Deputy Public Administrator (duty officer) is available during normal business hours to respond to public inquiries/requests and decedent case emergencies.

REFERENCE:

1.0 Procedures:

1.1 The duties and responsibilities of the duty officer is to function as the Bureau's representative for that day. Individual responsibilities are as follows:

1.1.1 The duty officer will answer all questions from the public regarding new referrals or cases not yet assigned.

1.1.2 The duty officer will answer all questions from the public regarding the function of the Bureau.

1.1.3 The duty officer will respond to emergency inquiries on cases assigned to other deputies when the assigned deputy is not in the office at the time of the call/visit, and will note any action taken on the Case Event screen. The duty officer shall alert the assigned deputy by e-mail.

1.1.4 The duty officer will return all duty phone calls within two (2) hours of receipt of call.

1.1.5 The duty officer will be responsible for selecting an alternate duty officer in the event of planned absence on scheduled duty day and notify the receptionist of the new duty officer (even if only for a short time). The duty officer will also notify the receptionist upon return to the office.

1.1.6 The duty officer will, upon written request, respond to a case need of another deputy, such as releasing property, when that deputy has to be in the field or otherwise out of the office. These types of situations shall be limited to only those cases in which rescheduling would be inappropriate.

2.0 In the absence of Public Administrator Staff

2.1 In the absence of Public Administrator Staff, Coroner Bureau personnel may be required to handle cases that would normally fall under the jurisdiction of the Public Administrator (P.A.).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR
Personnel

TITLE:	Public Administrator Duty Officer	NUMBER: Policy #701.17
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2.1.1	If a Deputy Coroner receives the report of a death, which does not meet the criteria of a regular coroner's case, however possibly falls under the jurisdiction of the Public Administrator, and Public Administrator staff is not available (i.e. after hours, weekends, and holidays) the Deputy Coroner shall take enough information on the case to enter the case into the coroner data base as a medical.	
2.1.1.1	If the reporting party (hospital or skilled nursing facility) has adequate body storage capabilities, then the Deputy Coroner will advise the facility to store the body until normal business hours, and report the case to the Public Administrator as a possible P.A. case.	
2.1.1.2	If the reporting party does not have adequate body storage capabilities (death is at a residence or small facility) then the Deputy Coroner shall make the case a regular coroner's case and have the body transported to the appropriate forensic center. The Deputy Coroner shall then work the case as they would any other coroner's case, to include confirmation of identity, searching for next of kin, writing a report, and signing the death certificate. In the event that no family or next of kin is established, the case will be referred to the Public Administrator, per policy 701.15.	
2.2	At no time will a Deputy Coroner contact the Public Administrator's contract mortuary and arrange for the transportation of a potential Public Administrator case to their facility for storage.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE: Daylight Saving Time

NUMBER: Policy # 701.18

POLICY: The Coroner's Bureau shall insure that employees do not work overtime as a result of daylight saving time.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Daylight Saving Time:

1.1 Daylight Saving Time begins at 0200 on the first Sunday of April. Time reverts back to standard time at 0200 on the last Sunday in October.

1.1.1 Supervisors shall insure that employees assigned to work during either of these two periods adjust their schedules accordingly so as not to be subject to the requirements of overtime.

1.1.1.1 Example; employees assigned to work 2400-0800 on the night Daylight Saving Time begins, (clocks moving forward), shall either adjust their schedule to work until 0900, or use one hour vacation or compensation time.

1.1.1.2 Employees assigned to work 2400-0800 on the night Daylight Saving Time ends, (clocks moving back), shall adjust their schedule to start one hour later, or end one hour earlier.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE: Jury Duty

NUMBER: Policy # 701.19

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner shall make every attempt possible to allow employees to attend jury duty as part of their regular shift, ensuring that work schedules are adjusted if necessary.

REFERENCE: Departmental General Orders section 206.07

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Duty Time:

- 1.1 A Department employee summoned for attendance to any court for jury duty shall be deemed to be on duty if the attendance is during the employee's normal working hours.
- 1.2 Duty schedules may be adjusted to allow the employee to attend jury duty on duty time.
 - 1.2.1 Example; If an employee is assigned to swing shift, he/she may be temporarily assigned to day shift in order to attend on duty time.
 - 1.2.2 Under no circumstances shall an employee be subject to overtime as a result of attending jury duty.
 - 1.2.3 In the event the employee's initial jury duty day falls on a regular day off, that employee shall attend on his or her own time. Should an employee be selected for a jury or asked to return for an additional day, his/her duty schedule may be adjusted to allow them to attend on duty.
- 1.3 While attending jury duty, the employee is to be held accountable for that entire shift.
 - 1.3.1 If the employee is released prior to their normal shift being completed, they shall notify supervision and either return to work or make up the difference by using their benefit time.

2.0 Subpoena:

- 2.1 Upon receiving a subpoena for jury duty, the employee shall immediately notify his/her supervisor.
- 2.2 The supervisor shall obtain a copy of the subpoena and make arrangements to adjust the employee's schedule.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Personnel

TITLE: Jury Duty

NUMBER: Policy # 701.19

3.0 Court Appearance:

- 3.1 Employees shall attend jury duty wearing proper courtroom attire. Departmental uniforms are not to be worn.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Deaths involving members of law enforcement

NUMBER: Policy # 701.20

POLICY: Deaths involving members of law enforcement, military, fire personnel, or other first responders may include special requests from family and/or the decedent's agency. This may include requests for a motorcade escort, vigil, draping of an American Flag or other requests. This policy provides guidance on such requests, as well as the release of information.

REFERENCE: Ca. Gov. Code 27491, Coroner Policies 700.12, 702.07

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Scene Response:

- 1.1 In most cases, a Deputy Coroner, Coroner Sergeant, and a member of Coroner Administration will respond to a death in the line of duty.
- 1.2 Coroner supervision shall identify the liaison, if any, between the family and the decedent's agency and/or the investigating agency.
- 1.3 Viewing of the decedent(s) shall be determined based on several factors including, but not limited to; location/control of the scene of death, family's wishes, condition of the decedent, and potential loss of evidence.
- 1.4 The decedent's uniform, firearm, equipment, badge, and other items may be collected by the investigating agency or the decedent's employing agency. Items not issued by the employing agency and not requested to be collected by the investigating agency as evidence should be handled as personal property.
- 1.5 Coroner staff responding to the scene shall bring a sufficient number of American flags to drape over the decedent(s).
 - 1.5.1 American flags are stocked in the Coroner transportation vehicles and the morgue supply warehouse.
 - 1.5.2 Decedent(s) shall be draped with an American flag, with the field of blue at the head and over the left shoulder of the decedent.

2.0 Next of Kin Notification:

- 2.1 The decedent's agency or the investigating agency may wish to make the death notification to the next of kin. The Coroner case agent shall ensure notification was made and document by whom and when. Next of kin information shall be entered into the Coroner Case Management System.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Deaths involving members of law enforcement

NUMBER: Policy # 701.20

3.0 Transportation of Decedent:

- 3.1 Deaths in the line of duty are often widely covered and viewed by media, family, and members of the public. Coroner supervision shall arrange for well-maintained, clean hearse(s) in anticipation of an escort from the location of death to the Coroner's Bureau. If one hearse is not sufficient, every effort will be made to ensure the hearses are matching, or as similar as possible. The transport driver should be dressed nicely, in a clean, neat suit, free of wear or stain.
- 3.1.1 In-house Coroner transportation vehicles should not be used, as they are not representative of a motorcade/funeral type procession.
- 3.1.2 Coroner supervision shall coordinate the removal and transportation of the decedent with the agency handling the motorcade escort. Authorization, implementation and managing of a motorcade rests with the appropriate agency, according to their procedures.
- 3.1.3 The gate to the Coroner's Bureau may need to be held open, depending on who will be following the hearse into the morgue receiving area.

4.0 Arrival to the Coroner's Bureau / Vigils:

- 4.1 If arrival will be after hours, Coroner supervision should consider calling a Coroner Technician in to assist in receiving the decedent. The morgue should be prepped for arrival (i.e. no tables sitting out, area cleaned and tidy and any items that may be insensitive put away).
- 4.2 Coroner supervision should consider contacting persons to assist in the mental health of staff and others. This may include The Counseling Team, Sheriff's Chaplains, etc.
- 4.3 Coroner supervision should arrange for sufficient supplies for staff involved in managing the receiving of the decedent(s) and/or vigil. This may include drinks, food, tissues, etc.
- 4.3.1 Coroner Supervision should consider contacting RSA, LEMU or the appropriate Union to assist in providing supplies for staff involved in the vigil.
- 4.4 Members of agencies and family should not enter the morgue area past the first set of double doors. The escort should end outside the morgue area, if possible. Agencies requesting a vigil shall be directed to the reception area of the front of the building, preferably in one of the family rooms.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Deaths involving members of law enforcement

NUMBER: Policy # 701.20

5.0 Release of Remains:

- 5.1 Motorcades are often involved in transporting the decedent to the mortuary. Supervision shall coordinate the release of remains with the agency in charge of the motorcade, as well as the mortuary.
- 5.2 Supervision shall ensure a clean American flag is draped on the decedent for release.
- 5.3 Supervision should arrange for a Sheriff's Chaplain to be present for the release, if appropriate.

6.0 Release of Information

- 6.1 Release of information shall be in accordance with established policy (700.12). The investigating agency may request a press release be delayed (702.07).
- 6.2 The Agency / Family may require a certification of death letter for purposes of benefits and insurance. This shall be completed by clerical staff and signed by the Coroner's Bureau commander.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Delegation of Jurisdiction

NUMBER: Policy # 701.21

POLICY: **The Coroner's Bureau will receive requests and be requested to make requests for jurisdictional changes. The Coroner's Bureau will make every effort to cooperate when a request for relinquishment of our jurisdiction is made to us.**

REFERENCE: California Government Code 27491.55

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Government Code:

1.1 In any case where a coroner is required to inquire into a death pursuant to Section 27491, the coroner may delegate his or her jurisdiction over the death to an agency of another county or the federal government when all of the following conditions have been met:

1.1.1 The other agency has either requested the delegation of jurisdiction, or has agreed to take jurisdiction at the request of the coroner.

1.1.2 The other agency has the authority to perform the functions being delegated.

1.1.3 When both the coroner and the other agency have a jurisdictional interest or involvement in the death.

2.0 Processing requests for delegation of jurisdiction:

2.1 Requests for delegation of jurisdiction are often made when an original injury (or suspected injury), is sustained in one county and the death occurs in another county. The federal government also makes requests in particular instances, such as military aircraft accidents.

2.1.1 Requests for jurisdiction of delegation cannot be considered with another state.

2.2 A Coroner's Bureau supervisor should handle all requests for jurisdiction delegation. Authorizations will be obtained from the Coroner's Bureau commander or his/her designee.

2.3 When a Riverside County law enforcement agency requests the Coroner's Bureau to request jurisdiction relinquishment from another county, the supervisor will contact a jurisdictional county coroner/medical examiner's supervisor to make the request. If that county grants our request, the details of how the case will be handled will need to be discussed with that county.

2.4 When another county or the federal government requests this Coroner's Bureau to relinquish jurisdiction, the case is to be assigned a case number as an AOD.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE: Delegation of Jurisdiction

NUMBER: Policy # 701.21

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- 2.5 In the coroner database system, generate a case number. The case type will be "O" for AOD. Obtain as much vital information as possible for Alpha Five and in the case notes section enter Jurisdiction relinquished to (name of) county. Refer to file number (number for that county).
- 2.6 If this bureau has initiated an investigation at the time of the request, the deputy coroner will complete the investigation, write an investigation narrative and forward it and any digital images to the county or federal government that is assuming jurisdiction.
- 2.7 The county coroner/medical examiner or federal government assuming jurisdiction will issue the death certificate and maintain all records/photographs.
- 2.8 Notify Riverside County's Vital Stats of our jurisdictional relinquishment. Provide them with the following information so that the death certificate filing can be accomplished without problem:
- 2.8.1 Name(s) of decedent(s).
- 2.8.2 County coroner/medical examiner that has assumed jurisdiction and the assuming county's coroner/ medical examiner file number(s).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Transportation	NUMBER: 701.22
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POLICY: The timely and effective transportation of decedents from the scene of death is of high priority to the Sheriff-Coroner. Coroner technicians may be tasked with this function as the need arises to deviate from the County contracted services.

REFERENCE: N/A

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Types of Cases Transported:

- 1.1 Coroner technicians may be directed to transport the following cases:
 - 1.1.1 Homicides
 - 1.1.2 Coroner Review
 - 1.1.3 Other cases due to logistical reasons or needs of the Department.

2.0 Transportation:

- 2.1 A minimum of two Sheriff-Coroner personnel shall be utilized in the removal of remains.
 - 2.1.1 This may include a deputy coroner or coroner sergeant.
- 2.2 Transports should only be performed in an authorized Sheriff-Coroner transport vehicle.
- 2.3 All necessary paperwork should be completed at the scene with the information provided by the deputy coroner, prior to transport, to include:
 - 2.3.1 Toe tag
 - 2.3.2 Transportation form
- 2.4 Remains should be transported directly to the Forensic Center from the scene, unless directed otherwise by a Sheriff-Coroner Supervisor.
- 2.5 Remains should be bagged or wrapped in plastic.
- 2.6 All remains should be covered prior to transport, or during removal in view of bystanders.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Electronic Mail	NUMBER: 701.23
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POLICY: This procedure establishes mandatory requirements for employees and supervisors that are allowed to operate and supervise the computer use and utilization of county owned or maintained computers. All department personnel responsible for operating the computers and/or supervising the use of them are under the duty to act solely for the benefit of the Sheriff-Coroner's Department in all matters connected with their employment. The purpose of the electronic mail (e-mail) is for employees to transmit only work related matters in furtherance of their assigned duties.

REFERENCE: General Orders – sections 1200.00 – 1202.04

BACKGROUND:

- 1.0 Most county employees either have access to or can obtain access to GroupWise for purposes of utilizing electronic messages instead of relying on written notes or memorandums to disseminate and collect information quickly in furtherance of their official duties.

DEFINITIONS:

- 1.0 Electronic mail (commonly referred to as e-mail): This refers to typed information or messages transmitted through computers utilized through the current networking system known as GroupWise.
- 2.0 The Electronic Mail Systems include, but are not limited to the ability to transmit via: Voice Mail Systems (VMS), Mobile Data Terminals (MDT), Mobile Data Computer (MDC) Systems and any laptops or free standing Personal (dept owned) Computers (PCs).

PROCEDURES:

- 1.0 The following General Orders address certain information related to Electronic Mail use, but are not all inclusive of related General Order sections.
 - 1.1 General Orders 1200.12: No Department member who has the access rights to another's user directory shall examine, inspect, or otherwise browse through any other user's subdirectories, file names, or otherwise view the files themselves without the express permission of the assigned "owner" of that directory except when necessary to further official duties.
 - 1.2 General Orders 1200.13: The Department Electronic Mail Systems (EMS) is provided to facilitate the performance of law enforcement work and is intended

for business related purposes only. The Electronic Mail Systems include but are not limited to: Voice Mail Systems (VMS), Mobile Data Terminals (MDT), and Mobile Data Computer (MDC) Systems within the Department.

- 1.3 General Orders 1200.14: Department Members who use the Electronic Mail Systems shall only use these systems in the course and scope of their assigned duties. The Electronic Mail Systems shall not be used for personal communication.
- 1.4 All electronic communications transmitted and stored via EMS, VMS, MDT or MDC are Department records. The Department reserves the right to access, use and copy all information.
- 2.0 No employee shall send electronic mail to the group "ALL-SHFCOR" or "ALL-SHFCORI" without obtaining approval from a Lieutenant or someone higher in rank.
 - 2.1 No employee shall reply to "ALL-SHFCOR" without obtaining approval from a Lieutenant or higher.
- 3.0 No employee shall send (or reply to) electronic mail to the group "ALL-SHERIFF" without obtaining approval from a ranking officer in the executive staff of the Sheriff Department, via Chain of Command.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	General guidelines for death investigations	NUMBER: Policy# 702.01
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POLICY: All personnel in the Coroner's Bureau are responsible for understanding and following the National Guidelines for Death Investigation published by the National Institute of Justice. The sudden or unexplained death of an individual has a profound impact on family and friends of the deceased and places a significant responsibility on the Sheriff-Coroner in determining cause of death. Each and every death is unique but by adhering to agreed-upon national standards, death investigators can competently answer questions about suspicious death.

REFERENCE: GOV. CODE 27491, H&S 10250, R.C.L.E.A.A. Death scene protocol

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Receiving the initial call:

- 1.1 Get as much accurate information as possible, asking questions in a clear concise manner.
- 1.2 Enter all information on the Initial Report. Use additional paper for notes as needed.

2.0 Response:

- 2.1 Generally, we will respond to all of the following as soon as possible.
 - 1. Homicides
 - 2. Suicides
 - 3. S.I.D.S.
 - 4. Traffic accidents
 - 5. Drowning
 - 6. Decomposed
 - 7. Burned
 - 8. No relatives present
 - 9. Miscellaneous violent accidents
 - 10. Sheriff-Coroner review cases/In-custody deaths (to include natural deaths)
 - 11. When requested by law enforcement
- 2.1.1 If the deputy was not intending to respond to the scene, such as in the case of a "Medical", and law enforcement is still requesting a deputy coroner at the scene, a Coroner supervisor should be contacted for direction in the matter.
- 2.2 Prior to leaving the office make sure the office knows where you are going, the type of case you are on, and the name of the deceased if known.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	General guidelines for death investigations	NUMBER: Policy# 702.01
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2.3 At no time shall a decedent that is a Coroner's case be left unattended, except under extraordinary circumstances and only with the Coroner Commander's or their designee's approval. A deputy coroner is not to leave a death scene until transportation has picked up the remains, unless a member of law enforcement is present the entire time. If the deputy coroner did not initially respond, he/she is not to instruct law enforcement to leave the remains awaiting the arrival of transportation, even if those remains are secured within a structure. Decedents located at a hospital, mortuary, or other facility where there is no deputy coroner response shall be safeguarded by staff until Coroner transportation arrives.

2.3.1 Medical cases are excluded from the requirements set forth in 2.3. Pending the arrival of mortuary transportation, remains may be left with family, neighbors or friends with the approval of the next of kin.

2.3.2 In the event no family, friends or neighbors are available and law enforcement is unable to remain on scene, the deputy coroner shall respond and the remains shall be transported to the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center.

3.0 Arriving at the Scene:

3.1 The Deputy Coroner shall take the initiative to identify the Lead Investigator and introduce himself / herself, establish rapport, and identify his / her role.

3.2 Identify other essential personnel and establish collaborative investigative effort.

3.3 Identify and document the identity of the first responders to the scene to ascertain if any artifacts or contamination may have been introduced to the death scene.

4.0 Exercise Scene Safety:

4.1 It is normally the investigating agency's responsibility to assess and / or establish physical boundaries to ensure scene safety.

4.2 Identify Incident Command.

4.3 Secure vehicle and park as safely as possible.

4.4 Use personal protective safety devices.

4.5 Arrange for removal of animals, or secure them if possible.

4.6 Obtain clearance / authorization to enter scene from the individual responsible for scene safety. Do not cross crime scene tape until checking with lead investigator.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	General guidelines for death investigations	NUMBER: Policy# 702.01
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- 4.7 Protect the integrity of the scene and evidence to the extent possible from contamination or loss by people, animals, and elements.

5.0 **Time of death:**

- 5.1 Locate and view the body.
- 5.2 Identify and document the individual who made the official determination of death, including the date and time of determination.

6.0 **Participate in Scene Briefing:**

- 6.1 Scene briefing allows for initial and factual exchange of information. This includes scene location, time factors, initial witness information, agency responsibilities and investigative strategy.

7.0 **Conduct Scene Walk Through:**

- 7.1 The investigating agency will designate the entry team for the investigative walk through. The Deputy Coroner should be a part of this.
- 7.2 The investigating agency will establish a path of entry and exit.
- 7.3 Identify visible physical and fragile evidence and determine initial investigative procedures providing for a systematic examination and documentation of the scene and body.

8.0 **Establish Chain of Custody:**

- 8.1 Determine custodian(s) of evidence, determine which agency(ies) is / are responsible for collection of specific types of evidence, and determine evidence collection priority for fragile / fleeting evidence.
- 8.2 Identify, secure, and preserve evidence with proper containers, labels, and preservatives. (Responsibility of investigative agency).
- 8.3 Document the collection of evidence by recording and photographing its location at the scene, time of collection and time and location of disposition.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

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- 8.4 Any evidence collected from the deceased shall be collected with the knowledge and permission of the Deputy Coroner on scene, and a receipt / documentation shall be provided by the collecting / investigative agency for the Sheriff-Coroner case file.

9.0 Documenting and Processing the Scene

The Deputy Coroner is responsible for photographic documentation as outlined below.

Note: The photographic documentation of the scene creates a permanent historical record of the scene. Photographs provide detailed corroborating evidence that constructs a system of redundancy should questions arise concerning the report, witness statements, or position of evidence at the scene. In homicide investigations the investigating agency may provide photographic documentation to the Sheriff-Coroner, however, the Deputy Coroner should also obtain photographic documentation for review at time of autopsy. In other cases the Deputy Coroner has the discretion of calling the Forensic Technician for photographic documentation of the death scene.

- 9.1 Photograph specific areas of the scene to provide more detailed views of specific areas within the larger scene.
- 9.2 Photograph the scene from different angles to provide various perspectives that may uncover additional evidence. A Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Tech may be needed for critical photographic work.
- 9.3 Diagram / describe in writing items of evidence and their relationship to the body with necessary measurements.
- 9.4 Describe and document, with necessary measurements, blood and body fluid including volume, patterns, spatters, and other characteristics.
- 9.5 Describe scene environment including odors, lights, temperatures where the remains were found (including ambient water temperature, and other fragile evidence as it pertains to the death investigation.
- 9.6 Note if any evidence has been moved prior to photographic documentation.

10.0 Establish Probable Location Where Injury Occurred

- 10.1 Document location where death was confirmed. If a street address is not obtainable, document the location with Global Positioning Systems.
- 10.2 Determine location from which decedent was transported and how body was transported to scene.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

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- 10.3 Identify and record discrepancies in rigor mortis, livor mortis, and body temperature. Check body, clothing, and scene for consistency of trace evidence and indicate the location where artifacts are found.
- 10.4 Check for drag marks (on body and ground).
- 10.5 Establish post-injury activity.
- 10.6 Establish dispatch (e.g., police, ambulance) records.
- 10.7 Affix a Coroner's Toe Tag to the remains for identification and document the toe tag number.
- 10.8 If a criminal act is associated with the death (Homicide, Hit and Run, Coroner Review, etc.) seal the body pouch with a locking seal and document the seal number.

11.0 Collect, Inventory, and Safeguard Property and Evidence

- 11.1 The Deputy Coroner shall inventory, collect, and safeguard medications. Illicit drugs and paraphernalia shall be retained by the investigating agency.
- 11.4 Inventory, collect, and safeguard money at scene, store according to policy, or release to next of kin.
- 11.5 Inventory, collect, and safeguard personal valuables / property at scene, store according to policy, or release to next of kin.
 - 11.5.1 When collecting perishable items such as bottles containing baby formula, diapers with fecal matter, food or medications, the items shall be refrigerated as soon as possible.
 - 11.5.2 These perishable items should be transported to the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center by the Deputy Coroner, and placed into a designated storage box within the walk-in cooler. It shall remain in this storage location pending review by the Pathologist, and/or release to the investigating law enforcement agency.
This procedure only applies to cases where law enforcement does not desire to take possession of the evidence. As in all cases where the Deputy Coroner takes possession of property/evidence at a scene, these items shall be documented on a property receipt.
 - 11.5.3 If property cannot be removed from the remains, for any reason, seal the body bag, photo document the property, and document the property in the case

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	General guidelines for death investigations	NUMBER: Policy# 702.01
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summary. Deputy Coroners shall write "PROPERTY ON BODY" in permanent marker of the body pouch.

12.0 Interview witness(es) at the scene

- 12.1 Coordination between the criminal investigator and the death scene investigator is essential. Interviews conducted by the deputy coroner to establish identity of the decedent and notification of next of kin must be conducted with the full knowledge of the lead criminal investigator.

13.0 Documenting and processing the remains at the death scene

- 13.1 The investigating agency shall have the primary responsibility for photographing the remains, which should include but is not limited to the following:
- a. Photograph the decedent as found.
 - b. Position (orientation) of the body (face up, down, on the side, hands crossed, etc.).
 - c. Clothing and personal effects.
 - d. Identifying features such as marks, scars, and tattoos.
 - e. Physical injury.
 - f. Therapeutic intervention.
 - g. Trace evidence (e.g., hairs, fibers, stains, foreign material).
 - h. Scaled photographs shall be taken of blood and body fluid patterns, wounds and other markings on the body such as soot and stippling, bite marks, contusions, etc.
 - i. Deputy Coroner shall document postmortem changes (i.e. rigor mortis, lividity, body temperature (if available), body odor, decomposition, insect / animal artifact or activity). The date and time these noticed postmortem changes are observed shall be noted.
 - j. Written documentation of all of the above: 13.1a –h.
 - k. Document the affixed toe tag number and body bag seal number, if applicable.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: General guidelines for death investigations	NUMBER: Policy# 702.01
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14.0 Collecting evidence from the remains:

14.1 The Sheriff-Coroner has jurisdiction over the body of the deceased, and any clothing and personal property (Govt. Code #27491).

14.1.1 It is extremely important that any evidence collected from the deceased is collected with the knowledge and permission of the Deputy Coroner assigned to the case. Documentation shall be provided for any evidence collected from or on the remains, and retained by the investigating agency.

14.1.2 In the event of immediate potential loss and / or contamination of evidence (e.g., environmental factors, hazards, etc.), that evidence may be collected prior to the arrival of the deputy coroner. The Deputy Coroner shall be advised of what was collected, the manner in which it was collected, and the reason necessitating the immediate collection. Again, the Deputy Coroner shall be provided with documentation for any collected evidence.

14.1.3 *There shall not be any intrusion into a body cavity, no matter how slight, without the consent of a Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner Pathologist. If pathologist is unavailable, Sheriff-Coroner Lieutenant may authorize collection of evidence.*

14.2 The investigating agency, in conjunction with the Deputy Coroner, shall facilitate the collection of evidence from the remains. The following items, among others, shall be considered for collection:

- a. Biological fluids / stains (e.g., semen, blood, saliva) on the body.
- b. Clothing
- c. Gunshot residue (GSR)
- d. Trace evidence (fibers, hair, tape lifts)
- e. Ballistics, weapons (e.g., knives, bullet fragments, wadding)
- f. Secondary, known victim blood sample, when possible, without compromising the integrity of the wound
- g. Foreign material (e.g., paint, soil, vegetation, etc.)
- h. Insects, maggots, larvae

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- i. Ligatures to be left in place
- j. If necessary, bag hands in place. Bags can be removed for identification purposes or other investigatory necessities.

14.3 To ensure the proper collection of blood and body fluids for subsequent analysis, biological specimen evidence shall be sampled by the pathologist with the adequate lighting and controlled environment of the autopsy suite on or about the morning following death. This will include vitreous, biological evidence that may be better preserved if collected as soon as possible, (e.g., semen taken by swab from body cavities), will be collected at the direction of the chief forensic pathologist or his designee.

NOTE: Treat all biological samples as infective material. Follow your agency's Bloodborne Pathogen plan.

- Wear gloves.
- Dust mask should be worn if dealing with dried stain material.
- Keep contaminated material away from face to prevent contact with mucous membranes.
- After dealing with evidence, properly dispose of gloves and wash hands with germicidal soap.

15.0 Hospital Deaths:

15.1 Admitting blood and medical records shall be obtained by the Deputy Coroner whenever the deceased is brought into the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center for determination of cause of death. This also applies to cases that are not brought in, but where toxicology may be pertinent or required by law to test, such as with delayed overdoses, delayed traffic accidents, etc.

15.1.1 If at all possible admitting blood shall not be transported by the contract transportation company.

16.0 Establish Decedent Identification:

16.1 As soon as possible, the Deputy Coroner shall confirm the identity of the deceased.

16.1.2 Direct visual or photographic identification of the decedent if visually recognizable. The Deputy Coroner shall also take a digital photograph of the decedent's face.

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16.1.3 The Deputy Coroner or Coroner Tech shall fingerprint the deceased. All print cards shall be submitted to Cal I.D.

16.1.3.1 **Victims of homicides shall not be routinely printed prior to examination by a pathologist, and/or any evidence being collected. If fingerprinting is necessary to establish identification, a thumbprint may be taken in the field after any necessary processing of the hands has been completed. This shall only be done with proper joint coordination and agreement with the investigating agency.**

16.1.4 Scientific methods such as dental and DNA comparisons may be used.

16.1.5 Circumstantial methods such as (but not restricted to) personal effects, circumstances, physical characteristics, tattoos, and anthropologic data may also be utilized for identification.

17.0 Death Notification:

17.1 Next of kin shall be notified as soon as possible, providing it does not interfere with criminal investigations.

17.1.1 Identify next of kin, (determine who will perform task).

17.1.2 Notify next of kin (Deputy Coroner is responsible for this task, however, Criminal Investigators may want to accompany him / her), record time of notification.

17.1.3 Provide next of kin with circumstances of the death, and any information relating to the Sheriff-Coroner's course of investigation.

17.1.4 Notify concerned agencies of status of the notification.

18.0 Completing the Scene Investigation:

18.1 Maintain Jurisdiction over the Body

18.1.1 The Deputy Coroner shall arrange for, document, and secure transportation of the remains to the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center.

18.1.2 The Deputy Coroner is responsible for the recovery of remains. Any recovery performed by an outside entity shall have the approval of a sergeant upon notification to the on duty or on call lieutenant. No recovery

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of human remains shall be performed by an outside entity without approval of the Coroner's bureau administration (lieutenant or captain).

18.1.3 The Deputy Coroner shall coordinate and document procedures to be performed when the remains are received at the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center.

19.0 Assist the Family:

19.1 The Deputy Coroner shall provide the family with a timetable so they can arrange for final disposition and provide information on available community and professional resources.

19.1.1 Inform the family if an autopsy is required.

19.1.2 Inform the family of available support services (e.g., victim assistance, social services, etc.)

19.1.3 Inform the family of appropriate agencies to contact with questions (e.g., law enforcement, SIDS support groups, etc.)

19.1.4 Ensure family is not left alone with body (if circumstances warrant).

19.1.5 Inform family of approximate body release timetable.

19.1.6 Inform family of information release timetable (toxicology, autopsy results, etc.).

19.1.7 Inform family of availability and cost of reports.

19.1.8 Upon completion of investigations in which the cause and/or manner of death was pending, notify the family and advise them that the investigation has concluded, and necessary amendments to the death certificate have been completed and submitted. Make a note in the Coroner database of the date, time and name (and relationship to deceased) of the person notified.

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TITLE:	Death notifications	NUMBER: Policy # 702.02
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POLICY: Deputy Coroners shall make death notifications as soon as reasonably possible. Utmost priority should be given to locating next of kin.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Notification procedure:

- 1.1 Notification should first of all be made to the decedent's next of kin, using due diligence and reasonable means to identify the decedent and/or next of kin.
 - 1.1.1 Notification of death shall be made without delay. If for some reason notification is delayed for more than two hours, the deputy shall notify the on-duty or on-call supervisor of the circumstances.
 - 1.1.1.1 When a supervisor is made aware of a delay he/she shall authorize the overtime, or make other arrangements to handle the notification as soon as possible.
 - 1.1.2 When making notification, assess the recipients condition, ie; elderly, suicidal, serious medical problems, etc...
 - 1.1.3 If a problem exists, take some action to assist prior to leaving, ie; call a friend of the family, member of the clergy, law enforcement, etc...
 - 1.1.4 If the Deputy Coroner is unable to locate next of kin at a location, a **generic** business card may be left containing the office investigation phone number along with a contact name.
 - 1.1.4.1 When a Deputy Coroner leaves such a card, he/she shall notify all Deputy Coroners and Supervisors of that information. The best way of relaying this information would be via e-mail. The Deputy should refer the other personnel to the case notes if a family member was to respond to the card by calling.
 - 1.1.4.2 Deputies are to answer the investigations line as, "investigations," not as the Coroner's Bureau.
- 1.2 The responsibility of notification rests on the investigating Deputy Coroner.
 - 1.2.1 If the Investigating Deputy is consumed with other case details, another Deputy Coroner may assume the task.

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TITLE:	Death notifications	NUMBER: Policy # 702.02
	1.2.2 Depending on the circumstances of the case, law enforcement personnel may need to be present during the notification.	
1.3	Law enforcement may request a delay in notification or to perform the notification themselves.	
	1.3.1 There must be a viable reason for the delay, ie; may impede the apprehension of a suspect.	
	1.3.2 On homicide or suspicious cases, law enforcement may wish to be present at the time of notification or to conduct the notification themselves for investigative reasons. The investigating deputy coroner will obtain a name and contact number for the law enforcement representative who will be responsible for notifying the Coroner's bureau once notification is made. Follow-up to assure the notification was made will rest on the investigating deputy coroner.	
1.4	Notification shall be made in person if at all possible.	
	1.4.1 If geographically impossible for the Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau to make the notification, a request shall be made to the coroner, or law enforcement agency which has jurisdiction in the respective area.	
1.5	The person making notification should have enough pertinent information regarding the death, to reasonably answer the family's questions.	
	1.5.1 Information should be provided to the family reference disposition of the remains, and the process of determining the cause of death.	
1.6	Notifications are not to be made to children, without the presence of his / her parents, or adult relatives.	
1.7	A death notification over the telephone shall be a last resort when all other avenues have failed.	
1.8	When a death occurs in the custody of the Riverside County Sheriff's Office, notification of the next of kin shall be a top priority, prior to the scene investigation of possible.	

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TITLE:	Personal Property	NUMBER: Policy# 702.03
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POLICY: Personal property is a very important and integral part of the Sheriff-Coroner's function. Care must be exercised in the gathering and preservation of this property, assuring its safe return to families of the deceased. All property retained by this department shall be inventoried, witnessed, and receipted. All property will be gathered in accordance with California Government Code 27491.3

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491.3, 27466, 27468 – California Probate Code 330. DSM 322.6

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Search of Decedent's Remains:

- 1.1 Searches must be done in accordance with death scene investigation guidelines, established through R.C.L.E.A.A.
- 1.2 Searches may be made to determine identification of the decedent, next-of-kin information, and/or the safeguarding of personal property.
- 1.3 The search should be complete, to include all areas of the body and clothing.
- 1.4 This department, with the exception of articles of evidentiary value in a criminal investigation shall retain all personal possessions. The Deputy Coroner may release articles of evidentiary value to the respective investigative agency.
- 1.5 The Deputy Coroner shall inventory, bag, and receipt all property for which he/she takes possession of. All property taken is to be inventoried on a Coroner's property receipt. At minimum, the receipt number, decedent's name, and Sheriff-Coroner case number, shall be written on the bag. The receipt shall then be stapled to the exterior of the bag. Clothing of the deceased needs to be described.
 - 1.5.1 If property cannot be removed, or is requested to be left in place by the investigating agency, Sheriff Coroner Policy 702.01 11.5.3 shall be followed.
 - 1.5.2 In certain cases clothing may need to be examined by the pathologist at time of autopsy. Even though this clothing may hold evidentiary value, the Deputy Coroner shall collect it at the scene, retain possession of it and process it in accordance with Sheriff-Coroner Policies and Procedures, (702.36).
- 1.6 If the Deputy Coroner is present at the death scene, it should be his/her responsibility to release property directly to the decedent's next-of-kin or their designee, if present, or when making notification to the decedent's next-of-kin.

2.0 Safeguarding of Premises:

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2.1	When a death occurs inside a residence, the Sheriff-Coroner must make a reasonable effort to safeguard the premises of the decedent until next-of-kin is located.	
2.2	The Deputy Coroner should assure that the residence is secured, locking all doors and windows.	
	2.2.1 If a door or window was broken to gain entry, and no next-of-kin is available, the Deputy shall contact a county contract locksmith to secure the location. This should be done through a Supervisor.	
2.3	The exterior doors and windows may be tagged with a Sheriff-Coroner seal if necessary.	
2.4	The Deputy Coroner should notify local law enforcement of the vacant residence. A request to "extra patrol" the property should be made in order to prevent trespassers.	
2.5	In the event that no next-of-kin is located after a reasonable search, the Deputy Coroner should refer the case to the Public Administrator.	
3.0	<u>Firearms:</u>	
3.1	The Sheriff-Coroner shall retain all firearms in the case of <u>known</u> suicides.	
3.2	Firearms are not to be transported by contract transportation companies. The Deputy Coroner shall transport all firearms.	
3.3	Firearms shall be unloaded, and made safe prior to being transported. <i>Deputies shall note the firing order of rounds prior to emptying the weapon.</i>	
3.4	Magazines shall be removed; breaches or cylinders are to be left open, and secured with a plastic tie, refer to DSM 322.6 (e).	
3.5	All ammunition should be kept separate from the weapon.	
3.6	Firearms are to be tagged with decedent's name & case number. The weapons are to be secured in approved firearm boxes.	
4.0	<u>Cash / Contaminated Monies:</u>	
4.1	This section applies to all forms of U.S. currency. All other foreign currencies, checks, will be handled the same as other property.	
4.2	All cash shall be counted & inventoried by the Deputy Coroner at the scene.	

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- 4.3 If the total value exceeds \$500.00, the money shall be bagged separate from the other personal property; (this excludes rare collectible coins). Money shall be accurately documented on the property bag, listing cash by quantity of denominations. The separate bag of money is to be placed in the drop safe within Perris investigations or within the drop safe in Indio investigations. The deputy coroner is then to notify the Coroner's accounting, if dropped in Perris, or Coroner management if dropped in Indio, that money has been placed in the safe.
- 4.4 Money exceeding \$500.00 is to be deposited to the Sheriff-Coroner's bank account. In the Perris office, the accounting unit is responsible for removing the money from the safe and depositing it in the bank via Brinks. In the Indio office, Coroner management, or their designee, is responsible for removing the money from the safe and delivering the money to the Perris accounting unit for deposit.
- 4.5 Upon authorization from the investigating deputy coroner, the accounting unit can issue a check to the next-of-kin.
- 4.6 The Deputy Coroner shall count money contaminated from body fluids or that has been partially burned. Contaminated money shall be placed in a bio-hazard bag by each individual dollar bill. For example; if there are five contaminated \$1 bills, each dollar bill will be placed in a 5 separate plastic bags, this will facilitate piece counting at the Federal Reserve Board Bank. In the event there is an inordinate amount of bills, they may be separated by denomination in reasonable increments, \$100 or \$1,000 depending on the amount of cash. The bio-hazard bag(s) shall then be placed in a property bag, along with the proper inventory information. All contaminated money, or partially destroyed money, shall be placed in the drop safe at Perris. Money from Indio shall be transported to Perris and treated the same. Immediate notification of the drop shall be made to accounting in Perris. The contaminated money will then be picked up by Brinks Security and transported to the Treasury Dept. for reimbursement to the Sheriff-Coroner.
 - 4.6.1 The Deputy Coroner shall complete numbers 1-6 of RSD Form 307. This form shall accompany all contaminated currency and should be stapled to the completed property bag.
 - 4.6.2 Deputies are responsible for cleaning coin that has been contaminated by body fluids prior to being released to the next-of-kin, as is the case with all personal property.

5.0 Handling of Personal Property:

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TITLE:	Personal Property	NUMBER: Policy# 702.03
5.1	All personal property shall be placed in designated tamper resistant plastic bags. The exception to this is when the article is too large, soaked with body fluids, or released immediately at the scene. If necessary, property may be air dried within the property room. The Coroner Technicians will then bag the article(s) upon drying.	
5.2	The bag number(s) shall be documented on the personal property receipt, and the receipt number shall be entered on the bag. The Deputy Coroner should retain the tear off receipt for placement in the case file.	
5.3	The Deputy Coroner shall seal the property bag prior to relinquishing it to another person.	
5.4	Each person handling the property bag <u>must</u> sign the chain of custody and state the reason for the change of custody.	
5.5	All property is to be secured in a property locker at either the Perris or Indio facilities, until being released to next-of-kin. The exception to this would be the Deputy Coroner releasing property at the scene, or <u>shortly</u> thereafter.	
5.5.1	If the property is admitted with the body, the mortuary shall be encouraged to obtain a properly completed property release from the decedent's next-of-kin so that the property may be released with the remains.	
5.5.2	If the property is not released with the body, a Coroner Technician will enter the applicable information on the weekly log which tracks property not released with remains.	
6.0	<u>Release of property:</u>	
6.1	Property shall be released to the decedent's next-of-kin, or to a relative as described in section 6.1.3 of this policy. Property may also be released to the mortuary along with the decedent's remains. However, property may only be released when the Sheriff-Coroner "Request for Release of Decedent's Personal Property" has been completed.	
6.1.1	Employees of the Sheriff-Coroner should follow California Probate Code 8461 as to the order of priority in the release of property whenever possible. This may vary depending on the presence of a trust or will.	
6.1.1.1	Surviving spouse or Domestic Partner	
6.1.1.2	Children	
6.1.1.3	Grandchildren	

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	6.1.1.4 Other issue	
	6.1.1.5 Parents	
	6.1.1.6 Brothers and sisters	
	6.1.1.7 Issue of brothers and sisters	
	6.1.1.8 Grandparents	
	6.1.1.9 Issue of grandparents	
	6.1.1.10 Children of a predeceased spouse or domestic partner	
	6.1.1.11 Other issue of a predeceased spouse or domestic partner	
	6.1.1.12 Other next of kin	
	6.1.1.13 Parents of a predeceased spouse or domestic partner	
	6.1.1.14 Issue of parents of a predeceased spouse or domestic partner	
	6.1.1.15 Conservator or guardian of the estate acting in that capacity at the time of death who has filed a first account and is not acting as conservator or guardian for any other person.	
	6.1.1.16 Public Administrator	
	6.1.1.17 Creditors	
	6.1.1.18 Any other person	
6.1.2	In the case where it is not possible/feasible to adhere to California Probate Code 8461, employees may release property to a known relative of the decedent per California Probate Code 330.	
	6.1.2.1	Employees releasing property pursuant to this section shall require reasonable proof of the status and identity of the person to whom the property is delivered and may rely upon any document described in subdivision (d) of Section 13104 of the California Probate Code as proof of identity.
	6.1.2.2	Employees should inform recipients of property under this section that delivery of said property does not determine ownership.
	6.1.2.3	Employees shall not release property pursuant to this section if there is reason to believe that a dispute exists as to right of possession of said property. If a dispute exists, contact supervision for direction.
6.1.3	It is the responsibility of the employee to verify the contents of the bag upon release. The employee shall place a check mark next to each item on the receipt, as it is removed from the bag. If an item is unaccounted for, the employee shall immediately notify a supervisor.	
6.2	It is the responsibility of the Deputy Coroner to follow-up on his/her own cases, when the decedent's family has not claimed property, which is held by the Sheriff-Coroner.	

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6.3	In the event that property is found on remains after arrival at the Forensic Center, it is the responsibility of that person to bag, document, and securely store property as described in section 4.2.1 of 703.01. The Deputy Coroner shall then be advised that the property was found.	
6.4	Upon release of property, the releasing employee shall photocopy the side of the bag that has any documentation. This photocopy becomes part of the case file in order to retain chain of custody information.	
6.4.1	In the case where property is released at the scene or outside of an office setting, it is not necessary for the employee to photocopy the property bag.	
6.5	When a death occurs at a hospital or nursing home, the decedent's personal property should remain with the institution for release to family. If it is unable to be released, a Deputy Coroner shall respond at a later time to take possession of the property.	
6.5.1	The transportation company shall not transport a body to either Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center with personal property, including jewelry, unless expressly directed by a Deputy Coroner or Coroner supervisor.	
6.6	When a death occurs at a residence where a Deputy Coroner did not respond, family at the scene shall take possession of all personal property prior to the decedent being transported. <i>In all cases, the employee should try to limit the exposure of personal property to the contract transportation company.</i>	
6.7	In all cases Deputy Coroners should attempt to release property as soon as possible, as opposed to transporting property into the Forensic Centers.	
6.8	All retained property shall be booked into a property locker as soon as possible. No property is to be stored within the investigating deputy's desk.	
6.9	Property relating to in-custody deaths shall be handled in the same manner as other Coroner cases. Correctional facilities should release inmate's personal property to the deputy coroner for release to next-of-kin.	
6.10	When property is released to a mortuary along with the remains, refer to section 703.02 of this P&P.	
7.0	<u>Abandoned property:</u>	
7.1	On a weekly basis the Perris Coroner Technician in charge of property, and the Indio Coroner Technician in charge of property will generate the abandoned property letter for personal property not released from their respective facility. A photocopy of the property receipt will be attached to each letter.	

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- 7.1.1 The Technician will then mail the letters *certified, return receipt requested*, to the decedent's next-of-kin via County Central Mail.
- 7.1.2 If the decedent's next-of-kin does not respond within 90 days of receipt of the letter, any items of value will be released to the Public Administrator, via the Accounting Department, for sale at auction and the proceeds will be delivered to the County Treasurer. Miscellaneous items of no value will be discarded.
- 7.1.3 If the decedent's next-of-kin notifies the Department in writing that personal property is to be destroyed, the Coroner Technician in charge of property shall do it. After destruction occurs, it shall be noted on the personal property receipt, dated, and signed by the Technician, and returned to the file.
- 7.1.4 If after receipt of the personal property letter the decedent's next-of-kin cannot respond to the appropriate facility to obtain the property, they may authorize, in writing, an individual to obtain the property during designated hours. No provisions are made for the mailing of personal property.
- 7.1.5 Unclaimed money, coin and currency, will also be delivered to the Accounting Department for release to the County Treasurer.

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TITLE: Sheriff-Coroner review

NUMBER: Policy # 702.04

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner has the duty under California Government Code 27491, to inquire into and determine the circumstances, manner and cause of all violent, sudden, or unusual deaths. In-custody, and law enforcement related deaths are unique in that there is direct involvement in the death by a governmental entity mandated the responsibility of public protection. Consequently, these incidents receive high interest resulting in close scrutiny of enforcement policy, procedure and the conduct of officers in arrests and confinements. Thorough and impartial investigation is necessary to preclude any conjecture of impropriety. Due to these and other special issues which arise during the investigation of in-custody and law enforcement related deaths, the following procedure is established.

REFERENCE: National Institute of Justice Guidelines for death scene investigation
Section 702.01 of this P&P

PROCEDURE:

1.0 **Definitions:**

1.1 In-custody death.

1.1.1 The death of a prisoner who is in custody of a law enforcement or custodial agency including but not limited to city, county, state or federal, and occurs while a decedent is within the geographical boundaries of Riverside County. This includes, but is not limited to, prisoner deaths in jails, prisons, hospitals or other health care facilities, mental health facilities.

1.2 Law enforcement related.

1.2.1 Any death wherein the circumstances surrounding the death are directly or reasonably related to, or involve an official act of law enforcement personnel, or person acting on their behalf, or law enforcement is present during death. Deaths that are contemporaneous to or subsequent to actual release within twenty-four hours.

2.0 **Special considerations:**

2.1 **Forensic Examination/Autopsy (Outsourcing):**

2.1.1 The Sheriff-Coroner may elect to have another county coroner perform the forensic examination and/or autopsy of decedents that fall under the In-Custody and/or Law Enforcement Related categories.

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TITLE:	Sheriff-Coroner review	NUMBER: Policy # 702.04
	2.1.2	All aspects of the death investigation leading up to the transportation of a decedent to an alternative forensic center will remain the same as outlined below.
	2.1.3	Sheriff's administration shall be immediately notified of cases falling under this category and shall make the determination of outsourcing the forensic examination/autopsy. If a member of Sheriff's Administration is not available, the Coroner Bureau commander or designee will make the determination.
	2.1.4	If outsourcing is requested, the on-duty sergeant shall contact the on duty watch commander/supervisor of the county being requested to perform the examination. The outsourced county will be provided with the RSO Coroner case summary of information and deputy coroner narrative report as soon as possible.
	2.1.4.1	The RSO on-duty sergeant will be provided with the date and time of the examination/autopsy from the outsourced county. This information will be provided to the appropriate investigating agency to ensure they are able to attend the examination/autopsy.
	2.1.4.2	The outsourced county will provide all forensic support (evidence collection, imaging, photography, etc. at the time of the examination/autopsy.
	2.1.5	The decedent's remains will be transported to the outsourced county in a sealed body pouch. The remains may be transported via the contracted transportation company or by in-house transportation.
	2.1.5.1	Upon completion of the examination/autopsy, the outsourced county will provide notification that the decedent's remains are ready for release. The on duty RSO sergeant shall make arrangements for the decedent to be transported back to the RSO Coroner for release to the next of kin.
	2.1.5.2	The case may be entered into the "out boards," with notification to the coroner technicians that the remains are "in house" and available for release. Transport can be done by either contract transport or in house transport.
	2.1.5.3	Any requests for eye, organ, or tissue donation shall be forwarded to the outsourced county for review and approval. The on-duty sergeant may assist by forwarding medical records to the outsourced county for review.

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	2.1.5.4	Upon case completion, the outsourced county shall provide RSO Coroner with the completed autopsy protocol in a timely manner, as well as any toxicology or other forensic testing, imaging, photographs, etc.
	2.1.5.5	Any samples obtained at the time of examination/autopsy shall be retained by the outsourced county until the case is completed and a cause of death is determined. RSO Coroner and the outsourced county will coordinate sample retrieval.
2.2	Deputy Coroner	
	2.2.1	Gather information; acquire as much accurate initial information as possible and make immediate notification to the Sheriff-Coroner <u>via chain of command</u> . Initiate a Sheriff-Coroner review checklist.
	2.2.2	Scene; immediately respond to the scene. Introduce yourself and identify your role in the investigation. Introductions at the scene help to establish collaborative investigative effort. It is essential to establish scene safety prior to entry and carry identification in the event you are questioned of your authority.
	2.2.3	Confirmation of death; The Sheriff-Coroner has no legal authority to enter a case until the person has been pronounced dead. Confirm date & time of death being pronounced, and by whom. If possible, obtain the identity of the deceased from investigators.
	2.1.3.1	Deputies will ultimately need three forms of identification, i.e.; photo, Cal ID, family confirmation, CDL confirmation etc...
	2.2.4	Scene briefing; Scene investigators must recognize the varying jurisdictional and statutory responsibilities that apply to individual agency representatives. Determining each agency's investigative responsibility at the scene is essential in planning the scope and depth of each scene investigation, and the release of information to the public. Scene briefing allows for initial and factual information exchange. This includes scene location, time factors, initial witness information, agency responsibilities, and investigative strategy.
	2.2.4.1	In the instance of a Coroner Review case, the deputy coroner will respond to the scene and be available for both the briefing and walk through. Depending on the circumstances of the case, two deputy coroners may respond, as assigned by a supervisor.

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- 2.2.4.2 The Primary Deputy Coroner will be the case agent and will be responsible for the investigation (i.e. initial report, collection of reports, delegation of duties to secondary investigator, etc.). The primary investigator can delegate duties to the secondary investigator to aid in the completion of the investigation.
 - 2.2.4.3 The secondary investigator may be available to aid the primary investigator with the investigation (i.e. photograph and document the body exam, aide in evidence collection, etc...).
- 2.2.5 Scene walk through; Conducting a scene walk through provides the investigators with an overview of the entire scene. The walk through provides the investigators with the opportunity to locate and view the body, identify valuable and/or fragile evidence, and determine initial investigative procedures providing for a systematic examination and documentation of the scene and body.
- 2.2.6 Establish chain of custody; it is essential to maintain a proper chain of custody for evidence. Through proper documentation, collection, and preservation, the integrity of the evidence can be assured. A properly maintained chain of custody and prompt transfer will reduce the likelihood of a challenge to the integrity of the evidence.
- 2.3 Associated duties of Deputy Coroner.
 - 2.3.1 A Sheriff-Coroner Review Case is no different than any other death scene investigation, in that the Deputy Coroner must be thorough in his / her investigation. Do not make assumptions, factual data is of utmost importance.
 - 2.3.2 The Deputy Coroner must work closely with the law enforcement investigators, the designated Sheriff-Coroner Review Deputy, and administrative investigators.
 - 2.3.3 Times, and details leading up to the event must be correct and should be verified.
 - 2.3.4 Obtain thorough scene / body photographs.
 - 2.3.5 Obtain admitting blood if any, and hospital / medical records if any.
 - 2.3.5.1 If hospital admission blood is not available, an adequate amount of peripheral blood should be obtained once the decedent returns to

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TITLE:	Sheriff-Coroner review	NUMBER: Policy # 702.04
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the forensic center. A supplemental report should be written to document the blood draw.

2.3.5.2 All phlebotomy tasks performed by Coroner staff shall be followed within the guidelines listed in Coroner Policy and Procedure 703.03.

2.3.6 After the initial investigation, the deputy coroner must continue to work closely with law enforcement, and the Coroner Review Deputy in preparation for the Coroner Review.

2.3.7 After the completion of the body exam and evidence collection, in the absence of an on-duty Coroner Technician, either the primary or secondary investigator may transport the remains to the appropriate forensic center and complete the intake process. The contract transportation company can be utilized for Coroner Review or homicide cases, with direct transport to the appropriate forensic center. Deviation from direct transport requires Coroner supervision approval.

3.0 Supervisor duties:

3.1 Upon initial notification, gather as much information as possible; Exact location, number of deceased, age / identity of deceased, circumstances of death, agency's involvement, etc...

3.2 Make immediate notification to the Sheriff-Coroner via chain of command.

3.2.1 The Chief Deputy over the Corrections Bureau shall be notified as soon as possible by email when a Coroner Review is initiated during a death investigation on a recently released inmate.

3.3 Confirm that the designated Sheriff-Coroner Review Deputy has been notified and determine the resources required to investigate the case (are two deputy coroners needed to respond to the scene and/or location of death).

3.3 Respond to the scene. Provide general supervision for the Deputy Coroner, and act as a liaison for the Sheriff-Coroner with other involved agencies. While at the scene, the supervisor will determine which deputy coroner will be the primary investigator and which one will be the secondary (if two responded). The supervisor will also confirm the deputies will respond in the appropriate vehicle to transport the remains to the appropriate forensic center, or if the contract transportation company will be used.

3.4 Provide required information to the Department PIO for posting a the public notification of in custody deaths for all deaths occurring in a Riverside County Sheriff's Office Jail.

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4.0 Release of Information:

- 4.1 No formal and/or written results shall be released to individuals, media, or any agency prior to the case being certified through the Coroner Review process.

5.0 Coroner Review:

- 5.1 The Administrative Deputy Coroner will gather all pertinent information including but not limited to:
- Medical records
 - Body worn camera footage
 - Deputy Coroner narrative report
 - Recommended cause of death from pathologist
 - Toxicology report
 - Any other documents that are relevant to determining the cause, manner and mode of death.
- 5.2 Once all case information has been obtained, a case summary with photographic documentation shall be prepared.
- 5.3 The Administrative Deputy Coroner will organize a date to present the case in a Coroner Review to the Sheriff's Administration, the involved law enforcement agency and the Grand Jury.
- 5.4 The Administrative Deputy Coroner will present the facts of the case at the Coroner Review. A Forensic Pathologist and Forensic Toxicologist will report on their findings.
- 5.5 At the conclusion of the presentation, invited guest, including the Grand Jury, will be allowed to ask questions.
- 5.6 At the conclusion of the Coroner Review presentation, and after all questions have been addressed, the Sheriff or his designee will certify the cause and manner of death. The Administrative Deputy Coroner will complete the cause of death amendment and the case will be completed by the assigned Coroner Review Supervisor.

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TITLE:	Decedent medications	NUMBER: Policy # 702.05
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POLICY: Prescription medications can often play an integral part in determining the cause of death. Deputies shall insure that medications of the deceased are properly documented and accounted for.

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Deputy Coroner responsibilities:

1.1 Roll-outs.

1.1.2 Deputies should locate and document all prescription medications. Deputies shall photograph containers/labels and any medication located within the containers for identification purposes.

1.1.3 By looking at the date of issuance, the quantity filled, the daily dosage, the approximate amount remaining, and any other relevant indications at the scene, such as physiological changes (foam, purge, etc.), deputies should attempt to determine if abuse may have occurred.

1.1.4 If abuse is suspected, the suspected medications should be inventoried on scene. Once inventory is complete, medications are to be left on scene. If the deputy is unable to conduct a medication inventory on scene, the medications shall be brought to the Forensic Center for inventory and disposal.

1.1.4.1 Any medications brought into the Forensic Center due to the deputy's inability to inventory on scene shall be immediately inventoried upon return to the Forensic Center.

1.1.4.2 Once inventory is complete, medications shall be emptied from their containers and sealed into a property bag with a copy of the inventory form attached. The perforated property tag shall be removed from the property bag and placed in the case file. The bag shall then immediately be dropped in the designated locked bin for destruction. Empty medication containers can be discarded.

1.1.5 Deputies should collect any medications that are unmarked or unidentifiable and bring them to the Forensic Center in an attempt to identify them.

1.1.5.1 Any unmarked or unidentifiable medications shall be handled the same as property, packaged per 1.1.4.2 and stored in the property room pending a cause of death. Once the Deputy receives a cause

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of death, the medication is no longer needed, and shall be destroyed per established procedure.

1.1.6 *Medications should only be brought into the Forensic Center if they are unable to be inventoried on scene and the need to do so exists, or if they are unmarked or unidentifiable. No other medications shall be collected.*

1.1.7 All medications and associated information shall be documented in a report and forwarded to triage.

1.2 Non roll-outs.

1.2.2 Deputies should have medical/law enforcement personnel locate and describe all prescription medications.

1.2.3 By looking at the date of issuance, the quantity filled, the daily dosage, and the amount remaining, deputies should attempt to determine if abuse may have occurred.

1.2.4 All medications and associated information shall be documented in a report and forwarded to triage.

1.3 CDRT Cases.

1.3.2 In cases where the decedent is 17 years and younger, all the same Deputy Coroner responsibilities shall remain the same, with the exception that **all medications shall be documented and brought into the office.**

2.0 **Disposition of medications:**

2.1 All medications shall be properly disposed of once cause of death has been determined, and no further testing is desired.

2.1.1 A locked bin, designated for disposal of all prescription medications is located within each forensic center.

2.1.2 Employees log all items on the approved disposal form, prior to placing them within the bin. *The running log shall remain next to the bin.*

2.1.3 The collection bin will be emptied by a Supervisor or his designee as needed.

2.1.4 The disposal of medications shall be done through the contract Bio Waste vendor. *No other form of disposal is authorized.*

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2.1.4.1 The Supervisor shall indicate on the log that all previous entries have been disposed of, by what method, and date.

3.0 Illicit Drugs:

- 3.1 Extreme caution shall be taken when searching in or around human remains. Deputy Coroners shall utilize proper personal protective equipment, such as gloves and an N95 respirator when handling items on a scene. Gloves shall always be worn when searching a decedent and handling any items located at a scene. Deputy Coroners should avoid opening containers, folded up bindles, baggies, or other items that may contain illicit substances. If the investigating law enforcement agency requests that an item be opened to determine the contents, the Deputy Coroner should release the item to the agency representative for examination purposes. It is not the responsibility of the Deputy Coroner to examine unknown substances to determine their composition. Whenever illicit/illegal drugs are located, they shall immediately be released to the investigating law enforcement agency.
- 3.2 Whenever illicit/illegal drugs are located, they shall immediately be released to the investigating law enforcement agency.
- 3.2 If for some reason law enforcement is either unavailable, or unwilling to accept the drugs, contact an on duty or on call supervisor. Coroner supervision may direct the deputy coroner to collect the drugs, seal them separately in an evidence bag, and complete a 409 evidence form. The drugs may be temporarily stored in a locked locker at the forensic center until they can be released to law enforcement.

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TITLE: Identification of Decedents

NUMBER: Policy # 702.06

POLICY: The Coroner's Bureau will make every effort to establish identification of all decedents. In the event identification cannot be made, proper examinations, evidence collection and documentation shall be performed for possible future identification.

REFERENCE: CA Government Code Section 27521

PROCEDURE:

1.0 **Identification:**

1.1 Identification of the deceased is the responsibility and shall be a top priority of the investigating Deputy Coroner.

1.2 Positive identification can be established at the scene by methods that include government issued photo identification (state driver license, state identification card, military identification, etc.) or by relatives.

1.2.1 Any case where the facial appearance has been disfigured due to decomposition, severe trauma, or burns, the identification shall be confirmed by use of fingerprints, dental examination, skeletal x-rays or if necessary, DNA analysis.

1.3 On occasion, identification may have to be made based mostly on circumstances.

1.3.1 Circumstantial identifications will be used only as a last resort and must be approved by Coroner administration.

1.3.2 At the end of this policy will be guidelines to assist in establishing a circumstantial identification.

2.0 **Initial Investigation Does Not Reveal Identification:**

2.1 An unidentified number shall be generated in the Coroner Case Management System in addition to the Coroner file number prior to the body being transported.

2.2 All available fingerprints shall be obtained from the decedent and submitted to Cal-ID for processing ASAP. Cal-ID should be requested to run

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them through WIN (Western Identification Network). If identification still cannot be established, continue with the procedures below.

2.2.1 If available, palm prints shall be obtained at the time of obtaining the other fingerprints for later submission to the Department of Justice.

2.3 Full body x-rays shall be requested by the deputy coroner and taken by forensic staff prior to an autopsy being performed.

2.4 Except for homicides, the deputy coroner shall request the forensic staff to photograph the body prior to autopsy. These photographs shall include full body overalls, frontal and lateral facial views, any scars, marks and tattoos. All photographs shall include ruler documentation.

2.5 All clothing shall be photographed and documented as to brands, colors, sizes and any logos, designs, etc.

2.6 All personal property shall be thoroughly documented. All jewelry shall be checked for any inscriptions. All jewelry and other identifiable items of personal property shall be photographed with a ruler.

3.0 Deputy Coroner:

3.1 The deputy coroner who handles the initial investigation shall maintain and continue investigating an unidentified case for a minimum period of 45 days.

3.2 The deputy coroner shall meet and discuss the case status with an investigations supervisor on a weekly basis. The supervisor shall provide necessary direction and recommendations during these meetings. At the supervisor's discretion, the case will be referred to the deputy coroner assigned to long term unidentified cases.

4.0 Investigation Documentation:

4.1 The investigating deputy coroner shall be responsible to ensure that all aspects of the investigation be documented in the case file and the Unidentified Information section of the Coroner's Case Management system so that other Coroner's Bureau employees are able to field any incoming telephone calls.

5.0 Autopsy:

5.1 The Coroner's Bureau should strongly consider performing an autopsy on unidentified decedents to document any previous surgeries or injuries and any medical conditions and/or implants that might be present.

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- 5.2 An autopsy shall not be performed prior to the full body x-rays and overall photographs having been completed.

6.0 Specimen Collection:

- 6.1 It is the responsibility of the investigating deputy coroner to ensure that adequate specimens have been collected by Forensic staff. The following is a guideline of samples needed for DNA testing depending on condition of the body.

6.1.1 **Fresh** - Hair sample and ten (10) milliliters of blood, stored in a purple top (EDTA) tube. The blood should be kept refrigerated until submission. When shipping to a laboratory, it should be shipped on ice for next day delivery.

6.1.2 **Decomposed** – Depending on the state of decomposition, ten (10) grams of deep muscle tissue stored in a 50-milliliter conical tube or, if mummified tissue is present, one (1) to ten (10) grams should be collected. If necessary, bone (as outlined below can be collected).

6.1.3 **Skeletal or Mummified** – Intact femur is preferred. If femur is not available, another long bone should be collected. If no long bone is available, the longest and most compact bone or bone fragment should be collected. Dried tissue should not be removed from the bone. Decomposing tissue should be cleaned from bone. If available, an unrestored tooth (preferably a molar should be collected (after dental examination).

7.0 Dental Examination:

- 7.1 If the decedent has teeth, it is the responsibility of the investigating deputy coroner to ensure that the Forensic Odontologist completes a dental examination and the charting side of Department of Justice form BCIA 4085.

- 7.2 If there are no teeth, whether naturally or because of the condition of the body, this shall also be noted on the DOJ charting form.

8.0 Department of Justice Reporting:

- 8.1 The investigating deputy coroner shall be responsible for completing and submitting the Department of Justice form BCIA 4085 with all identifying information as well as relevant comments about the case. This form is required to be submitted to the Department of Justice within 45 days of the date of death or found date. A photograph of the decedent, if a fresh body, shall also be submitted with this form.

- 8.2 DNA samples cannot be submitted to DOJ until after the BCIA 4085 form with dental charting has been submitted.

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- 8.3 A complete copy of the coroner's report (investigation, autopsy and toxicology) shall be submitted to the Department of Justice within 180 days of the date of death or date found. The investigating deputy coroner or the long term unidentified deputy coroner shall be responsible to see that this is sent.

9.0 Disposition of Unidentified Remains:

- 9.1 Referral of an unidentified decedent to the Public Administrator will be at the agreement of the deputy coroner assigned to long term unidentified cases and an investigations supervisor.
- 9.2 Skeletal remains will be maintained in curation, not referred to the Public Administrator.

10.0 Establishing A Circumstantial Identification:

- 10.1 This section will list some items and/or questions that will be helpful in establishing a circumstantial identification. Not all items will be relevant on every case and other things that are not listed may be important on some cases. A solid circumstantial identification will generally need to have a minimum of twelve strong points of positive comparisons.
- 10.2 A "Comparative Identification Worksheet" is available to use to work up your case and discuss with supervision. When a supervisor believes that sufficient comparative information exists, he may present it to Coroner administration for approval.
- 10.3 Upon approval of a circumstantial identification, the deputy coroner shall write a detailed supplemental report of how the identification was established.

GUIDELINES:

Did the death occur at own residence? If yes, answer the following:

- 1. How long has person resided at the residence?**
- 2. Did the person reside alone?**
- 3. Did the person own the residence?**
- 4. Was the resident an active person or recluse?**
- 5. Did the resident have any known habits such as walking of bicycle riding around the neighborhood?**

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- 6. Were there frequent visitors to the residence?**
- 7. When was the resident last seen or spoken too?**
- 8. Has there been any activity on any bank accounts?**
- 9. Did the resident own or drive a vehicle?**

Dental: What did the odontology examination reveal as far as dental work and estimated age of decedent? Did the exam reveal a possible match or high consistency? Does the decedent have unique front teeth that could be identified by an ante mortem photograph of the person smiling?

Physical Characteristics of Body vs. Presumed Decedent: To include sex, age, length/height, weight, overall build, eye and hair color, hair length, complexion. Significant discrepancies in items such as weight may be explained by statements of family members, neighbors, medical personnel, etc.. In the event the remains are severely decomposed, charred, or skeletal, the Coroner Bureau Anthropologist should handle the physical characteristic comparison.

Scars, Marks and Tattoos: Depending on the condition of the body not all scars, marks or tattoos will be located.

Jewelry: Check for inscriptions. Any unique pieces of jewelry that can be identified on an ante mortem photograph of the person wearing it?

Medical Prostheses: Medical record documentation with serial number will likely provide a positive identification.

Medical Procedures / Fractures: Medical record documentation or ante mortem x-rays will be of significant assistance.

Medical History of Presumed Decedent vs. Medical Conditions Found During Autopsy: Many conditions may be found in many people.

Medications Being Taken by Presumed Decedent: Not all medications can be tested for.

Post Mortem Toxicology Results:

Blood Type of Presumed Decedent vs. Body:

Estimated Time Since Death of Body vs. Last Known Alive Date of Presumed Decedent:

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Any suspicious circumstances surrounding the death?

Any warrants for arrest of the presumed decedent?

Any excessive financial obligations of the presumed decedent?

Any law enforcement contacts with the presumed decedent?

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TITLE:	Press releases	NUMBER: Policy # 702.07
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau is aware that the public has an interest in this department's operations. The news media represents the means by which information is gathered and presented to the public. The Sheriff-Coroner also recognizes our responsibility to the next of kin of the deceased, as well as the relationship with various law enforcement agencies in which our investigations commingle.

REFERENCE: Riverside County Sheriff's Dept. DSM 385.4

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Press releases:

- 1.1 Deputy Coroners shall generate a press release on all traumatic cases, or those of public interest.
- 1.2 Press releases shall be completed as soon as practical.
- 1.3 It is the responsibility of the handling Deputy Coroner to generate a press release or ensure one has been generated, unless otherwise directed by a supervisor.
- 1.4 Press releases shall be completed on the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau approved "Webpage Log" (see below)
 - 1.4.1 All items shall be completed, with the exception of the decedent's name if notification has not been made.
 - 1.4.2 Great care should be exercised in the completion of the "circumstances of death" section. Initial press releases should state "Pending investigation, refer to investigating agency". The Deputy Coroner should check with the law enforcement agency, prior to making the press release.
 - 1.4.3 Law enforcement will often desire restrictions on what information is released in regards to injury information, etc.
- 1.5 Once identity is known, or notification has been made after the press release has been completed, the Deputy Coroner shall generate an updated release with the new information.

2.0 Dissemination of Press Releases

- 2.1 The deputy coroner generating the press release shall send it via county e-mail to all supervisors. The on-duty, or first supervisor on the upcoming shift, shall review the press release and forward accordingly. He/she shall notify the other supervisors that the matter has been approved and forwarded.

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- 2.2 Sergeants will review, ensure any changes or corrections are made, and will thereafter forward the press release to the Media Information Bureau (MIB) via the [riversidesheriff.org](mailto:press@riversidesheriff.org) email address and shall also include the Bureau Captain and Lieutenants.
- 2.3 Sergeants will ensure information regarding deaths in the custody of the Riverside County Sheriff's Office is forwarded to the PIO for public posting.

3.0 Withholding Information:

- 3.1 Pursuant to California Govt. Code 6254(f), the investigating law enforcement agency may request the cause of death, injury information and reports to be held for a specified time, providing the criminal investigation may be jeopardized.
 - 3.1.1 At time of autopsy on all homicides or high profile deaths, the morgue sergeant, or his/her designee, will assure that the attending law enforcement agency completes a Sheriff-Coroner "Confidentiality of Case Information" form in order to withhold **or** release cause of death and injury information.
 - 3.1.1.1 The agency representative must either complete the top or bottom portion of the form, designating whether the information should be held or released.
 - 3.1.1.2 In the event the agency feels the release of such injury information may jeopardize the criminal investigation, they should complete the top portion of the form. Once this hold is requested, the cause of death in the Coroner database will be listed as "Pending." The death certificate will also go out as pending. No reports are to be released and no cause of death listed until the agency clears the hold by completing the bottom portion of the same form. This form remains in the case file.
 - 3.1.1.3 When a hold is requested, the pathologist should list the cause of death as "Pending", on the worksheet. The actual cause of death may be listed on the autopsy protocol as this report will be held, pending a release by the agency.
 - 3.1.1.4 Upon receiving the paperwork following the autopsy, the coroner technician should enter "Pending" as the cause of death in the Coroner database. The coroner technician should then enter "HOLD INFO" within the "keywords" section in the database. This statement will trigger the database to display "DO NOT RELEASE INFO" in various locations on the case information page.

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3.1.1.5 If the information may be released, the cause of death will then be entered into the Coroner database and a death certificate may be issued with cause and injury information. This form then becomes part of the case file.

3.1.3.1 The release portion of the form may be completed by faxing it to the agency. This does not need to be done in person.

3.1.2 Coroner Investigations personnel should periodically check with the agency in order to determine when the hold may be lifted, as a pending death certificate may cause hardships on family of the deceased.

3.1.3 Once the hold has been cleared, the database may be updated with the cause of death and an amended death certificate should be completed.

4.0 Interviews by the media:

4.1 Deputy Coroners are not to participate in interviews with the media, unless directed by a Supervisor.

4.2 All requests for interview shall be referred to a Supervisor, or the Department's Media Information Bureau, (MIB)

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TITLE: **Press releases**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.07

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	Photographs	NUMBER: Policy # 702.08
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POLICY: Deputy Coroners shall thoroughly photograph all death scenes which they respond to.

REFERENCE: California Code of Civil Procedures, 129

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Digital photos:

- 1.1 Deputies shall digitally photograph all scenes which they roll out on.
 - 1.1.1 35mm may be substituted if digital is unavailable.
 - 1.1.2 A ruler should be used on all close up photos.
- 1.2 Photos should be taken as they give a complete picture of what occurred.
 - 1.2.1 Close up photos of injuries.
 - 1.2.2 Overall photos of decedent.
 - 1.2.3 Close up photos of jewelry, if identity may be in question.
 - 1.2.4 Close up photo of face.
 - 1.2.5 Overall scene photos, this may vary depending on the type of incident, ie; traffic collision, found body, unattended, etc...

2.0 Storage of photos:

- 2.1 Digital photos shall be saved to the server by the end of shift, and made available for triage.
- 2.3 If 35mm film was used, it shall be submitted to Sheriff Forensics for processing into 3"x5" prints.
- 2.2 All 35mm negatives shall be stored at the respective Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center, by the administrative supervisor.

3.0 Release of photos:

- 3.1 Sheriff-Coroner photos may be released to law enforcement, or the District Attorney upon written request.

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TITLE:	Photographs	NUMBER: Policy # 702.08
3.2	Photos shall not be released to any other individuals without the production of a Subpoena, or approval by the Bureau Commander.	
3.2.1	Pursuant to Code of Civil Procedures 129, photographs of the body or any portion of the body of a deceased person taken by or for the coroner shall not be copied or released except under the following	
	a. For use in a criminal action or proceeding in the state which relates to the death of the person	
	b. By court order after good cause has been shown	
	c. Following written notice that the order would be requested having been served upon the district attorney at least five days in advance.	
3.2.2	For use or potential use in a civil action or proceeding in this state that relates to the death of that person based on one of the following situations:	
	a. A legal heir or representative of the deceased submits a written authorization for the release (this may occur before a lawsuit is actually filed) AND all of the following:	
	1. Submits a declaration under penalty of perjury that the person is a legal heir or representative of the deceased	
	2. Provides a valid form of identification (e.g. photo ID)	
	3. Provides a certified death certificate	
	b. A subpoena is issued by a party to a civil action involving the death of the deceased and that party is the legal heir or representative of the deceased	
3.2.3	Coroner Division employees may not make available or display photographs taken at death scenes or taken within the coroner facility spaces without the consent of the Coroner Division Commander	
3.3	Sheriff-Coroner photos are not to be shown for other than identification or training purposes.	
4.0	<u>Personal use of photos:</u>	
4.1	The personal use of Sheriff-Coroner photos is prohibited without the consent of the Bureau Commander.	

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TITLE:	Photographs	NUMBER: Policy # 702.08
4.2	Sheriff-Coroner personnel shall not take photos within the Forensic Centers for personal use.	
4.2.1	Due to the present capability to electronically transmit photos via cell phones and palm pilots, the Sheriff-Coroner has deemed it necessary to prohibit the possession of these items from within the morgue areas of the Forensic Centers.	
4.3	Photos of decedents, human remains, or the interior of the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Centers shall not be released by any other method than that mentioned in 3.0 of this Policy.	
4.3.1	This applies to any case where the Sheriff-Coroner had involvement, i.e. regular, medical, AOD or other cases.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: **Types of Death Investigations**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.09

POLICY: It shall be the duty of the Sheriff-Coroner to inquire into and determine the circumstances, manner, and cause of all violent, sudden, or unusual deaths; death wherein the deceased has not been attended by a physician in the 20 days before death; and/or deaths related to the following;

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Types of Death Investigations

- 1.1 Aircraft
- 1.2 Aspiration of foods
- 1.3 Carbon Monoxide
- 1.4 Conflagration
- 1.5 Drowning
- 1.6 Electrocution
- 1.7 Falls and Jumpers
- 1.8 Fetal Demises
- 1.9 Gunshot
- 1.10 Hanging
- 1.11 Homicide
- 1.12 Hospice
- 1.13 Hyperthermia or Hypothermia
- 1.14 In-Custody
- 1.15 Natural or Apparent Natural
- 1.16 Occupational

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TITLE:	Types of Death Investigations	NUMBER: Policy # 702.09
1.17	Overdose	
1.18	Parachutist	
1.19	Poisoning	
1.20	Scuba	
1.21	Skeletal Remains	
1.22	Stabbing	
1.23	Sudden Unexpected Infant Death or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome	
1.24	Suicide	
1.25	Traffic	

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TITLE:	Aircraft	NUMBER: Policy # 702.10
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POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Notification of incident:

- 1.0 Determine the basic information; location, agencies involved, number of deceased, etc...
 - 1.1.1 If dealing with 10 or more deaths, refer to disaster plan.
- 1.1 As in any case that would draw public awareness, notify Supervision immediately.
- 1.2 Inquire if NTSB has been notified.

2.0 Scene:

- 2.1 Locate investigators, and begin gathering information.
- 2.2 If scene is safe, and secure, examine the wreckage and remains.
- 2.3 Attempt to locate the pilot's log, and flight plans.
- 2.4 Record the plane information, make, model, license etc...
- 2.5 Work hand in hand with NTSB, they may be able to assist in pilot identity, possible causes of the incident, etc...

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: **Aspiration of food products**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.11

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

1.1 This occurs most generally at meal times. Statistically, it is shown to be fairly common in mental institutions. Persons who leave the dinning table and collapse, either on their way out of the room or on the way to the bathroom, may have aspirated food. Children have been known to have died as a result of this, after falling or tripping with their mouth full.

1.1.1 Has the death occurred while eating, or shortly thereafter?

1.1.2 Has the decedent consumed any alcohol, if so, how much?

1.1.3 Had the decedent been taking medications?

1.1.4 Had the death or collapse been witnessed? Where did it occur, residence, restaurant, institution, etc...?

1.1.5 Did the collapse occur suddenly, and without any complaints?

1.1.6 What type of food is involved?

1.1.7 Is there any history of mental retardation?

1.1.8 Is there any history of neurological disease?

1.1.9 Is there any history of Epilepsy?

2.0 Examination:

2.1 Conduct a cursory examination of the decedent, and the surroundings.

2.1.1 This may or may not reveal any significant findings.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	Carbon Monoxide	NUMBER: Policy # 702.12
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POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

1.1 If Carbon Monoxide is suspected at the scene, consideration should be given to the following questions;

1.1.1 *Carbon Monoxide is odorless. Make sure the scene is secure/safe prior to exposing yourself.*

1.2 Vehicle:

1.2.1 Location of vehicle.

1.2.2 Year, make and model of vehicle.

1.2.3 Was key in ignition?

1.2.4 Was key in off, or on position?

1.2.5 If off, who turned it off?

1.2.6 Was vehicle engine running when found?

1.2.7 If not, was engine warm, or cold to touch?

1.2.8 If vehicle was not running, was any fuel left in the tank?

1.2.9 Was a hose attached to the vehicle, if so, where and with what?

1.2.10 What type of hose was used?

1.2.11 Did the hose enter through a window? Was it taped? If so, was tape inside, or outside?

1.2.12 Were all windows and doors sealed?

1.2.13 Any indication of a suicide note, alcohol, drugs or any paraphernalia?

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Carbon Monoxide

NUMBER: Policy # 702.12

1.2.14 Previous attempts or any prior talk of suicide by the decedent?

2.0 Examination of remains:

- 2.1 What is the color of the body?
- 2.2 What is the body position, and condition?
- 2.3 Any indication of trauma?
- 2.4 Completely describe clothing.

3.0 Structures, tents etc...:

- 3.1 Description of the scene, including specific rooms within the location.
- 3.2 Temperature of the area in which the decedent was found, and how that temperature was obtained. (Estimate if unable to get accurate reading).
- 3.3 Locate probable source of Carbon Monoxide, i.e.; furnace, barbecue, stove, etc...
 - 3.3.1 Local fire department should be able to ascertain this information.
- 3.4 Was a kerosene heater, charcoal burner, or gas lighter being used in a closed non-ventilated area?
- 3.5 Was a gas range or oven being used for heating?
- 3.6 Any other sick or deceased humans or animals involved?
- 3.7 Any change in the decedent's mental attitude; happy, unhappy, despondent, marital status, physical status?

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Conflagration

NUMBER: Policy # 702.13

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

1.1 The investigator at the scene of a death apparently resulting from fire should consider many possibilities. The investigator should cooperate fully with the fire department personnel, and work closely with the arson investigator. The following items should be covered in the Deputy Coroner's investigation;

1.1.1 Position of the body(s) at the scene. Exact location of the remains, room, hall, closet, porch, out-building, yard etc...

1.1.2 Degree of burns on the body. Percentage of burns on the body.

1.1.3 Origin of the fire.

1.1.4 Arson, suicide, homicide, accident; what evidence is available to substantiate the manner of death.

1.1.5 Structural damage.

1.1.6 Witnesses.

1.1.7 Activities of the deceased prior to the fire; physical activities, and mental state.

1.1.8 Were fire alarms present? Functioning?

2.0 Removal of remains:

2.1 Since identity is likely to be in question, careful attention should be taken for any personal property of identification that may be under the remains. Jewelry should be photographed on the remains, and removed only if it can be done without disruption.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	Drowning	NUMBER: Policy # 702.14
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POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 With the diversity of Riverside County, Deputies may handle drowning deaths in either salt or freshwater, within the following locations; lakes, streams, rivers, swimming pools, bathtubs, and hot tubs.
 - 1.1.1 Record temperature, if possible.
 - 1.1.2 If in moving water, is current slow or fast?
 - 1.1.3 Type of bank at point of entry; dirt, cement, gravel, etc...
 - 1.1.4 How far from the point of entry was the body found?
 - 1.1.5 What was the type of bottom; dirt, cement, gravel, etc...
 - 1.1.6 Range of depth of water, if known.
 - 1.1.7 What was the decedent's swimming ability? Poor, fair, good, and how was that determined?
 - 1.1.8 Did the decedent enter the water voluntarily, or involuntarily?
 - 1.1.9 What were the decedent's activities prior to drowning; swimming, diving, wading, water skiing, fall into water, bathing, etc...
 - 1.1.10 Was the incident witnessed?
 - 1.1.11 Is the area on private or public land? Posted, or non-posted, fenced or not.
 - 1.1.12 How was the decedent clothed? Street clothes, swim suit, nude, etc...
 - 1.1.13 Any indications of alcohol, or drug involvement?
 - 1.1.14 How was the decedent removed from the water? Civilians, law enforcement, divers, grappled, etc...

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE:	Drowning	NUMBER: Policy # 702.14
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1.1.15 Medical history of the decedent; seizure disorder?

1.1.16 If located within a swimming pool, describe shape of pool, and exact location of decedent, whether face up or down.

1.1.17 Water condition; clear, cloudy, approximate depth of visibility.

2.0 Examination:

2.1 Any trauma visible to the remains?

2.1.1 If decedent slipped or fell into the water, or was found in moving water with rocks etc... trauma may very well be present.

2.1.2 Is trauma consistent with what is said to have occurred?

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: **Electrocution**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.15

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

- 1.0 **Special considerations:** *(Make sure scene is safe prior to entry)*
- 1.1 What is the temperature of the area in which the decedent was found? If no thermometer is present, estimate. Very hot, cool, cold, etc...
 - 1.2 Was the decedent using an electrical apparatus?
 - 1.3 Describe what type of apparatus.
 - 1.4 Is the apparatus new, or used?
 - 1.5 Is the apparatus U.L. approved?
 - 1.6 Is there a circuit breaker or fuses?
 - 1.7 Were the protective devices bypassed?
 - 1.8 Is the apparatus still operable?
 - 1.9 Where is the apparatus currently?
 - 1.10 Has anyone ever been shocked or injured with this apparatus before?
 - 1.11 What type of flooring, and the condition of same? Wood, concrete, metal, dirt, dry, wet, etc...
 - 1.12 Did anyone witness the incident?
 - 1.13 Did the injury occur in farming area, crop fields, groves. Was ground dry, or wet from irrigation. Defective machinery, overhead power lines, voltage in lines.
 - 1.14 Any visible evidence of electrical contact on body; hands, soles of feet, shoes, clothing etc...

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Falls and jumpers

NUMBER: Policy # 702.16

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

1.1 Deaths by falls, or jumpers can occur from many types of sites; buildings, bridges, mountain terrain and other objects. Often deaths of the elderly can be related to a simple fall at home.

1.1.1 What is the temperature of the area in which the decedent was found? Give estimate, if unable to get accurate reading.

1.1.2 Where was the decedent found in relation to the vertical line of fall?

1.1.3 Did the decedent make contact with any objects during the fall?

1.1.4 Is the scene public, or private?

1.1.5 What type of surface did the decedent fall from?

1.1.6 Type of surface decedent fell onto?

1.1.7 What was the condition of the surface? Slippery, wet, smooth, jagged, loose, etc...

1.1.8 Was safety gear being worn? Was it new, used, defective, etc...

1.1.9 Was the decedent working at the time of the fall?

1.1.10 Was the fall or jump witnessed?

1.1.11 Any evidence of alcohol, or drugs being related to the incident?

1.1.12 If fall or jump occurred from a building, and was suspected to have originated from a window, note dimensions of window, height, of sill from floor, open or partially open, devices for holding window open, obstructions on floor in front of window, etc...

1.1.13 Any suicidal indications, notes etc...

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Falls and jumpers

NUMBER: Policy # 702.16

2.0 Elderly:

2.1 How long ago was the fall?

2.1.1 Was fall witnessed?

2.1.2 Medical history; stability, ability to walk without stumbling. Seizure disorders, dementia, etc...

2.1.3 Any previous falls?

2.1.4 Related surgeries, when?

2.1.5 In physician's opinion, cause of death directly related to the fall?

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: **Fetal**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.17

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 A death prior to the complete expulsion, or extraction from it's mother of a product of conception, (irrespective of the duration of pregnancy); the death is indicated by the fact that after such separation, the fetus does not breathe or show any other evidence of life such as the beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles.
- 1.2 A certificate of fetal death is required to be registered when the fetus has advanced to or beyond the 20th week of uterogestation. When the length of interogestation is not determinable, the following criteria may be used by the certifying Physician or Deputy Coroner.
 - 1.2.1 Weight of 400 grams or more.
 - 1.2.2 Crown-heel length of 28 centimeters or more.
 - 1.2.3 If both of the above are met, the fetus may be registered as a fetal death.
 - 1.2.4 If the above criteria is not met, a certificate of fetal death is not required, and the embryo may be disposed of without mortuary use, or burial.
- 1.3 A fetal death meeting the previously mentioned criteria shall constitute a separate Sheriff-Coroner's case number, if the mother was deceased at the time of delivery.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	Gunshot	NUMBER: Policy # 702.18
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POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 Death by gunshot can result from an accidental shooting, suicide, or as a result of a homicide. Regardless of the classification of death, the following should be considered;
 - 1.1.1 What is the temperature of the area in which the decedent was found? Give an estimate, if unable to get an accurate reading.
 - 1.1.2 Detailed description of the scene.
 - 1.1.3 What are the weather conditions; dry, raining, windy, etc...
 - 1.1.4 What is the condition of the scene; outside, in building (type), in vehicle, etc...
 - 1.1.5 Describe type of weapon if known, ie; automatic, revolver, rifle, shotgun, etc...
 - 1.1.6 Make, model, caliber, serial number, barrel length, registered owner of the weapon (weapon should be ran while on scene through dispatch to determine if it is a stolen weapon).
 - 1.1.7 Live bullets in weapon, expended shells in weapon,(describe location if revolver, may have to get the information from law enforcement if weapon taken as evidence in a homicide).
 - 1.1.8 Expended shell casings outside of the weapon; describe quantity, and location in relation to the body.
 - 1.1.9 All expended casings of same caliber?
 - 1.1.10 Was deceased right, or left handed?
 - 1.1.11 Who is the owner of the weapon?
 - 1.1.12 Describe any blood stains on the decedent, or clothing. Law enforcement may take clothing at the scene, not allowing the pathologist to view.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	Gunshot	NUMBER: Policy # 702.18
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1.1.13	Any recent changes in the decedent's behavior; unhappy, depressed, suicidal, etc...
1.1.14	Any recent changes in marital status?
1.1.15	Any recent changes in child custody?
1.1.16	Any recent changes in the decedent's life; death of family or friends, loss of employment, financial problems, pending legal matters, etc...
1.1.17	Any notes left at the scene?
1.1.18	Was shooting witnessed?
1.1.19	Activity of the decedent just prior to the shooting?

2.0 **Examination:**

2.1	Attempt to locate the number of gunshot wounds, may be very beneficial to the immediate investigation by law enforcement.
2.2	Attempt to determine if each suspected entrance wound, has an exit wound.
2.3	Law enforcement may desire to perform a Gunshot Residue test on the hands of the remains. This is permissible, with the authorization of the Deputy Coroner, and should be done in the Deputy's presence.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	Hanging	NUMBER: Policy # 702.19
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POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 Deaths from hanging are generally attributed to suicide. However, hangings can be accidental, or by the criminal act of another.
 - 1.1.1 Temperature of the area in which the decedent is found. Give estimate, if unable to get an accurate reading.
 - 1.1.2 Describe location in detail.
 - 1.1.3 Describe decedent's clothing; condition, soiled, disarray?
 - 1.1.4 Any signs of violence?
 - 1.1.5 Any signs of trauma on the remains? Describe in detail.
 - 1.1.6 Describe ligature. Rope, wire, cloth, etc...
 - 1.1.7 When cutting the ligature, cut away from the knot, leaving the knot intact.
 - 1.1.8 Send ligature to the forensic center, along with the remains if possible.
 - 1.1.9 Describe the knot.
 - 1.1.10 Where was ligature tied?
 - 1.1.11 If decedent was cut down, by whom and when?
 - 1.1.12 Are any other items about the decedent at the scene? Medications, poisons, firearms, cutting instruments, etc...
 - 1.1.13 Decedent's marital status; good, separation, divorced.
 - 1.1.14 Any recent change in behavior?
 - 1.1.15 Any recent change in life style?

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	Hanging	NUMBER: Policy # 702.19
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1.1.16 Any recent altercations, pending litigations?

1.2 Autoerotic indications;

1.2.1 Towel or soft material between ligature and neck.

1.2.2 Signs of masturbation.

1.2.3 Mirror located for deceased to see self.

1.2.4 Pornography, or photographs present.

1.2.5 Wearing clothes of opposite sex.

1.2.6 Any "fail safe" mechanism present, and will they work?

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: **Homicide/Suspicious Death**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.20

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01
R.C.L.E.A.A. Guidelines for death scene investigation

PROCEDURE: All homicides and suspicious deaths shall be treated the same by this agency. Deputies shall respond to all cases of this nature including those that are delayed deaths occurring in hospitals or nursing homes. (This procedure is meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01). Two deputy coroners and a supervisor should respond to all reported homicide. The on-duty or on-call supervisor will assign the deputy coroner as the primary and secondary investigator respectively.

1.0 Notification:

1.1 Deputies shall notify Supervision immediately of all homicides.

1.1.1 Deputies should be able to provide Supervision with the location, number of victims, agency involved, and any significant factors.

1.2 Two Deputies and a supervisor shall respond to the scene immediately, even if the agency does not require our services for some time.

1.2.1 After arrival at the scene, and the gathering of initial information at the scene briefing, the deputies may leave and return, depending upon the circumstances.

1.2.1.1 At times, search warrants are required prior to processing the scene. This can often take hours. The deputy coroners shall however be on scene prior to the processing in or about the body.

2.0 Documentation:

2.1 Make sure all your times are correct, and coincide with that of scene investigators.

2.2 Note weather conditions.

2.3 Record temperature, estimate if unknown.

2.4 Obtain as much information as possible from the scene investigator. Try and keep your questions to one source.

2.1.1 Time of offense.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	Homicide/Suspicious Death	NUMBER: Policy # 702.20
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- 2.1.2 Reporting party.
- 2.1.3 Circumstances of death.
- 2.1.4 Suspect, in-custody, outstanding, family related, etc...
- 2.1.5 First officer at scene.
- 2.1.6 Time of death, and who pronounced.

3.0 Examination:

- 3.1 Note body position. Where and how lying.
- 3.2 Describe visible wound(s).
- 3.3 Describe blood, where located, splatters, direction of flow, color and consistency.
- 3.4 Describe clothing, (law enforcement will often desire to remove clothing at scene, and secure as evidence, refer to Policy 702.36 *pending*.)
 - 3.4.1 Describe condition of clothing.
- 3.5 Photograph remains, and surrounding area from different angles.
 - 3.5.1 Close up photography of wound(s), and weapon(s).
- 3.6 Skin condition, cool, warm, cold, color.
- 3.7 Presence of rigor mortis; fixed, easily broken, none, etc...
- 3.8 Presence of livor mortis; locations, fixed, blanching, etc...
 - 3.8.1 Consistent with position found?
- 3.9 Type of wound(s) and location, if present.

4.0 Removal of remains:

- 4.1 The Deputy Coroner shall continually communicate with the scene investigators.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE:	Homicide/Suspicious Death	NUMBER: Policy # 702.20
4.2	The remains shall not be moved / disturbed, until all investigators concur.	
	4.2.1 Make sure photos, video, measurements, and diagrams have been completed prior to moving remains.	
4.3	Decedent hands may be bagged in paper to preserve evidence. Refer to Policy 702.37.	
4.4	If possible, roll the remains directly into a <i>new</i> body bag.	
4.5	Check for additional wounds, evidence, on the underside of the remains prior to closing the bag.	
	4.5.1 Place toe tag, prior to closing bag. (Body bag shall be sealed with a Sheriff-Coroner tag, noting time, and tag number).	
	4.5.2 A body bag tag shall also be placed on the outside of the bag. If a bag tag is not available then the toe tag number shall be written on the outside of the bag per Policy 703.07.	
	4.5.3 On all homicides, a deputy coroner or coroner technician should transport the remains to the appropriate forensic center and complete the intake process. The contract transportation company should not be utilized. If the coroner staff is unable to transport the remains, coroner administration should be contacted for direction.	
5.0	<u>Note:</u>	
5.1	If a pathologist is requested at the scene, or if the Deputy Coroner feels it would be beneficial for a Pathologist to respond, the request shall go through Sheriff-Coroner supervision.	
5.2	The Deputy Coroner shall immediately notify the forensic center of the name, and contact number(s) of investigator requesting to attend the autopsy.	
5.3	The primary investigator will be the case agent and will be responsible for the investigation (i.e. initial report, collection of reports, delegation of duties to secondary investigator, etc.).	
5.4	The secondary investigator will be available to aid the primary investigator with the investigation at the discretion of the primary investigator (i.e. photograph and document the body exam, aide in the evidence collection, etc.).	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: **Homicide/Suspicious Death**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.20

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	Hospice	NUMBER: Policy # 702.21
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POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 Sheriff-Coroner Coroner Technicians may take information on hospice deaths, absent a deputy coroner.
- 1.2 Even though the patient is in a hospice program, the circumstances shall be reviewed, assuring the Sheriff-Coroner that it falls under the perimeters of a non-coroner's case.
 - 1.2.1 The employee taking the information shall confirm with the R.N. / L.V.N. on scene that none of the following exist:
 - 1.2.1.1 Medications levels not appropriate
 - 1.2.1.2 Trauma including falls or fractures involved in the death (either recent or remote).
 - 1.2.1.3 No Adult Protective Services concerns or evidence of recent history of neglect and/or abuse.
 - 1.2.1.4 Any indication decedent took their own life
 - 1.2.1.5 No recent surgical procedures performed
 - 1.2.1.6 No family / legal next-of-kin
 - 1.2.1.7 Death is not related to COVID-19
- 1.3 Cases meeting any of the above criteria, or when the deputy coroner feels further inquiry is warranted, shall be investigated as necessary and in accordance with Policy & Procedure 702.01 and California Government Code section 27491.
- 1.4 If none of the above exist, and the decedent is over the age of 17, the case does not meet criteria for a Coroner's Case and may be released without further investigation.
- 1.5 No case number shall be issued and no entry into the Coroner's Case Management System is required. The deputy coroner releasing the case will provide their last

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	Hospice	NUMBER: Policy # 702.21
	name to the reporting agency for verification that the case was screened and released.	
1.6	Deaths of children 17 years of age and younger will still be investigated in accordance with Policy & Procedure: 702.45 (Child and Infant Death).	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: **Hyperthermia or Hypothermia**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.22

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 Hyperthermia deaths are the result of greatly increased body temperature. Hypothermia deaths are the result of greatly reduced body temperature.
 - 1.1.1 Describe the area in which the deceased was found, and photograph.
 - 1.1.2 Temperature of area in which deceased was found. This information could be very important. Attempt to get accurate figures. If unable, estimate. Also, document prior day(s) temperatures.
 - 1.1.3 How is deceased dressed? And what type of clothing; wool, cotton, synthetics, etc...
 - 1.1.4 What is condition of clothing; dry, wet, torn, etc...
 - 1.1.5 Is the clothing appropriate for the time and location?
 - 1.1.6 Apparent reason for the deceased being where found; i.e.; vehicle breakdown, hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, etc...
 - 1.1.7 Had deceased traveled far from shelter?
 - 1.1.8 Where was decedent going? Lost?
 - 1.1.9 If decedent was found under snow, was snow under the remains?
 - 1.1.10 If decedent was inside a building, what was the source of heat or cold?
 - 1.1.11 Obtain an accurate medical history, (natural disease process can cause either of these conditions).



Riverside County Coroner – In Custody Death Information Release

Coroner's Case Number:		County of Death:	
Agency with Custodial Responsibility:			
Location of Death:			
If in a facility, exact location within the facility:			
Date of Death:		Gender:	
Race:		Age:	
Custodial Status:			
Manner of Death:			
How Death Occurred (Mode):			

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: **In-custody**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.23

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code sections 27491 and 12525, P&P 702.01, California Department of Justice Information Bulletin 03-12-BCIA, P&P 702.04, California Penal Code section 10008.

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 Riverside County has several state correctional facilities, county jails, and city jails. "In-custody" deaths can apply to any occurring within these facilities, as well as those individuals who are detained, or under arrest by law enforcement.
 - 1.1.1 All in-custody deaths are probable Sheriff-Coroner Review cases and shall be handled as such until directed otherwise by Sheriff-Coroner administration.
- 1.2 Each institution has its own set of policies to work within. The deputy coroner must respect the security constraints of each facility and work closely with staff.
- 1.3 Every attempt should be made to obtain medical records, medical history while at the facility.

2.0 Special Reporting Procedures:

- 2.1 In all cases where a subject dies in the process of arrest, is en route to being incarcerated, or is incarcerated by the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, the Coroner's Bureau will prepare and forward a "Death In-Custody" report (Form BCIA 713) to the State Attorney General's Office via fax or registered return receipt U.S. Mail within 10 days of the death. The information will be sent to The Department of Justice, Law Enforcement Information Center, Death In-Custody Program, 4949 Broadway, Sacramento, CA 95820 –or- fax # (916) 227-4777. Deaths due to AIDS, tuberculosis, or other communicable diseases must also be specified in the report. A copy of the report will be included in the case file. An example of the report is attached to this section. The Coroner's Bureau will not be responsible for reporting deaths that occur while the subject is in the custody of another law enforcement or correctional agency.
 - 2.1.1 The Administrative Deputy Coroner or designee will be responsible for completing and submitting Form BCIA 713. The Administrative Deputy Coroner shall complete the initial form within 5 days of the death.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	In-custody	NUMBER: Policy # 702.23
	2.1.2	The form shall be reviewed by the designated sergeant and Coroner Administration (Lieutenant or above) prior to submission to DOJ.
	2.1.3	Upon completion of Coroner Review, the Administrative Deputy Coroner shall update Form BCIA 713 and submit it for review to the designated sergeant and Coroner Administration prior to submission to DOJ.
	2.2	Upon receipt of the completed Coroner's Packet (Investigative Report, Autopsy Protocol, and Toxicology Report), the Administrative Deputy Coroner will provide copies to the State Attorney General via the above mentioned methods.
	2.3	In addition to the State In-Custody Death Report, the administrative deputy coroner will also prepare the Federal Law Enforcement Custodial Death Report (Form CJ 11A) and retain it in the case file until it is requested by the California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center (CJSC). Once the CJSC requests the form, it will be sent to them within 15 days of the request.
	2.4	For clarification, deaths that occur "in process of arrest" include those persons: <ul style="list-style-type: none">2.4.1 In the physical custody, or under physical restraint, of law enforcement officers, even if the person was not formally under arrest at the time.2.4.2 Killed by any use of force by law enforcement officers prior to booking.2.4.3 At a crime/arrest scene or medical facility prior to booking.2.4.4 In transit to or from law enforcement facilities.2.4.5 Confined in lockups or booking centers.
3.0	<u>Natural In-Custody Deaths</u>	
	3.1	In the event that an individual dies of apparent natural causes while in custody, the Deputy Coroner assigned to the case will conduct a thorough investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death. In all in-custody deaths, the deputy coroner shall respond to the location of the death to carry out their investigation.
	3.2	Upon notification that an individual has died an apparent natural death while in the custody of a State, County, or local agency, the Deputy Coroner assigned to the case will immediately notify bureau supervision. Supervision will notify bureau administration, who will make the determination if the case will undergo the Coroner Review process.
	3.3	In all in custody natural cases, the body of the deceased shall be transported to the appropriate Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center for further investigation. The Deputy Coroner assigned to the case shall make a diligent effort to obtain a detailed medical

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TITLE:	In-custody	NUMBER: Policy # 702.23
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history on the decedent. In all cases, the Deputy Coroner should attempt to obtain the following:

- 3.3.1 Medical records
- 3.3.2 Admitting blood samples
- 3.3.3 Custody information (including booking numbers, CDC numbers, reason for incarceration, length of incarceration, etc.)
- 3.3.4 History of recent trauma
- 3.3.5 History of recent disciplinary action
- 3.3.6 History of suicidal ideation
- 3.3.7 Next of kin information. If the decedent is in the custody of the California Department of Corrections (CDC), they will contact and notify next of kin according to their policy. The deputy coroner will ensure that any essential information is passed on to the family by CDC.
- 3.3.8 If the decedent is involved in any civil litigation with or against the agency that is incarcerating them, or the agency that arrested him/her.

- 3.4 The Sheriff-Coroner shall be responsible for determining and issuing the cause of death in all in-custody deaths regardless of whether or not the attending physician is willing to provide the cause of death.

4.0 In custody Death Information Release

- 4.1 In accordance with California Penal Code Section 10008, the following information shall be released within 10 days of the death:

- 4.1.1 The full name of the custodial agency
- 4.1.2 The county in which the death occurred
- 4.1.3 The facility in which the death occurred
- 4.1.4 The location within the facility the death occurred
- 4.1.5 The race, gender, and age of the decedent
- 4.1.6 The date of the death
- 4.1.7 The custodial status of the decedent
 - 4.1.7.1 Awaiting Arraignment
 - 4.1.7.2 Awaiting Trial
 - 4.1.7.3 Sentenced / Incarcerated

- 4.2 In the event the legal next of kin has not been notified of the death, there shall be an additional 10-day grace period for good faith efforts to notify the next of kin before the information is posted. (20-day total).

- 4.2 Upon notification of the next of kin, the on-duty Coroner Sergeant shall complete the In Custody Information Release Form (Attached) and forward the form to [REDACTED] riversidesheriff.org for posting on the In Custody Death web page.

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- 4.3 Upon completion of the Coroner Review Process, the Administrative Deputy Coroner Shall update the In Custody Information Release Form to include the Manner and Mode of death. The updated form will be sent to [REDACTED] riversidesheriff.org so the in custody death web page may be updated.

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TITLE: **Apparent natural**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.24

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

- 1.0 **Special considerations:** (Generally law enforcement will be providing this information).
- 1.1 If death occurred at the residence, are any family members present?
- 1.1.1 If not, deputy coroner should respond.
- 1.2 Where is the decedent located, and how dressed?
- 1.2.1 Is the type of clothing appropriate for the location, and time of death?
- 1.3 Is there any visible trauma, or signs of violence?
- 1.4 Any medications?
- 1.4.1 List all medications, prescription numbers and date. Pharmacy, prescribing physician, and amount of medication in each container.
- 1.5 Does body appear to have been moved?
- 1.6 If family member(s) are present, when was decedent last seen alive?
- 1.7 Had the decedent made any recent complaints of pain / discomfort?
- 1.8 Did decedent have any medical history, or a private physician?
- 1.8.1 When was decedent last seen by physician, and why?
- 1.9 What is the general appearance of the residence / location; clean, dirty, ransacked, etc...
- 1.10 Was the location locked from within?
- 1.11 Are any lights or electrical appliances on?
- 1.12 Any newspapers outside, if so, from what date?
- 1.13 Any mail in mailbox?

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TITLE:	Apparent natural	NUMBER: Policy # 702.24
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1.14	Window coverings, open or closed?
1.15	Had bathroom been used prior to death?
1.16	Does it appear decedent had just ate?
1.17	Any indications of alcohol / drug abuse?
1.18	Any blood, vomitus, urine or excrement?
	1.18.1 If present, are they dry, partially dry, or fresh?
1.19	Any personal effects, or jewelry on body?
	1.19.1 If family members are present, items may be removed and released to them at scene.
1.20	Remains may be released to the mortuary of the families choice once it is apparent that death is natural, and physician will be providing cause of death.

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TITLE: **Occupational**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.25

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

1.1 Occupational deaths cover a multitude of occupations. The Deputy Coroner must be thorough in the investigation. Also, remember that litigation is almost a certainty. When the initial death is reported to the Coroner's Bureau, and the death is believed to be occupational, the investigating deputy should confirm that the Occupational Safety and Health Association of California (CAL OSHA), has been notified, (FED OSHA for Federal lands). The CAL OSHA Investigator can be of great help to the Deputy Coroner, both at the scene, and later in the investigation. The following should be considered;

1.1.1 Time of occurrence.

1.1.2 Name of company, owner, foreman, immediate supervisor, and all witnesses to the incident.

1.1.3 Time of the job that day, and the time decedent reported for work.

1.1.4 How long had decedent been performing this particular job?

1.1.5 Was formal training required for the job?

1.1.5.1 If so, when was training received?

1.1.6 Describe exactly what deceased was doing at the time of the incident.

1.1.7 Is special clothing, or safety equipment required for the job?

1.1.8 Any indication of alcohol or drug involvement?

1.1.9 Was decedent's actions prior to the incident in keeping with safe procedures?

1.1.10 Thoroughly photograph entire scene, and any safety equipment used.

1.1.11 Did it appear safety equipment was working properly? Is equipment well maintained?

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TITLE: **Suspected overdose**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.26

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 The ingestion of medications or intravenous injections of drugs can be accidental, intentional, or by the criminal act of other(s). The following should be considered;
 - 1.1.1 Temperature of area in which deceased was found. If unable to get accurate temperature, estimate.
 - 1.1.2 Description of area, and photographs.
 - 1.1.3 Location of medication containers, or drug paraphernalia.
 - 1.1.4 More than one type of medication?
 - 1.1.5 Was medication prescribed to the decedent? If not, to whom?
 - 1.1.6 What amount was originally prescribed? How much was left in the container?
 - 1.1.7 What was the daily dosage? What date was prescription filled?
 - 1.1.8 Are medications prescribed by more than one physician?
 - 1.1.9 Take possession of medications that may assist in determining cause of death.
 - 1.1.10 Had deceased shown any change in behavior; depressed, agitated, unhappy, etc...?
 - 1.1.11 Had there been any change in marital status, deaths of friends or relatives, court appearances, legal charges, etc...?
 - 1.1.12 Any previous suicide attempts? If so, how?
 - 1.1.13 Was the decedent a known drug or narcotic user?
 - 1.1.14 How long was the decedent a user?

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TITLE:	Suspected overdose	NUMBER: Policy # 702.26
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1.1.15 To what extent did the decedent use? (daily quantity).

1.1.16 Type of drug, narcotic usage?

1.1.17 Has overdose occurred before? When?

1.1.18 Was the previous overdose intentional, or accidental?

1.1.19 Check with law enforcement for possible prior convictions, narcotic or drug arrests, or information regarding previous narcotic related activities.

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TITLE:	Parachutist	NUMBER: Policy # 702.27
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POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 Most deaths of parachutists occur at or near the jump zone. Those cases that are transferred to a hospital should also include a scene investigation by the Deputy Coroner. The F.A.A. or N.T.S.B. may or may not respond. However, they should be notified, and can be of great assistance.
- 1.2 Upon arrival at the scene, make contact with law enforcement, and representatives of the parachute center.
 - 1.2.1 Make note of the weather conditions at the time of the incident; visibility, wind speed, rain, etc...
 - 1.2.2 Record any witness statements.
 - 1.2.3 Are there any recordings of the incident? Home video, still pictures, etc...
 - 1.2.4 Are there any signs of alcohol, drug involvement?
 - 1.2.5 Record aircraft information that parachutist jumped from.
 - 1.2.6 Obtain information from pilot.
 - 1.2.7 Inquire as to the altitude the jump was performed, the type of jump, and the names of other jumpers involved.
 - 1.2.8 What is the jump history of the decedent? Number of jumps, training, etc...
 - 1.2.9 What was the mental attitude of the deceased prior to the jump?
- 1.3 Examination of equipment.
 - 1.3.1 All parachute equipment shall be inspected for possible malfunction, wear, improper use.
 - 1.3.2 The parachute center should have an available master rigger.

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TITLE:	Parachutist	NUMBER: Policy # 702.27
	1.3.2.1	The master rigger can assist with the inspection of equipment; the main parachute, reserve, harness and container, serial numbers, packing data card, and rigger's seal.
	1.3.3	Equipment should not be released until a complete inspection has been completed.

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TITLE:	Poisoning	NUMBER: Policy # 702.28
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POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 The ingestion of poisons can be accidental, intentional, or by the criminal act of other(s).
 - 1.1.1 What is the temperature of the area in which the deceased was found? If unable to get an accurate temperature, estimate.
 - 1.1.2 Description and photographs of area.
 - 1.1.3 Are empty or partially empty containers at scene?
 - 1.1.3.1 Check wastebaskets, garbage containers, drawers near decedent, etc...
 - 1.1.3.2 Containers should be brought in for analyses.
 - 1.1.4 Could more than one mixture have been taken?
 - 1.1.5 Are there any drinking glasses, or other containers with a liquid, paste, or residue in them?
 - 1.1.6 Any indication of recent purchases, or written material on poisonous substances?
 - 1.1.7 Any evidence on face, lips, or inside of mouth to indicate the ingestion of poisons?
 - 1.1.8 Any unusual odors about the body, or the room?

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TITLE:	Scuba diving	NUMBER: Policy # 702.29
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POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 In the investigation of suspected scuba deaths, the Deputy Coroner must keep in mind that death by drowning is a logical assumption. Drowning is not always the cause.
 - 1.1.1 Water temperature at approximate time of death, if available.
 - 1.1.2 Any history of heart disease, or seizure disorder?
 - 1.1.3 Decedent's scuba experience and approximate number of dives.
 - 1.1.4 Depth at which decedent should have been diving when incident occurred.
 - 1.1.5 Was decedent diving alone, with partner, instructor, or group?
 - 1.1.6 Were there previous dives by the decedent on this day? What time did they occur, and for how long? Time intervals between dives, and maximum depth attained?
 - 1.1.7 Did the decedent have sinus, ear problems, or a cold? Was the decedent on any medications?
 - 1.1.8 What was the decedent doing just prior to the fatal event?
 - 1.1.9 How was the decedent dressed?
 - 1.1.10 Any complaints of pain, or discomfort by the decedent?
 - 1.1.11 What were the conditions; water depth, visibility, current?
 - 1.1.12 Was the equipment used, owned by the decedent, or rented?
 - 1.1.13 The equipment should be inspected by a certified diver for possible malfunctions.

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TITLE: **Skeletal remains**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.30

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 Skeletal remains can be found in a variety of scenes. These remains may represent a death of forensic interest (i.e. natural, suicide, homicide, or accident). The Coroner will determine if the remains are human or non-human.
- 1.2 In some instances, found skeletal or cremated remains may represent prehistoric or historic remains and as such are NOT of forensic interest but ARE protected under Federal and State laws.
- 1.3 Skeletal remains require the significant moving, sifting, or digging of soil should be considered potentially hazardous for pathogenic fungus and other environmental hazards. Refer to policy 702.40 Hazardous Materials for additional safety procedures.

2.0 Handling of skeletal remains in a Forensic Setting

- 2.1 Upon the Coroner's Bureau being notified of found skeletal or buried remains a deputy coroner shall respond to the scene.
 - 2.1.1 The deputy coroner shall attempt to make an accurate determination of the remains (i.e. non-human or human origin). If the remains are clearly not human (i.e. presence of hair, hoof, or clearly identifiable non-human elements), the deputy coroner may collect and dispose of the remains properly.
 - 2.1.2. If needed, the deputy coroner should contact a supervisor who may authorize photographing and emailing the photograph and pertinent information to the anthropologist for clarification of biological origin.
 - 2.1.3 A supervisor may direct an anthropologist to respond to the scene for examination and/or recovery of remains.
 - 2.1.3. All skeletal remains thought to be human shall be handled with clean gloves. This will protect from possible DNA contamination.
 - 2.1.4. All human skeletal remains should be treated as any other decedent and checked into receiving with a toe tag affixed.

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TITLE: **Skeletal remains**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.30

3.0 Native American Remains:

- 3.1 Prehistoric remains include all Native American remains and any other associated artifacts, recovered from an archaeological context are protected. Usually there remains are uncovered during archaeological monitoring by a registered archaeological company during construction.

Native American remains, funerary objects, and sacred objects found on private, private, or lands that are NOT Federal or Tribal are protected under Section 27460 Part 3 Division 2, Title 3, Government Code, 7050.5 Health and Safety, and sections 5097.94, 5097.98, and 5097.99 of the Public Resources Code.

Native American remains, funerary objects, and sacred objects found on Federal or Tribal lands are protected under Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) (25 USC 3001 et seq)

- 3.1.1 When unidentified remains, believed to be prehistoric, are found during construction, the contracted company must halt all work and immediately contact the Coroner's Bureau.
- 3.1.2 If Native American representatives are on-site and state that they prefer the remains not to be photographed, no photographs shall be taken and the anthropologist shall be contacted after notifying the on-duty supervisor.
- 3.1.3 No cremations, skeletal remains, or artifacts shall be removed from the site.
- 3.1.4 The Coroner or their representative has two working days to examine and determine if the remains are a prehistoric burial/cremation.
- 3.1.5 If the remains are NOT on Federal or Tribal lands the Coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). Their main line is (916) 373-3710. Additional information is available at nahc.ca.gov

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- 3.1.6 If the remains ARE on Federal lands the Coroner must immediately notify the responsible Federal official. If the remains are on Tribal Lands the Coroner must immediately notify the responsible Indian tribe official. Contact number for the Bureau of Indian Affairs is 760-416-2133 or 951-276-6624. Contact for BLM is 760-833-7100.
- 3.1.7 Notification of Riverside County Sheriff's Department Tribal Liaison Unit should be made on all Native American remains.

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TITLE:	Stabbing	NUMBER: Policy # 702.31
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POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 Stabbings and cuttings can be accidental, intentional, or by the criminal act of other(s).
 - 1.1.1 Temperature of area in which deceased was found. If unable to get accurate temperature, estimate.
 - 1.1.2 Description of scene, and photographs.
 - 1.1.3 Description of clothing on decedent.
 - 1.1.4 Is clothing in disarray?
 - 1.1.5 Blood on clothing? If so, describe.
 - 1.1.6 Blood at scene, but not on clothing of decedent?
 - 1.1.7 Any cutting instruments at scene? If so, obtain measurement, and type for pathologist.
 - 1.1.8 Was decedent right, or left handed?
 - 1.1.9 Any hesitation marks, marks on wrists?
 - 1.1.10 Any old scars, apparent self inflicted?
 - 1.1.11 What was decedent's mental state; depressed, unhappy, aggravated, etc...?
 - 1.1.12 Any recent change in marital status, altercations, deaths of family or friends?
 - 1.1.13 Any recent medical attention, or trauma?
 - 1.1.14 Any recent arguments?
 - 1.1.15 Any recent investigations by law enforcement?

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TITLE: **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.32

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

1.1 The victims of SIDS are often apparent healthy infants. The infants are generally between the ages of 1-6 months, and can be 12 months old. The infants are often put to bed with no indication of any problems, and sometime later found dead. Often the infant is transported, and pronounced dead at the hospital. The Deputy Coroner should always conduct a scene investigation. Riverside County Health Department shall be contacted as soon as possible on suspected SIDS cases; they can provide needed support for the family. The following areas should be answered, along with the more detailed report, which shall be submitted to the State of California.

1.1.1 Thoroughly photograph the area in which the infant was sleeping.

1.1.2 Exactly where was infant found?

1.1.3 Record temperature of room.

1.1.4 Was room cooled, heated? If so, how central air, furnace, space heater, etc...

1.1.5 When was infant put to bed? What type of bed?

1.1.6 How was infant lying in bed, supine, prone, on side?

1.1.7 When did infant last eat? What, and how much?

1.1.8 Any recent congestion, coughing, throwing up?

1.1.9 Where was the infant born?

1.1.10 What was the birth date?

1.1.11 What was the birth weight, and any subsequent doctor visits?

1.1.12 Was the birth normal, or by "C" section.

1.1.13 Were there any problems during prenatal, or during delivery?

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TITLE:	Sudden Infant Death Syndrome	NUMBER: Policy # 702.32
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1.1.14 Has the infant been on any medications? Currently, or in the past.
Prescribed, or over the counter.

1.1.15 Was the child sleeping with parents/other adult, or other children. If sleeping
with an adult, was that adult under the influence of any substance, medication,
etc...

2.0 Reporting requirements:

2.1 "Suspected SIDS" cases shall be reported within twenty-four hours to the California
SIDS program.

2.1.1 Deputies shall complete form DHS 4411 (1/00), and mail to the Ca. SIDS
program.

2.2 Once the cause of death has been certified as "SIDS", the Deputy shall mail the SIDS
death investigation, form DHS 4439 (03/97) to the State of California.

2.2.1 This investigative packet should be completed by the Deputy during the initial
investigation, on all suspected SIDS cases. If the cause turns out to be other
than SIDS, the form will not be forwarded to the state; however, the questions
within the packet will assist the Deputy in the initial investigation.

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TITLE: **Suicide**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.33

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

1.1 Suicide can be accomplished in many ways; asphyxia, burning, gunshots, drowning, ingestion and injection of drugs, slashing, stabbing, jumping, etc...

1.1.1 What is the temperature of the area in which the decedent is found? If unable to get accurate temperature, estimate.

1.1.2 Describe and photograph scene.

1.1.3 Describe decedent's clothing.

1.1.4 Is mode of death apparent?

1.1.5 Any evidence of a suicide note? Was note found on decedent, under pillow, waste basket, on computer, etc...

1.1.6 Does note appear to match decedent's handwriting?

1.1.6.1 Often law enforcement will desire the note as evidence. Unless the death is a suspected homicide, the Sheriff-Coroner will maintain custody of the note, (California Govt. Code 27464). Law enforcement can be provided with a copy. The original shall be released to next of kin of the deceased as soon as possible. A copy of the note shall be made for the file.

1.1.7 Who identified the handwriting?

1.1.8 If the decedent used a weapon, the Sheriff-Coroner shall maintain possession unless it is a suspected homicide. The weapon shall be released to next of kin of the deceased after 30 days, providing law enforcement does not desire it as evidence.

1.2 Some of the following should be considered;

1.2.1 Decedent's personality.

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TITLE:	Suicide	NUMBER: Policy # 702.33
1.2.2	Family relationships.	
1.2.3	Social relationships.	
1.2.4	Life style.	
1.2.5	Employment history.	
1.2.6	Medical or psychiatric problems.	
1.2.6.1	Recent Mental Health to include <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Substance abuse/Dependency Treatment- Past or present outpatient/hospitalization therapy	
1.2.6.2	Trigger events <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Loss of relationship- Conflict with family members- Conflict with school/job- Legal issues (court appearance, incarceration, warrants)	
1.2.6.1	Serious Illness/Diagnosis <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Recent hospitalization within last 12 months- Emergency Department visits in last 2 months- Physician or Clinic visits within last 12 months	
1.2.7	Past suicide attempts.	
1.2.7.1	This information can be obtained from relatives, co-workers, friends, neighbors, physicians, etc...	
1.2.7.2	Exposure to Other's Behaviors (i.e. completed suicide or attempt by family, friends or role models).	
1.2.7.3	Self-injury/Risk Taking Behavior (cutting, burning, choking game, etc.)	
1.2.8	Social Networks	
1.2.8.1	Request passwords for email, Facebook, text messages, etc.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: **Traffic accident**

NUMBER: Policy # 702.34

POLICY: Refer P&P 702.09

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491, P&P 702.01

PROCEDURE: (meant to be a supplement to P&P 702.01)

1.0 Special considerations:

- 1.1 Traffic cases can greatly impact a large area. At times law enforcement may request permission to move bodies / vehicles in order to clear roadways, reducing hazards. It is up to the investigating deputy coroner as to whether permission is granted. Major considerations may be the deputies estimated time of arrival, and whether it is a major roadway. If all lanes of Interstate 10 are closed, it may be beneficial to move the vehicles off to the side, and obtain scene photos from CHP. At any rate, this is something the Deputy needs to evaluate.
- 1.2 Upon arrival, contact the investigating traffic officer. Gather initial information.
- 1.3 Describe and photograph scene.
 - 1.3.1 Overall photos should be taken, showing position of vehicles in relation to one another. Close up photos shall be taken of decedent's injuries, etc...
 - 1.3.2 Photograph specific damage to vehicle(s).
 - 1.3.3 Tires, if blowout is suspected.
- 1.4 Document vehicle makes, models, and license numbers.
- 1.5 Identify where decedent's were positioned at the time of collision.
- 1.6 Note weather conditions; visibility, sunny, raining, etc...and traffic conditions at time of collision.
- 1.7 Any indication of alcohol or drug involvement?
- 1.8 Describe the clothing of decedent(s).
- 1.9 Describe injuries.
 - 1.9.1 If possible ascertain how the decedent received the injuries; what part of the vehicle caused the injuries etc...

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TITLE:	Traffic accident	NUMBER: Policy # 702.34
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1.9.2	Are the injuries consistent with the position the decedent was reportedly seated? (Be sure you can identify driver vs. passengers).
1.9.3	Was the decedent restrained? Is there any trauma from belts?
1.10	Check vehicle(s) for personal property, not only for identification but for safeguarding.
1.11	Obtain any witness statements.
1.12	Find out from law enforcement, where vehicle(s) will be towed to.
1.13	If decedent was pronounced dead at the hospital, obtain admitting blood ASAP.

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TITLE:	Military involvement	NUMBER: Policy # 702.35
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POLICY: Generally, deaths involving active duty military personnel will be handled by the Office of the Armed Forces, Medical Examiner.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 **Active duty military:**

- 1.1 All death investigations involving active duty military personnel shall be immediately reported to a Supervisor.
 - 1.1.1 The Supervisor shall report the incident to the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau Lieutenant.
 - 1.1.2 The Supervisor shall immediately report the case to the Regional Medical Examiner in San Diego.
- 1.2 Providing the Office of the Armed Forces is going to handle the case, the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau will only provide assistance as requested.
- 1.3 Autopsies may be conducted within our facilities, or the case may be transferred to San Diego.
- 1.4 Riverside Sheriff-Coroner may decide not to relinquish the case to the Armed Forces Medical Examiner. If the case is handled by this department, all reports, photos, records, shall be forwarded to the Armed Forces Medical Examiner.

2.0 **Contact personnel:**

- 2.1 Regional Medical Examiner
 - 2.1.1 Naval Medical Center, 34800 Bob Wilson Dr., San Diego, Ca. 92134; (619) 532-6400. Ask for the Officer of the Day.
- 2.2 Regional Decedent Affairs Officer
 - 2.2.1 J.P. Rigaud, Naval Medical Center, 34800 Bob Wilson Dr., San Diego, Ca. 92134; (800) 290-7410-main line, 619-532-8305-direct line.
 - 2.2.2 If unable to reach appropriate personnel at the Naval Medical Center, contact the Armed Forces Medical Examiner, 301-319-0000. This is a 24 hour line.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Clothing Retained as Evidence

NUMBER: Policy # 702.36

POLICY: When a death occurs as a result of a criminal act, investigating agencies may desire the decedent's clothing be removed prior to the body being transported from the scene of death. The Sheriff-Coroner recognizes the importance of preserving evidence and avoiding cross-contamination. The purpose of this policy and procedure is to insure that clothing retained as evidence is properly handled. Any clothing removed from the remains of the deceased must be done with the approval of the deputy coroner, in accordance with Gov. Code 27491.

REFERENCE: GOV. CODE 27491, R.C.L.E.A.A. Death Scene Protocol

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Evidence:

- 1.1 Decedent's clothing often contains various forms of evidence. It is the responsibility of the investigating agency to determine the value of that evidence in coordination with the deputy coroner and/or the Department of Justice.
- 1.2 The investigating agency shall determine whether or not that clothing should be removed prior to the decedent being placed into a body bag, and transported from the scene.

2.0 Removal of Clothing:

- 2.1 Prior to any clothing being removed from the decedent, the investigating agency shall advise the deputy coroner of their intent, and explain the reason for doing so.
 - 2.1.1 The determining factor should be loss of evidence due to bodily fluids, if the clothing remained on the decedent until autopsy.
 - 2.1.2 No clothing shall be removed without the approval of the deputy coroner.
- 2.2 Clothing shall be removed in conjunction with the investigating agency, in accordance with their departmental evidence collection procedures. This may be done by the deputy coroner or the investigating agency personnel. However, the removal of clothing shall occur in the presence of the deputy coroner.
- 2.3 The investigating agency and/or the deputy coroner shall package the clothing.
 - 2.3.1 The deputy coroner shall complete a separate Coroner Property Receipt for the clothing. If releasing to an allied Law Enforcement Agency, a Sheriff's Form 409 will be completed.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Clothing Retained as Evidence

NUMBER: Policy # 702.36

3.0 Retention of Clothing:

- 3.1 The deputy coroner shall transport the clothing to a Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center without delay.
 - 3.1.1 The investigating agency may accompany the deputy coroner to the Forensic Center to assist in logging the clothing into evidence.
- 3.2 The deputy coroner shall maintain proper "chain of custody" by logging the clothing into an evidence locker or drying locker at a Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center.
 - 3.2.1 Special consideration shall be given to the amount of saturation to the clothing by blood/bodily fluids.
 - 3.2.2 The deputy coroner may have to unwrap the clothing and lay it on a drying shelf, or hang it up. This shall be done in accordance with Policy #702.39.
 - 3.2.2.1 A copy of the Coroner Property Receipt shall be attached to the outside of the air-dry locker or evidence locker once the clothing is secured inside.
 - 3.2.3 In the event air-drying is not necessary; the clothing shall be logged into an evidence locker within a Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center adhering to 3.2.2.1 of this policy and P&P 702.39.
- 3.3 Sheriff-Coroner pathologists often desire to examine the clothing of the deceased at the time of autopsy. This examination assists the pathologist in their death investigation.
 - 3.3.1 At time of autopsy and/or at the request of the pathologist, the clothing may be brought into the autopsy suite for examination by the pathologist.
 - 3.3.2 At the completion of autopsy, the clothing shall be released back to the investigating agency. The only exception would be that if the clothing were not completely dry. In this case the Sheriff-Coroner may retain the clothing at the request of the agency, until it is dry.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Collection of Evidence From Hands

NUMBER: Policy # 702.37

POLICY: The following procedures relate to homicide cases or other cases where the hands are going to be bagged. It is important that the deputy coroner investigating the case communicate with the lead investigator and/or the Department of Justice on the collection of evidence from hands. If at all possible, it is best that all evidence from the hands be collected in a controlled environment. To minimize the loss of evidence on the hands, the following procedures have been established:

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Evidence Collected at the Scene:

- 1.1 In a homicide or suspicious death, when identity is a question and the integrity of physical evidence can be protected, a thumbprint should be obtained on all decedents at the scene regardless of whether the hands are going to be placed into bags. This will prevent having to do a pre-autopsy thumbprint for identification at the Forensic Center.
 - 1.1.1 Prior to taking the thumbprint and/or bagging the hands, the deputy coroner will coordinate with the investigating agency and/or Department of Justice for the collection of evidence from the hands (GSR, hairs, fibers). In the event that the investigating agency wants any evidence collected from the hands of the decedent at the scene, all processing of the hands should be done at that time. Optimally, fingernail scrapings and clippings should always be done at the Forensic Center, however, if the situation dictates they may be collected at the scene.
 - 1.1.2 The deputy coroner will document in his/her report what was collected from the hands at the scene. In the event, the deputy coroner is not able to complete their report prior to triage; this information should be included in their CCMS Summary.
 - 1.1.3 If any evidence is to be collected during the autopsy, the deputy coroner should document in their report what evidence is requested (GSR, fingernail clippings/scrapings, and trace). The hands should be placed in paper bags and secured at the wrist with tape. The bags should be labeled "left" and "right" and with the case number, date, time, and deputy's name.
 - 1.1.4 In cases where the investigating agency requests a full set of fingerprints be taken at the scene, the deputy coroner will coordinate with the investigating agency and/or the Department of Justice to process the hands entirely, prior to obtaining the fingerprints. Photographs of the hands should also be taken prior to any fingerprints.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Collection of Evidence From Hands

NUMBER: Policy # 702.37

2.0 Scene Hand Processing Procedure

- 2.1 The hands should be photographed, in place, prior to any movement or evidence collection. Scales should be used in all photographs. After photographing the hands in place, the anterior and posterior aspects of the hands should be photographed.
- 2.2 The deputy coroner at the scene will consider the order in which evidence is collected. The hands should be visually inspected prior to processing. If any evidence (hair, fiber, vegetation, insects, etc.) appears fragile, it will be collected first. After that, collection should be done in the following order:
 - 2.2.1 Gunshot Residue testing (GSR)
 - 2.2.2 Blood/Fluid samples/exemplars (if necessary)
 - 2.2.3 Tape Lifts (if necessary)
 - 2.2.4 Fingernail Scrapings and/or Clippings
 - 2.2.5 Fingerprints / IBIS
- 2.3 After the evidence is collected from the hands it should be immediately turned over to the investigating agency and packaged by their evidence technicians in accordance with their policies and procedures.
- 2.4 All evidence collected, how it was collected, and its disposition should be thoroughly documented in the deputy coroner's report.

3.0 Evidence Collected at the Forensic Center:

- 3.1 On cases where the investigating agency requests an identifying thumbprint after a decedent has been transported to the Forensic Center, the following procedures should be followed:
 - 3.1.1 The request from the investigating agency should go through a deputy coroner. The deputy coroner will ascertain from the investigating agency if any evidence is requested from the hands (GSR, fingernail scrapings and clippings, and trace). The deputy coroner will then contact the Forensic Center supervisor and advise him of the request. The Forensic Center supervisor will evaluate the request and coordinate with the investigating agency to collect the requested evidence prior to any fingerprinting.
 - 3.1.2 A deputy coroner or coroner forensic technician will be present during the collection of the evidence. The deputy coroner will write a supplemental report stating the request and what evidence was collected and its location, i.e., given to investigating agency or placed into evidence at the Coroner's Bureau.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: Collection of Evidence From Hands

NUMBER: Policy # 702.37

- 3.1.3 A deputy coroner or a coroner forensic technician will take possession of the collected evidence and place it into coroner evidence. The evidence will then be given to the investigating agency at the time of autopsy. If the investigating agency is present when the evidence is collected, it maybe given to them at that time.
- 3.1.4 If a request is made after hours by an investigating agency, the deputy coroner will contact the on-call coroner supervisor. The on-call supervisor will evaluate the request and determine what action to take.
- 3.1.5 Once all evidence has been collected from the hand(s) and they have been photographed, complete fingerprinting may occur.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Suicide Notes

NUMBER: Policy # 702.38

POLICY: All suicide notes are property of the decedent/estate. It is the policy of the Sheriff-Coroner that we will make every effort possible to obtain the original document. A copy will be made of the document and the original suicide note will be returned to the legal next-of-kin when requested.

REFERENCE: California Government Code 27464

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Disposition of Suicide Notes:

- 1.1 Any note left at a death scene that deals with disposition of property, remains, or may tend to indicate an intention by the writer to take the writer's life, shall be retained by the deputy coroner.
- 1.2 The deputy coroner may provide the investigating law enforcement agency a facsimile of the document.
 - 1.2.1 The deputy coroner shall retain the original document until completion of the investigation. The deputy coroner shall then release the original document to the decedent's next-of-kin or the legal representative of the estate.
 - 1.2.2 If the document is testamentary in nature, containing directions for disposition of property or remains, the original shall be filed with the clerk of the court as soon as possible.
 - 1.2.2.1 Arrangements should be made for the Public Administrator to file the note with the court. A verification of the court filing shall be returned to the deputy coroner for inclusion in to the case file.
- 1.3 If the possessor of a suicide note refuses to release it to the deputy coroner, the deputy coroner shall immediately notify coroner supervision.
 - 1.3.1 If the possessor still refuses to release the note, coroner supervision shall notify coroner administration for direction.
- 1.4 If the authenticity of a suicide note is in question, the original document shall not be released to the next-of-kin until the note has been verified.
- 1.5 In the case of a delayed suicide where law enforcement responded to the original injury and took possession of a suicide note, the deputy coroner shall contact the law enforcement agency as soon as he/she has knowledge of the note and make arrangements to obtain possession of the note as personal property of the decedent.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Suicide Notes

NUMBER: Policy # 702.38

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- 1.6 If a law enforcement agency refuses to release the suicide note, coroner supervision shall be notified immediately.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Air-Dry Locker

NUMBER: Policy # 702.39

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner recognizes the critical need of maintaining the integrity of forensic evidence. The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau has adopted strict guidelines to ensure personnel properly handle blood soaked articles, while providing the Forensic Pathologists the opportunity to examine these articles at time of autopsy as part of their death investigation.

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Securing Evidence in Air-Dry Unit(s):

- 1.1 Prior to placing items in drying unit(s), employees shall comply with Section 4.0 of this Policy and Procedure in assuring that the drying unit has been properly cleaned and sealed.
- 1.2 Each item shall be carefully removed from its original container and placed into the air-dry unit, (ensuring that any trace evidence is not lost in the transporting of items from container to dryer).
 - 1.2.1 All property from the same case number shall go into the same locker. In the event that all property will not fit in the same locker, it may be split. However, this shall be clearly noted on the personal property inventory form.
- 1.3 Items shall be appropriately hung on clean hangers or placed flat on the shelves so as to allow air to properly circulate around articles. Items shall not be bundled, or tossed into the air-dry unit.
 - 1.3.1 Under no circumstances are articles from one decedent to be commingled with that of another decedent's within the same drying unit.
- 1.4 The air-dry unit shall then be closed and secured with a numbered seal.
- 1.5 Containers, which were used for the transportation of the articles from the death scene, should also be placed in the drying unit. If the container is too large, or there is not enough room in the drying unit, the container(s) should be securely placed in an evidence locker in order to ensure the protection of trace evidence. Any/all container(s) shall then be released to law enforcement along with the dried articles when appropriate.
- 1.6 All items shall remain inside the air-dry locker until time of autopsy.

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TITLE: Air-Dry Locker

NUMBER: Policy # 702.39

1.6.1 In the event blood soaked articles come into the Forensic Center in need of being dried and the air-dry locker is occupied with another case, those new articles shall be hung in a similar fashion within one of the non-automated air-dry lockers. In a case such as this all sections of this Policy and Procedure apply as well to these lockers.

1.6.1.1 If the articles within the automated air-dry locker are completely dry, they may then be moved to a non-automated air-dry locker in order to make room for another case.

1.6.1.2 In the event property is moved to another locker, the Sheriff-Coroner Personal Property Inventory form shall follow the property to that new location. The person moving that property shall be responsible for indicating the move on the air-dry locker evidence log, as well as signing and dating the chain of custody section on the personal property inventory form and indicating the new locker number.

1.7 The Sheriff-Coroner Personal Property Inventory form shall be attached to the exterior of the air-dry unit and remain there until the items are removed from dryer.

1.8 Once all articles have been secured within the dryer and the door has been sealed in accordance with this Policy and Procedure, the employee shall activate the dryer by depressing the green toggle switch located on the top right hand side of the unit. (The dryer should remain on at all times while articles are located inside).

2.0 Retrieving and Handling Evidence:

2.1 A clean, butcher papered covered gurney will be used as the transporting device for all items removed from the air-dry unit, (air-dry room to autopsy suite).

2.2 Upon verifying the seal number on the drying unit with that of the evidence log, the employee shall break the seal, initial and date & time the log.

2.3 The employee retrieving the articles from the drying unit(s) shall obtain the Personal Property Inventory form from the exterior of the dryer.

2.4 The employee shall turn off the dryer and remove all articles from the air-dry unit ensuring that the Personal Property Inventory form matches that within the air-dry unit. If an item(s) is missing, a supervisor shall be notified immediately.

2.5 All items shall be placed on a butcher paper covered gurney (including any and all bags, butcher paper and containers) ensuring not to drop, mishandle or impair any of the items.

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TITLE: Air-Dry Locker

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2.5.1 Articles shall be removed one at a time and placed flat on the gurney.

2.5.2 The butcher paper from the bottom of the air-dry unit shall also be retained by carefully folding the paper. This is done while the paper is still inside the air-dry unit. The purpose is to ensure that any trace evidence that has fallen or gathered onto the paper is kept contained and not lost.

2.5.3 More than one gurney can be used if necessary.

2.6 All items shall be taken directly into the autopsy suite. The employee shall not leave the articles unattended for any reason, they shall maintain chain of custody to the law enforcement official who is going to take control of it.

2.7 Once disposition has been made with the property, the completed personal property inventory form shall go to the case file.

3.0 Evidence Log:

3.1 The Evidence log shall remain attached to the exterior of the drying unit(s) at all times.

3.2 The Deputy Coroner, or the person placing items into the drying unit shall complete the appropriate information on the log, (date, case number, decedent's name and deputy coroner's name, or the name of the person placing items in dryer).

3.3 The clean seal on the door shall then be broken after verifying the number with that on the evidence log.

3.4 After placing items in the air-dry unit the Deputy Coroner will re-secure the air-dry unit with a new seal and document the time and the new seal number in the appropriate box on the evidence log.

3.5 When items are removed out of the air-dry unit, the Deputy Coroner or Coroner Technician will compare the log to the seal that is currently securing the air-dry unit, to ensure that the original seal is still attached. If for any reason the seal does not match the log sheet, a supervisor shall be notified immediately.

3.6 When the seal is confirmed with that of the log, the Deputy Coroner or Coroner Technician shall write his/her initials and ID number in the appropriate box on the evidence log. By initialing the appropriate box this verifies that the seal number is the original seal provided by the Deputy Coroner that placed the items in the air-dry unit and indicates the person responsible for removing the items from the air-dry unit.

3.7 Once the seal is broken, the Deputy Coroner or Coroner Technician shall document the date and time this was accomplished on the evidence log.

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3.8 After items have been removed from the air-dry unit, personnel must indicate the disposition of the items on the evidence log, i.e., to autopsy suite, released to law enforcement, placed in locker #, etc...

3.8.1 After the items have been removed and disposition established. The air- dry unit shall be cleaned and secured with a new seal, indicating on the evidence log, by the employee initialing and entering the new seal number.

4.0 Cleaning:

4.1 The air-dry unit shall be sanitized with a 90/10 water bleach solution. This includes all shelves, walls, unit floor, ceiling and hangers within the unit.

4.2 After air-dry unit is thoroughly cleaned, all remaining moisture shall be wiped dry with clean paper towels.

4.3 Clean butcher paper shall be placed on the bottom of the unit.

4.4 The air-dry unit shall then be secured with a numbered seal, with the number facing out.

4.5 The intake filters should be periodically checked and replaced if necessary.

4.6 The Hepa filter should be replaced approximately every six months depending on actual usage.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Hazardous Materials Exposure Procedure

NUMBER: Policy # 702.40

POLICY: The Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau recognizes the potential for hazardous material exposures to employees at death scenes or within the forensic centers. It is the intent of the Sheriff-Coroner to eliminate or minimize the risk of occupational exposure to potentially hazardous substances by utilizing a combination of controls; employee training/education, personal protective equipment, and implementation of recommended safe work practices.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Definition:

- 1.1 Potentially hazardous materials are defined as having one or more of the following characteristics or effects: asphyxiate, carcinogenic, corrosive, environmental diseases, explosive, oxidant, pathogenic fungus, radioactive, reactive, toxic or poisonous.

2.0 Death scenes:

- 2.1 Personnel should be aware that any unexplained death or suspected overdose could have the potential to be a hazardous material incident.
- 2.2 When a death is reported, personnel should question the reporting party regarding the possibility of ingestion, or exposure to hazardous materials by the decedent. This applies to all cases, whether or not the deputy is going to respond to the scene. When dealing with unexplained/unattended deaths, personnel should ask the following questions as necessary.
 - 2.2.1 Did the decedent complain of nausea, vomiting, blurred vision, itching, or convulsions prior to death?
 - 2.2.2 Is there an unusual/unexplained odor to the body?
 - 2.2.2.1 An example of unexplained odors would be, almonds, peaches, garlic, fresh cut grass, chlorine, or other smells that may be out of place.
 - 2.2.3 Are there any chemical containers in the vicinity of the body?
 - 2.2.4 Unidentified tablets or liquids on or near the body.

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- 2.2.5 Chemical burns on the body.
- 2.2.6 Are there dead animals or insects in the vicinity of the body?
- 2.2.7 Are there any unexplained low-lying clouds/vapors?
- 2.2.8 Any unexplained smoke?
- 2.2.9 Multiple unexplained deaths in the same area?
- 2.3 If it appears hazardous materials are involved, Sheriff-Coroner personnel are to immediately convey those concerns to the reporting party. Sheriff-Coroner supervision is then to be notified, in conjunction with fire department and County Health.
 - 2.3.1 In cooperation with these agencies, a plan can be developed on how to proceed with the investigation, taking into account exposure to personnel, decontamination procedures and associated issues.
- 2.4 Personnel responding to the scene of an unexpected death or a possible overdose should maintain a heightened state of awareness as to the possibility of hazardous materials being involved in the death. (See 2.2 for potential indicators of a hazardous material exposure).
 - 2.4.1 If hazardous material exposure is suspected, personnel are to immediately move to a safe area up wind and make notification as specified in section 2.3 of this procedure.
 - 2.4.2 At no time are Coroner's Bureau personnel to handle any chemical canisters, chemicals (liquid or powder), or any suspicious items.
- 2.5 Bodies, which have been exposed to hazardous materials, will not be transported to a Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center, without first being decontaminated or made safe by hazardous material experts.
 - 2.5.1 Even after decontamination, the body should be placed in a Bio-Seal bag, or at minimum a body bag with the zipper being duct taped.
- 2.6 Deputy Coroners are to ensure that no contaminated property is brought into the forensic centers without proper decontamination and evaluation by hazardous material experts.
- 2.7 Personnel who are exposed to hazardous materials should be kept separate from non-exposed personnel to avoid potential cross contamination.

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2.7.1 All exposed personnel are to be evaluated by hazardous material experts and medical personnel.

2.8 All efforts to maintain the integrity of the investigation should be considered. However, decontamination and safety of personnel and the public should also be the priority.

2.9 Morgue staff are to be notified prior to any contaminated remains being transported in.

3.0 Excavation Cases:

3.1 Cases requiring the significant moving, sifting, or digging of soil shall be considered potentially hazardous for pathogenic fungus and other environmental hazards.

3.2 Personal Protective Equipment shall be utilized to protect against inhalation of contaminants.

3.3 Disinfecting of hand tools and equipment shall be completed prior to leaving the excavation site, if possible. Disinfecting hand tools and equipment shall be complete prior to being used again.

4.0 Forensic Center:

4.1 Upon arrival at the forensic center, the body should remain sealed and be placed in the infectious refrigerator.

4.1.1 Entrance to the refrigerator is to be restricted until the area is deemed safe per the hazardous material experts.

4.2 Morgue personnel should maintain a heightened state of awareness as to the possibility of hazardous materials being involved in the death of all bodies that arrive at the forensic center.

4.2 If a chemical exposure is discovered prior to a body entering the facility, i.e. the wash down area, the body should not be permitted to enter the facility.

4.2.1 The immediate area is to be immediately be evacuated and supervision shall be contacted.

4.2.2 All containers should be left where found. Staff also should not attempt to secure any potentially hazardous material.

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- 4.2.3 The exterior morgue door is to be locked.
- 4.2.4 Transportation personnel and any exposed Coroner personnel should be isolated and evaluated by hazardous material experts and medical personnel.
- 4.3 During the intake procedure, morgue personnel should be aware of the following possible signs of chemical exposure;
 - 4.3.1 Is there an unusual/unexplained odor to the body?
 - 4.3.1.1 An example of unexplained odors would be, almonds, peaches, garlic, fresh cut grass, chlorine, or other smells that may be out of place.
 - 4.3.2 Are there any chemical containers on the body, or within the clothing?
 - 4.3.3 Unidentified tablets or liquids on the body.
 - 4.3.4 Chemical burns on the body.
 - 4.3.5 Are there dead insects on the body?
 - 4.3.6 Personnel experiencing symptoms such as headache, blurred vision, nausea/vomiting, itching, burning of the eyes and throat, or feeling of disorientation.
- 4.4 In most cases, if exposure is suspected the morgue should be immediately evacuated and supervision shall be notified.
 - 4.4.1 The supervisor should evaluate the situation and contact the fire department to report the possible hazardous material exposure.
 - 4.4.2 During such an incident, the forensic center will be closed. All cases will then be diverted to the other Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center.
 - 4.4.3 All personnel who were in the building at the time of the exposure will not be permitted to leave the area without being evaluated by hazardous materials experts.
 - 4.4.4 If an autopsy is to be conducted on a contaminated body, there should be coordination between all agencies, Coroner's Bureau, fire department, County health, in order to determine the safest way to conduct the procedure.

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5.0 Supervisor functions:

- 5.1 Ensure necessary notifications are made to emergency personnel.
- 5.2 Account for all personnel, evacuate to a safe area.
- 5.3 Care for unconscious or injured personnel.
- 5.4 Isolate exposed personnel from those who were not exposed.
- 5.5 Notify Coroner Bureau administration.
- 5.6 Notify County Safety office.
- 5.7 Notify Sheriff's dispatch of the incident and evacuation.
- 5.8 Ensure all calls for service and body transports are diverted to the other forensic center.
- 5.9 Coordinate efforts with the fire department/hazardous material experts for possible building evacuation and decontamination procedures.
- 5.10 Establish a command post and be prepared to act as the liaison to the incident (fire) commander.

6.0 Evacuation:

- 6.1 If a hazard exists, an announcement should be made via the public address system to evacuate the building.
 - 6.1.1 In the event of an evacuation, all personnel should proceed to the nearest exit, meeting in the pre-designated area as per the facility evacuation policy.
- 6.2 Establish a building perimeter keeping people from entering/exiting the property.
- 6.3 See that neighboring businesses are notified if a hazard exists.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: PRIVATE AUTOPSY

NUMBER: Policy # 702.41

POLICY: The Coroner shall perform or cause to be performed an autopsy on a decedent if the surviving spouse requests him to do so in writing. If there is no surviving spouse, the Coroner shall perform the autopsy if requested to do so in writing by a surviving child or parent, or if there is no surviving child or parent, by the next-of-kin of the deceased. The cost of the autopsy shall be borne by the person requesting that it be performed.

REFERENCE: California Government Code §27520

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Private Autopsy Request:

1.1 The next-of-kin may request the Sheriff-Coroner to perform an autopsy, whether or not that death was originally reported to this agency.

1.1.1 The next-of-kin must come in to one of the two Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Centers and complete an "Authorization For Family Requested Forensic Autopsy Examination" form. A sergeant should be involved in this process and all discussions relating to questions by the requesting party regarding what the private autopsy entails will occur with a sergeant, or above. The primary point of contact for any initial inquiry for a private autopsy will be the on duty supervisor at the time of initial inquiry by the requesting party.

1.1.2 The family member must present payment in the amount of \$4,109.00, (cashier's check, or cash. NO PERSONAL CHECKS), prior to the remains being accepted at the facility and/or prior to the autopsy being performed. A receipt will be issued for the fee. The sergeant will inquire into the circumstances surrounding the death and document any questions the family would like answered from the autopsy. In turn, the sergeant shall advise the requesting party if the autopsy will not specifically answer their questions and allow them the opportunity to decline further.

1.1.2.1 It should be explained to the family that the cost of any secondary testing deemed necessary by the pathologist for workup of neurological disorders that require advanced testing, e.g., immunoperoxidase or special stains and genetic testing, shall bear additional cost.

1.1.3 Once the "Authorization For Family Requested Forensic Autopsy Examination" form has been completed and payment has been made, the remains can be transported into the facility.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: PRIVATE AUTOPSY

NUMBER: Policy # 702.41

2.0 Arrangements:

- 2.1 In the event the death was not previously reported to the Sheriff-Coroner as a "Medical" or "Regular" case, a Coroner case number should be pulled in the decedent's name. This case number can be taken as an "Other".
- 2.2 A Triage memo should be completed and medical records should be obtained for review by the forensic pathologist.
- 2.3 If the remains are located at a mortuary, the mortuary may transport in to the forensic center, (In this case, the coroner technician will complete a Sheriff-Coroner transport/receiving sheet, making a notation on the form that the remains were transported in via mortuary). If the family requests, the Sheriff-Coroner can arrange transportation via the contract company or via Sheriff-Coroner vehicle. However, this mode of transport will result in an additional fee of \$320.00 to the family.
- 2.4 The deputy coroner should enter the decedent's name on the appropriate "In Board". A notation should also be made stating, "En route" and "Private Autopsy".

3.0 Morgue:

- 3.1 Private autopsy cases should be accepted in the same manner as a Coroner case. A digital identification photo should be taken of the remains and a toe tag and wristband should be attached.
- 3.2 X-rays and blood draws will only be taken as directed by the pathologist or Sheriff-Coroner Administration.

4.0 Findings:

- 4.1 At the completion of all reports, it is not necessary for the assigned deputy coroner to close these cases. The deputy coroner should simply make sure that the case file is in order. The case file should then be forwarded to the appropriate supervisor. Upon approval from a supervisor, the file will be given to clerical who will forward the autopsy protocol to the next of kin.
 - 4.1.1 In the event the findings are significantly different from what was originally stated on the death certificate and changes the manner of death, this office will refund the cost of the autopsy. (This applies only to those cases originally certified by the Sheriff-Coroner).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE:	PRIVATE AUTOPSY	NUMBER: Policy # 702.41
4.2	The forensic pathologist conducting the autopsy will not list a <i>cause of death</i> heading in the autopsy report. Findings will be listed within a narrative opinion format unless the findings are significantly different than what was listed on the decedent's death certificate.	
4.3	The forensic pathologist conducting the autopsy will have the discretion to order any secondary test to include; toxicology, histology, or neuropathology deemed necessary for the purposes of giving a medically sound opinion as it relates to the cause of death. Any fees paid for test deemed unnecessary shall be refunded to the payee upon completion of the case.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Case Time and Expense Record

NUMBER: Policy # 702.42

POLICY: The Case Time and Expense Record Form shall be completed and submitted to accounting by each investigator handling the following types of cases: In Custody Deaths and Aircraft Deaths (pilot only).

REFERENCE: N/A

PROCEDURE:

- 1.0 The **Case Time and Expense Record Form** shall be completed by the investigating deputy coroner on the following types of cases:
 - 1.1 In Custody Deaths
 - 1.2 Aircraft Deaths (pilot only).
- 2.0 **Investigative Section of Form**, The Case Time and Expense Record Form shall be completed in its entirety. Sections one through five shall be completed by the Deputy Coroner investigating each qualifying case. The sections are as follows:
 - 2.1 First section: Case Type: In Custody or Aircraft
 - 2.2 Second section: Name of Deceased, Date of Death, and Coroner File Number
 - 2.3 Third section: Deputy Coroner Field Investigation Section is to include all travel associated with the investigation. Documentation will include the time (military time) and the Mileage for the start of such travel, and the completion time mileage. Also completed in the section is the destination of such travel, and the reason for travel, (i.e., CRC/Scene Investigation)
 - 2.4 Fourth section: Deputy Coroner's Office Investigation is to include the date and Start and finish time and the type of task associated with the investigation.
 - 2.5 Fifth section: Deputy Coroner's Signature and Date.
- 3.0 A **Supervisor** will be assigned as the point of contact for all Case Time and Expense Record Forms. The form will be turned into that designated supervisor.
 - 3.1 The assigned supervisor will be responsible for tracking each case, ensuring the requirements are met for each form.
 - 3.2 The supervisor will then review the form for accuracy and then forward the form to the accounting section.
- 4.0 **Accounting Section** : Sections six of the form will be completed by Accounting Personnel. Accounting personnel will be responsible for computing the following:

Revised 6/19/2008

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Case Time and Expense Record

NUMBER: Policy # 702.42

- 4.1 The total hours noted by the investigating deputy calculated by the current rate for the investigating deputy coroner's rate of pay.
- 4.2 The total miles noted by the investigating deputy calculated by the current rate per mile, as determined by the Department.
- 4.3 The current transportation fee for the decedent transportation.
- 4.4 The Pathology Services; the current rate for the Autopsy, and any associated expenses such as Histology and Neuropathology.
- 4.5 The Radiology fees: The current rate for X-rays or any type radiology services.
- 4.6 Toxicology Services: The current rate for any toxicology exams ordered for each case.
- 5.0 The **Accounting Section** will then be responsible for totaling all expenses, and submitting for reimbursements.
- 6.0 **(Example of Case Time and Expense Record form; attached)**

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: Case Time and Expense Record

NUMBER: Policy # 702.42

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
CASE TIME AND EXPENSE RECORD

NAME OF DECEASED	DATE OF DEATH	FILE#
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DEPUTY CORONER FIELD INVESTIGATION

TIME OUT	MILEAGE OUT	TIME IN	MILEAGE IN	DESTINATION/REASON

DEPUTY CORONER OFFICE INVESTIGATION

DATE	START TIME	FINISH TIME	TASKS

DEPUTY CORONER SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

DEPUTY CORONER - TOTAL HOURS _____ @ \$ _____ PER HOUR = \$ _____

DEPUTY CORONER - TOTAL MILEAGE _____ @ \$ _____ PER MILE = \$ _____

DECEDENT TRANSPORTATION TO CORONER FACILITY

PATHOLOGY SERVICES: Autopsy Histology Neuropathology \$ _____

RADIOLOGY: X-RAYS (#_____) Other _____ \$ _____

TOXICOLOGY SERVICES: Comprehensive Panel Other _____ \$ _____

PREPARED BY: _____ DATE: _____ APPROVED BY: _____

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: VIP Death Pre-Registry

NUMBER: Policy # 702.43

POLICY: The VIP Death Pre-Registry is located in the Sheriff/Coroner's Case Management System. This program allows persons of special interest to be entered into a Data Base prior to their death. The purpose of the program is to alert the Coroner's Bureau immediately upon the death of one of the flagged persons, and to make sure that all required investigations and coordination between agencies is completed.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE: VIP Death Pre-Registry

1.0 VIP Death Pre-Registry Data Base

- 1.1 The VIP Death Pre-Registry Data Base shall be used to flag names of decedents of special interest, i.e.; subject of investigation, missing person at risk, Department family members, or any other VIP deemed by the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau.
- 1.2 Authorization for a name to be entered into the VIP Death Pre-Registry Data Base shall be obtained from a Coroner Bureau sergeant or higher, and must be entered into the system by a sergeant.
- 1.3 The requesting deputy coroner or Coroner Bureau staff member shall complete the VIP Death Pre-Registry form, and submit the flagged person's information to a sergeant. Upon approval of the information, the sergeant shall enter the information into the VIP Pre-Registry Data Base.
- 1.4 The following information is requested on the Pre-Registry form;
 - 1.4.1 Identifying Information, name, DOB, SSN, address and phone number of the person to be flagged.
 - 1.4.2 VIP Status, reason person is to be flagged, i.e., subject of an Adult Protective Service investigation, Child Protective Service investigation, law enforcement interest, dignitary status, or any other VIP status as deemed by the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau.
- 1.5 There are two security levels that may be entered, 0 or 1.
 - 1.5.1 Level 0, is routine. When the deputy coroner or employee enters the flagged person's name into the Data Base as a death report, they will receive a notification advising that this person is a VIP Death Pre-Registry and give the reason for the registry.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU

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TITLE: VIP Death Pre-Registry

NUMBER: Policy # 702.43

1.5.2 Level 1, is VIP and is confidential. Upon entering the death information into the Data Base, the employee will receive a message to contact a supervisor immediately. No reason will be given.

1.5.2.1 Level 1 should rarely be used, as it locks the Data Base, requiring a sergeant to release the information, enabling additional death reports to be taken.

2.0 Confirmed Death Information

2.1 On the bottom of the form within the Data Base is a section for confirmation of death. It is imperative that once a flagged case has alerted, the employee receiving the information must notify a sergeant. The sergeant must complete this section Coroner case number. Completing this section will remove the flag from the system, insuring the system does not continue to search for a match for that particular Pre-Registry Case.

2.2 The deputy coroner should make immediate notification to the agency/requester. If immediate notification is not capable, the deputy coroner should generate a follow-up for a deputy to complete at the earliest convenience.

VIP Death Pre-Registry
Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner (CA 925 6001)

This is a secure page for viewing by **AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY!**
Do NOT leave this page unattended to prevent viewing by unauthorized persons.

Identifying Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
DOB: _____
Address 1: _____ Address 2: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____

VIP Status

Security Level: ☒ ☐ Routine Verification

VIP: ☐ VIP Description: _____
AFD: ☐ AFD Agent: _____ Phone: _____
CPS: ☐ CPS Agent: _____ Phone: _____
Contact: ☐ Contact: _____ Phone: _____
Employee Number: _____ Employee Name: _____

NOK Information

Name: _____
Address 1: _____ Address 2: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____ FAX: _____ Pager: _____

Confirmed Death

Case Number: _____ DOB: _____
REMARKS: _____

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Vehicle Navigation

NUMBER: Policy # 702.44

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner has provided navigational units in order to assist employees in locating addresses. Employees are expected to be familiar with the GPS Street Pilot c330, operating it within the manufacturers specifications and all safety guidelines.

REFERENCE: GPS Street Pilot c330

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Distribution of GPS Street Pilot c330:

- 1.1 Indio Forensic Center - 2 units
- 1.2 Perris Forensic Center - 2 units
- 1.3 Equipment will be stored in logistics. All GPS units will be numbered and logged in/out when used.
- 1.4 When logged out, the following information is required, employee name, unit #, date out/ date in.
- 1.5 The GPS Street pilot should not be left in a vehicle after the employee has finished an assignment. Return all components to logistics and sign the unit in.

2.0 Installation of GPS Street Pilot c330:

- 2.1 When installing the unit in a vehicle, affix the unit securely so that it does not interfere with vehicle operating controls or obstruct the driver's view of the road.
- 2.2 Do not mount where the driver's field of vision is blocked.
- 2.3 Do not place unsecured on the vehicle dash, where it can freely move around.
- 2.4 Do not mount in front of an airbag field of deployment.

3.0 Mounting of the GPS Street pilot c330:

- 3.1 Fit the bottom of the c330 into the cradle of the suction cup mount. Tilt it back until it snaps in place.
- 3.2 Place the suction cup on the bottom portion of the windshield. Flip the lever back towards the windshield, this will secure the suction cup.
- 3.3 Plug the cable into a receptacle in the vehicle. If necessary, use the tension knob to loosen or tighten the tension in the mount to improve the viewing angle

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: Vehicle Navigation

NUMBER: Policy # 702.44

4.0 Configuration of the c330:

- 4.1 Press and hold the power button on the side of the unit to turn it on. Follow the on screen Instructions to set up the c330; you only have to do this once.

5.0 Finding your Destination:

- 5.1 Touch screen, "where to".
- 5.2 Select a category, or "address" for a specific location.
- 5.3 Follow the on screen prompts for state, city, street and numbers.
- 5.4 Follow the route. If you depart from your original route, the c330 will recalculate the route and provide new directions.

6.0 Follow the Route:

- 6.1 Your route is marked with a Red line.
- 6.2 Follow the arrows as you take turns.
- 6.3 A checkered flag marks your destination.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Child/Infant Death Protocol

NUMBER: Policy # 702.45

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner has a responsibility to investigate all child and infant deaths and to determine if abuse or neglect played a direct role or if abuse or neglect was a significant contributing factor in an infant or child's death. This policy will address deaths of juveniles age 17 years or younger (not including fetal demise as defined in Policy 702.17).

REFERENCE: Riverside Co. Sheriff-Coroner Bureau Policy #702.01 and Government Code Section 27491 & 27491.42.

PROCEDURE: (meant to supplement Policy #702.01)

1.0 Receiving the initial call:

- 1.1 Obtain as much accurate information as possible, asking questions in a clear, concise manner.
- 1.2 Determine if the decedent is age 17 years or younger.

2.0 Response:

- 2.1 Unlike other deaths, Deputy Coroners will respond (roll out) to every death (including hospice and expected deaths) involving a child 17 years of age or younger.
 - 2.1.1 Special consideration may be given on cases involving infants born with congenital birth defects (i.e. anencephaly, Trisomy 18, transposition of great vessels, extreme prematurity, etc.) and where the infant remains in the hospital after birth without discharge. Consultation with the attending pediatrician reveals that the infant was not expected to survive and there is no known drug, alcohol or trauma involved or on cases of in-patient deaths reported by hospitals where the deceased is diagnosed with a terminal natural disease. Consultation with the attending physician reveals that no external contributing factors exists that may have contributed to the death in any way (i.e. surgery, trauma, exposure, drugs, alcohol, etc.).
 - 2.1.2 Special considerations may be given on cases where the decedent is 17 years of age or younger and is enrolled in a hospice care interdisciplinary agency. A Deputy Coroner shall respond to the scene, along with a Coroner Sergeant (if available), to determine if the case falls under the jurisdiction of the coroner. If there is no known trauma, suspicious circumstances, medication or drug issues, questions of neglect, Child Protective Services (CPS) or law enforcement contacts (see 2.3), then the case may be released directly to a mortuary with the cause of death to be determined by the attending physician, with supervisor approval.

In the event the death does fall under the jurisdiction of the coroner, where the death may be attributed to anything other than the admitting medical diagnosis, or, the deputy is unable to obtain the necessary details to make a determination (e.g., family interfering or uncooperative), the remains will be transported to the Perris or Indio Forensic Center for further investigation.
 - 2.1.3 In the event the case meets the considerations as defined in 2.1.1 above, a sergeant may be consulted to determine the extent of investigation required and if response to the hospital by a deputy coroner is needed.
 - 2.1.4 Pursuant to CGC 27491.42, deputy coroners shall notify the parent or responsible adult of the importance of taking tissue samples. This applies to any sudden death of a child one year of age or older but under 18 years of age.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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- 2.2 Documentation of the scene, collection of evidence, chain of custody, time of death determination, etc shall follow the same guidelines as outlined in Policy 702.01.
- 2.3 On all child/infant deaths, Deputy Coroners shall obtain information on parents and any other occupants of the residence.
 - 2.3.1 CPS – Deputy Coroners shall contact CPS for any contacts, on-going investigation, and to refer the death to them.
 - 2.3.2 Law Enforcement – For Coroner Cases, If law enforcement has not been notified of the death, deputy coroners shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency. Medical/Miscellaneous cases including hospice, fetal demise, etc. do not require law enforcement reporting.

3.0 Special Considerations:

- 3.1 All cases that are described in Government Code Section 27491 shall be transported to Perris or Indio for further investigation.
- 3.2 Enter all information into the coroner's computer database accordingly and ensure case is noticed for triage consideration and review.
- 3.3 If the decedent is brought in, note the case to have full body x-rays and full body photographs of children age 5 and younger.
- 3.4 Collect medical records for pathologist review.
- 3.5 The District Attorney's Office has an On-Call Homicide DDA that will respond to the scene or answer any questions on any suspicious or trauma related child death. Obviously, not all trauma-related child deaths may be evident at first glance (i.e., infants who die of Abusive Head Trauma without any external injuries); therefore, it is CDRT's recommendation that law enforcement or the CORONER contact the On-Call Homicide DDA to respond to child deaths, particularly if the death appears suspicious or unusual. On the other hand, children who suffer from a fatal disease or are under hospital or hospice care would not necessarily be considered "suspicious." Nonetheless, officers or DEPUTY CORONERS are always welcome to contact the On-Call Homicide DDA on any and all child death cases. The On-Call Homicide DDA numbers are:

Western Division
Southwest Division
Indio Division



Law enforcement may likely have already contacted the On-Call DDA on known suspicious cases, just make sure the call has been placed by someone (either our staff or law enforcement). Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns and immediately disseminate to your staff.

4.0 Press Releases:

- 4.1 Names of children of school age shall not be released to the press until the appropriate representatives from the school or school district where the child is enrolled are notified of the death.
- 4.2 After the above notification is made, adequate time should be given for the school or school district to assemble grief counselors, and to make appropriate preparations for the potential impact the death may have on the student body.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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- 4.3 The on-duty or on-call Sergeant will be responsible for assuring that the appropriate school or school district representatives are notified of the death of a student as soon as possible.
- 4.3.1 Special considerations should be given during periods when the school or school district is on extended break (summer, holidays, spring, etc.) In the event the school or school district is on extended break, a sergeant will be consulted to determine if the name should be released without further delay.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	General guidelines for CIRT activation	NUMBER: Policy# 702.46
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POLICY: Certain deaths occur within hazardous situations or environments, which require the deputy coroner to utilize specialized skills or techniques in order to complete the scene investigation and recover the remains. Members of the Coroner Incident Response Team (CIRT) have received specialized training to conduct death investigations and body recoveries within hazardous situations and environments.

REFERENCE: GOV. CODE 27491, H&S 10250, R.C.L.E.A.A. Death scene protocol

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Response:

1.1 Generally, CIRT members will respond to all of the following as soon as possible:

1. Hazardous Material Incidents involving exposed deceased remain(s).
2. Remote body recoveries requiring manual transverse over extended or treacherous terrain
3. Death investigations that require helicopter insertion or extraction to facilitate scene investigation and recovery of remains
4. Scattered or fragmented human remains to include excavation and/or grid searching
5. Large scale aircraft crashes or any aircraft crash in remote locations
6. Mass Fatality Incidents
7. Buried bodies which require excavation of ground soil material
8. When requested by the Coroner Bureau administration

2.0 Receiving the initial call (Deputy Coroner):

- 2.1 Get as much accurate information as possible, asking questions in a clear, concise manner.
- 2.2 Enter all information into the Coroner's database and generate a case number.
- 2.3 If the case appears to meet any of the CIRT response criteria listed above, then it should be presented to the on-duty/on-call supervisor for review.

3.0 Supervisor Review:

- 3.1 Upon receiving the case information from the deputy coroner, the on-duty/on-call supervisor will evaluate the initial information to determine if the case meets CIRT activation guidelines.
- 3.2 The on-duty/on-call supervisor may contact the reporting party on scene and gather additional information that may assist in determining if the case requires activation of

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	General guidelines for CIRT activation	NUMBER: Policy# 702.46
	the CIRT members. Determination should be based upon the above listed criteria, taking into account the following: location of the incident, geographical hazards associated with the investigation and recovery of remains, hazardous materials involved, complexity of the recovery of remains, specific requirements for use of helicopter hoisting, or other specialized situations that may require the use of specialized equipment in order to access the scene and facilitate the recovery of remains.	
3.2	If the case meets guidelines for CIRT activation, the on-duty/on-call supervisor will notify the active duty or on-call CIRT supervisor of the incident and provide as much information as possible.	
3.3	After notifying the active duty CIRT supervisor, the on-duty bureau supervisor will make notification to the Coroner's bureau investigations Lieutenant that a CIRT activation has been initiated. The Lieutenant will be provided with the location, type of incident, and CIRT supervisor notified.	
3.4	If it is determined that the recovery of the remains will be performed by an agency other than CIRT, for any reason, the on-duty or on-call investigations Lieutenant will be notified immediately. The investigations Lieutenant will be provided with all investigative details surrounding the case and rational behind why another agency is needed to perform the recovery of human remains. Ultimate determination for the use of allied agencies to perform human remains recoveries will be made by the investigative Lieutenant.	
4.0	<u>Response:</u>	
4.1	Upon being notified of the incident, the active duty CIRT supervisor will evaluate the circumstances surrounding the death to determine if immediate response is required or if a planned team response would be appropriate.	
4.1.1	If immediate response to the scene is required, the CIRT supervisor will review the current on-duty personnel to determine if any of them are CIRT members and available to respond. The active CIRT supervisor, along with any available on-duty CIRT members, will respond to the scene as soon as possible to assume control of the remains for purposes of completing the death investigation.	
4.1.2	If no current on-duty personnel are CIRT members, the CIRT supervisor will respond to the scene to coordinate control of the remains while coordinating the response by available off-duty CIRT members.	
4.1.3	Once control of the remains has been established by CIRT, that control will not be relinquished until completion of the investigation and removal of the remains.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE:	General guidelines for CIRT activation	NUMBER: Policy# 702.46
4.2	If the scene is secured and controlled, allowing for planned CIRT response, the CIRT supervisor will coordinate assembling a response team composed of four (4) members and one (1) supervisor.	
4.2.1	Team members will respond to the gathering location (either Forensic Center or other pre-established location) at the designated time for unified response to the scene.	
4.2.2	CIRT members will wear departmental uniform to all planned CIRT response incidents. CIRT members should also respond with personal protective gear specifically used for hazardous death investigation scenes (hard hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, hiking boots, sun hat, hydration pack, etc.)	

5.0 Arriving at the Scene:

- 5.1 Upon arrival at scene, the CIRT supervisor should establish contact with the on-scene incident commander or Lead Investigator and introduce himself / herself, establish rapport, and identify his / her role.
- 5.2 Identify other essential personnel and establish collaborative investigative effort.

6.0 Exercise Scene Safety:

- 6.1 A safety briefing shall be conducted on all CIRT operations prior to the initiation of any scene investigation of recovery.
- 6.2 The personal safety of departmental members and allied agency personnel is of paramount importance. All members of the CIRT are considered safety officers and have full authority to suggest suspension of on-scene operations for purposes of conducting a safety meeting to discuss their concern.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Use of Colorado River Station Investigators **NUMBER:** Policy # 702.47

POLICY: The Riverside County Coroner's Bureau recognizes the unique challenges of handling death investigations that occur in remote locations, such as the Blythe area of the county. Response times may adversely affect a scene investigation, block traffic for an extended period of time, delay a death notification, etc. In an effort to effectively conduct death investigations in a timely manner, while still maintaining the integrity of the investigation, the use of Sheriff's Investigators from the Colorado River Station will be utilized, when appropriate.

REFERENCE: 27491 California Government Code

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Initial Call

- 1.1 Upon receiving a death report within the Colorado River Station area, to include the city of Blythe, the on-duty deputy coroner will evaluate the case to determine if it is appropriate for a Colorado River Station (CRS) investigator to respond to the scene.
- 1.2 CRS investigators may handle a variety of death investigations, with the following exceptions to be considered:
 - 1.2.1 Homicides
 - 1.2.2 Coroner Reviews (In-Custody Deaths/Officer Involved Deaths)
 - 1.2.3 Infant/Child deaths
 - 1.2.4 Suspicious deaths
 - 1.2.5 Multiple fatality incidents
 - 1.2.6 Any death wherein an extended amount of investigation and/or recovery will be required (buried body, difficult/remote extractions, etc.)
- 1.3 If the deputy coroner feels the case is appropriate for a CRS to respond to, they shall notify a supervisor and brief them on the case.
- 1.4 Upon review of the case, a supervisor shall make the determination on whether to request assistance from the Colorado River Station.

2.0 Requesting Assistance

- 2.1 A Coroner supervisor (typically a sergeant), will contact the on-call Investigations sergeant for CRS and request assistance. (Contact numbers and on-call schedule is located on the share drive for reference).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Use of Colorado River Station Investigators NUMBER: Policy # 702.47

- 2.2 The CRS Investigations sergeant will advise if they have an investigator available to assist in the death investigation.
- 2.3 If an investigator is available, they will coordinate the scene investigation with the initial deputy coroner who took the case report. The deputy coroner will remain the case agent, with the CRS investigator acting on their behalf at the scene.
- 2.4 If at any time a case becomes suspicious in nature, or the CRS investigator becomes uncomfortable with the investigation, they shall stop and contact the Coroner's Bureau for direction.

3.0 Narrative Reports & Case Completion

- 3.1 The initial deputy coroner taking the call will complete an initial narrative report, with the CRS Investigator completing a supplemental report on their findings and actions at the scene.
- 3.2 The case agent will complete any needed follow-up on the case, including contacting primary medical doctors, identification, completing death amendments, etc.

4.0 Personal Property, Medical Records, Hospital Blood, Photographs

- 4.1 CRS Investigators may need to collect personal property from a scene, including firearms, cash, jewelry, etc. Property shall be stored at the CRS, in a pre-designated locker, until such time it can be collected by the Coroner's Bureau. CRS Investigators shall make prompt notification to the Coroner's Bureau upon return to their office of any personal property collected at a scene.
- 4.2 A Coroner supervisor will make arrangements to have the property picked up as soon as practical.
- 4.3 The case agent (deputy coroner) shall make arrangements for medical records to be faxed to the Coroner's Bureau. If the amount of records are too large to fax, a CRS Investigator may pick up the records to be held for Coroner pick-up in the property locker.
- 4.3 The case agent shall place hospital blood on hold, pending coroner pick-up. CRS investigators should not pick-up hospital blood, unless they are driving directly to the Indio Coroner's Bureau with the specimens.
- 4.4 Photographs taken by the CRS investigators shall be emailed to the case agent and/or on-duty supervisor prior to end of shift.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Use of Colorado River Station Investigators NUMBER: Policy # 702.47

5.0 Transportation of Remains

- 5.1 The case agent will make arrangements for transportation of the decedent from the scene to the Indio or Perris Coroner's Bureau. Unless otherwise specified by a supervisor, CRS investigators will not transport decedents.

6.0 Compensation

- 6.1 The Colorado River Station will complete a Form 329 for overtime to be charged to the Coroner's Bureau for use of their investigators.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	General guidelines for use of Digital Voice Recorders	NUMBER: Policy# 702.48
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POLICY: The purpose of this policy is to establish a procedure by which Coroner's bureau personnel digitally record interviews and briefings and store those recordings for official use. Recordings provide an accurate and unbiased record that may be useful for writing investigative reports, lawsuits and can be used as evidence for court purposes.

REFERENCE: California Government Code 6200 and 34090

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Response:

1.1 The use of digital voice recorder is mandatory on all death investigation briefings (homicide/coroner review cases), and should be utilized on all in-person death investigation interviews.

1. Whenever possible, the recorder shall be started just prior to the interview/briefing and continue without interruption until completed.
2. If the interview/briefing is interrupted for an extended period of time (personnel returning to their vehicle, conducting a records check, etc.), the recorder may be turned off to preserve digital memory and battery life. The recorder shall be restarted just prior to the interview/briefing commencing again.
3. Personnel may record other contacts, not otherwise prohibited by law or this policy, to provide a record of the conversation for coroner purposes.
4. Personnel shall not record personal contacts not related to their duties, nor shall they record other department personnel except when such recording is incidental to a recording otherwise required or permitted by this policy. All audio recordings are the property of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department and are subject to review, reproduction and/or distribution as deemed necessary.
5. If an employee inadvertently records an unauthorized conversation, that employee shall notify their supervisor, who will review the recording to ensure it is appropriate to delete it or document the incident, and notify the Chain of Command of the event.

2.0 Automated Digital Recording Storage:

- 2.1 At the beginning of each shift, each deputy shall examine the recorder and make sure it is in good working order for the shift, including checking the battery status.
- 2.2 Employees shall download their audio recordings after each shift. Files will be uploaded into the "Special" folder within the "Images" folder and case file that corresponds to the case number. If no folder exists, employees will create a new folder using the "PHOTOCON" program to do so. Images and audio files will be maintained on the Coroner's bureau server until such time that they are removed

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	General guidelines for use of Digital Voice Recorders	NUMBER: Policy# 702.48
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for storage needs and maintained on network attached storage devices (NAS).

- 2.3 All personnel who check out, are assigned, or issued a recorder are responsible for becoming familiar with the method of properly downloading the data for storage by the department. If data or recordings need to be recovered, the Administration Sergeant or their designee will coordinate transfer of files to compact disks (CD) or other storage devices as needed.
- 2.3 Personnel should not attempt to delete, alter, edit, or otherwise change a recording. Copies of recordings will only be produced as needed for official purposes such as court or during a citizen inquiry.

3.0 Control and Management of digital recordings:

- 3.1 Audio recordings will be maintained by the Coroner's bureau for a minimum of two years as per Section 6200 and 34090 of the Government Code or as otherwise prescribed by law. All recordings from Coroner Reviews, Homicides, and Infant Deaths will be retained indefinitely.
- 3.2 Requests for copies of recordings will be routed to the Coroner's bureau Supervising Office Assistant or their designee. Subpoenas will be responded to per Department Policy and those received by Sheriff's Records will be coordinated with the Coroner's bureau. Copies of all digital recordings shall not be released to those other than the intended person or entity. The cost for reproduction will be in accordance with charges for recording by Sheriff's Records.

4.0 Supervisory Responsibilities:

- 4.1 It is the duty of the Station Administrative Sergeant to issue a digital video/audio recorder to the assigned personnel. A log will be kept on the "G" drive under the sergeant's (Sgt) file documenting the issuance of the digital audio recorder for accountability purposes. The Station Administrative Sergeant shall ensure that personnel who were assigned digital recorders shall return them upon transfer or separation from the Coroner's Bureau.
- 4.2 It is the duty of the employee to inspect and audit audio recording equipment weekly. Upon notification from an employee that a recorder is not serviceable or properly working, the supervisor shall ensure the staff member reports it to the Station Administrative Sergeant or designee immediately. A replacement recorder will be provided if one is available.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: **General guidelines for End of Life Option Act (ABX2-15) NUMBER: Policy# 702.49**

POLICY: On October 5, 2015, the End of Life Option Act (ABX2-15) was signed into law, effective June 9, 2016. This law allows adults suffering from a terminal illness to be prescribed drugs for the purpose of ending one's life. This act affords immunity to civil and criminal liability for physician's prescribing life ending drugs and those present when a patient self-administers the drug. This policy outlines requirements in investigating End of Life deaths.

REFERENCE: Assembly Bill 15 (ABX2 15) – End of Life Option Act, California Government Code 27491

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Initial Death Report (Deputy Coroner Responsibility):

- 1.1 Deputy Coroners will obtain all pertinent information related to the death.
 - 1.1.2 Deputy coroners will establish who pronounced death, requesting ems/fire, hospice nurse/physician, or law enforcement to provide a time of death pronouncement.
 - 1.1.3 Deputy coroners will inquire if the death is in compliance with ABX2-15, with special consideration to the following:
 - 1.1.3.1 Decedent is 18 years of age or older.
 - 1.1.3.2 Drug used in ending life was prescribed by physician.
 - 1.1.3.3 Decedent has an underlying terminal illness.
 - 1.1.3.4 Attending Physician Checklist and Compliance Form is completed and available.
 - 1.1.3.5 Consulting physician is identified, separate from attending physician.
 - 1.1.3.6 Decedent is a California resident.
 - 1.1.3.7 Declaration of Witness Form is complete and available.
 - 1.1.3.8 Final Attestation Form is complete and available.
 - 1.1.4 Any failures to comply with ABX2-15 shall be immediately reported to a supervisor and may result in additional investigation, which may include:
 - 1.1.4.1 Deputy coroner response to scene.
 - 1.1.4.2 Notification to law enforcement of potential criminal act.
 - 1.1.4.3 Collection of medical records and prescription medications.
 - 1.1.4.4 Transportation of remains to Coroner's Office for further investigation.
 - 1.1.5 Deaths complying with ABX2-15 shall be released to the mortuary of choice.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: General guidelines for End of Life Option Act (ABX2-15) NUMBER: Policy# 702.49

- 1.1.5.1 Decedent's physician shall sign the death certificate, listing the death as natural, with the terminal illness as cause of death.
- 1.1.5.2 It is the responsibility of the physician to report the death to the State Department of Public Health within 30 calendar days from death.
- 1.1.5.3 Deputy Coroners shall report all End of Life Option Act deaths to a supervisor for tracking purposes.

2.0 Tracking/Oversight (Supervisor Responsibility):

- 2.1 Supervisors shall review each End of Life Act death and ensure compliance. Cases shall be tracked for statistical purposes.
- 2.2 Coroner administration shall be notified of any such cases and informed of any cases that are not in compliance with ABX2-15.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: Post Mortem Sperm Retrieval (PMSR)

NUMBER: Policy # 702.50

POLICY:

Post-mortem sperm retrieval or extraction, known as PMSR, is a medical procedure performed by a surgically trained doctor whereby potentially sperm-rich tissue is extracted from the testicles of a deceased male, with the greatest chance of success occurring as soon after death as possible. Riverside County Coroner will facilitate Post Mortem Sperm Retrieval (PMSR) whenever possible when requested by the legal next of kin. Riverside County Coroner will work closely with next of kin to coordinate PMSR, when such a request does not impede an investigation or jeopardize the collection of evidence or determination of cause of death.

REFERENCE: N/A

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Post Mortem Sperm Retrieval Requests:

- 1.1 PMSR requests are time sensitive and shall be immediately forwarded to a supervisor, with a follow-up email notification sent to supervision and administration.
 - 1.1.2 PMSR requests shall be entered into the Coroner Database System (CCMS) and case notes.
 - 1.1.3 A hold shall immediately be placed on the remains for both release of remains and forensic examination, pending the outcome of PMSR.
 - 1.1.3.1 The hold shall be reflected on the In/Out Boards, as well as written on the body pouch/plastic sheeting.
 - 1.1.4 Upon receiving a request for PMSR, the Chief Forensic Pathologist or his/her designee shall be contacted for approval of tissue procurement. Homicides, Coroner Reviews, or cases where criminal actions are involved in the death shall be reviewed by Coroner Administration prior to approval for PMSR.
 - 1.1.4.1 No forensic examination shall be completed on remains wherein the next of kin has requested PMSR until a decision has been made by the Chief Forensic Pathologist or his/her designee and Coroner Administration on whether to approve the request.
 - 1.1.5 The hold shall only be removed by Coroner supervision or administration once PMSR has been completed or the next of kin no longer requests the procedure to be completed.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
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TITLE: Post Mortem Sperm Retrieval (PMSR)

NUMBER: Policy # 702.50

2.0 Post Mortem Sperm Retrieval Procedure and Release of Tissue:

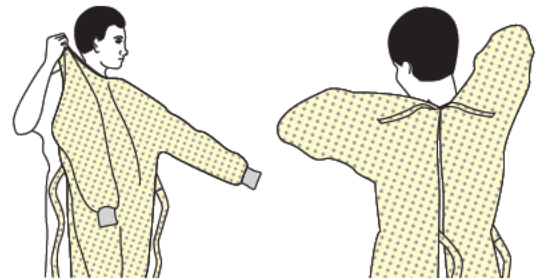
- 2.1 Riverside County Coroner shall not perform any PMSR procedures.
- 2.2 PMSR shall be completed by medical personnel selected by the next of kin with an authorization letter allowing said company to perform the procedure.
 - 2.2.1 Tissue related to the PMSR shall be released to the company/medical personnel selected by the next of kin upon receipt of a letter of authorization from the next of kin.
 - 2.2.2 No other tissue shall be authorized for release.

SEQUENCE FOR **PUTTING ON** PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

The type of PPE used will vary based on the level of precautions required, such as standard and contact, droplet or airborne infection isolation precautions. The procedure for putting on and removing PPE should be tailored to the specific type of PPE.

1. GOWN

- Fully cover torso from neck to knees, arms to end of wrists, and wrap around the back
- Fasten in back of neck and waist



2. MASK OR RESPIRATOR

- Secure ties or elastic bands at middle of head and neck
- Fit flexible band to nose bridge
- Fit snug to face and below chin
- Fit-check respirator



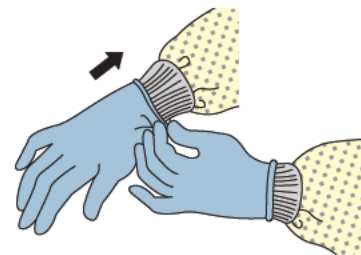
3. GOGGLES OR FACE SHIELD

- Place over face and eyes and adjust to fit



4. GLOVES

- Extend to cover wrist of isolation gown



USE SAFE WORK PRACTICES TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND LIMIT THE SPREAD OF CONTAMINATION

- Keep hands away from face
- Limit surfaces touched
- Change gloves when torn or heavily contaminated
- Perform hand hygiene



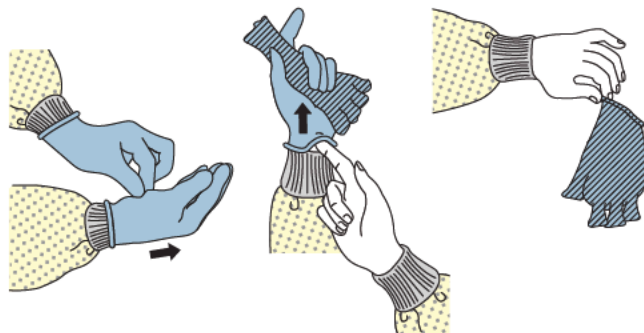
HOW TO SAFELY REMOVE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

EXAMPLE 1

There are a variety of ways to safely remove PPE without contaminating your clothing, skin, or mucous membranes with potentially infectious materials. Here is one example. **Remove all PPE before exiting the patient room** except a respirator, if worn. Remove the respirator **after** leaving the patient room and closing the door. Remove PPE in the following sequence:

1. GLOVES

- Outside of gloves are contaminated!
- If your hands get contaminated during glove removal, immediately wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Using a gloved hand, grasp the palm area of the other gloved hand and peel off first glove
- Hold removed glove in gloved hand
- Slide fingers of ungloved hand under remaining glove at wrist and peel off second glove over first glove
- Discard gloves in a waste container



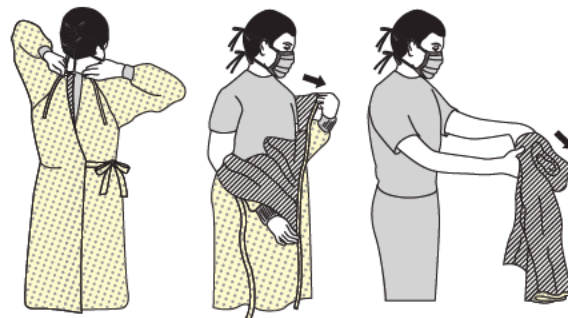
2. GOGGLES OR FACE SHIELD

- Outside of goggles or face shield are contaminated!
- If your hands get contaminated during goggle or face shield removal, immediately wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Remove goggles or face shield from the back by lifting head band or ear pieces
- If the item is reusable, place in designated receptacle for reprocessing. Otherwise, discard in a waste container



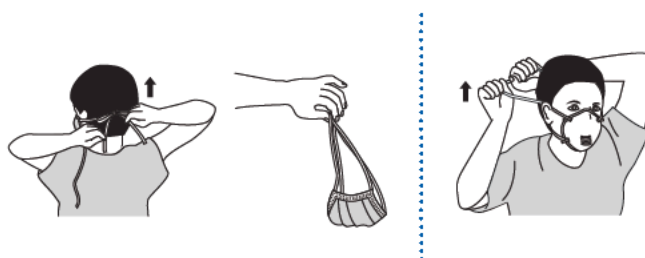
3. GOWN

- Gown front and sleeves are contaminated!
- If your hands get contaminated during gown removal, immediately wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Unfasten gown ties, taking care that sleeves don't contact your body when reaching for ties
- Pull gown away from neck and shoulders, touching inside of gown only
- Turn gown inside out
- Fold or roll into a bundle and discard in a waste container

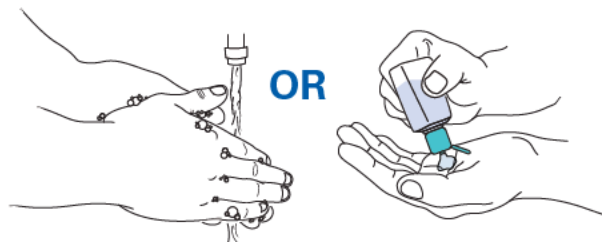


4. MASK OR RESPIRATOR

- Front of mask/respirator is contaminated — DO NOT TOUCH!
- If your hands get contaminated during mask/respirator removal, immediately wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Grasp bottom ties or elastics of the mask/respirator, then the ones at the top, and remove without touching the front
- Discard in a waste container



5. WASH HANDS OR USE AN ALCOHOL-BASED HAND SANITIZER IMMEDIATELY AFTER REMOVING ALL PPE



PERFORM HAND HYGIENE BETWEEN STEPS IF HANDS BECOME CONTAMINATED AND IMMEDIATELY AFTER REMOVING ALL PPE



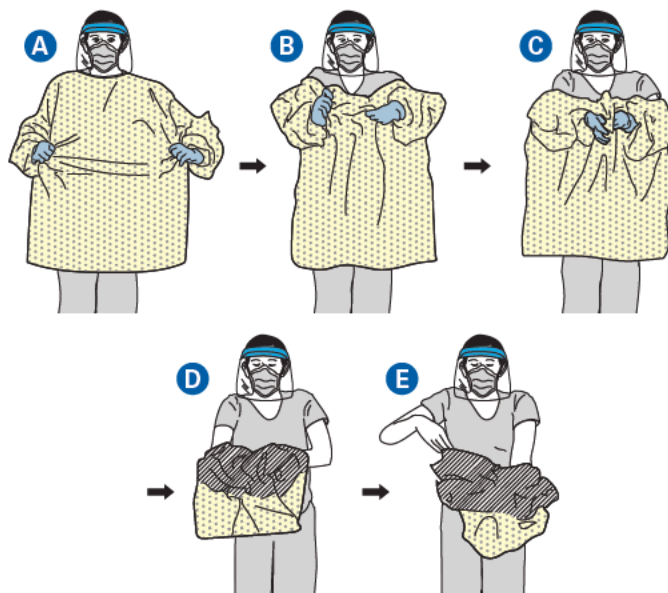
HOW TO SAFELY REMOVE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

EXAMPLE 2

Here is another way to safely remove PPE without contaminating your clothing, skin, or mucous membranes with potentially infectious materials. **Remove all PPE before exiting the patient room** except a respirator, if worn. Remove the respirator **after** leaving the patient room and closing the door. Remove PPE in the following sequence:

1. GOWN AND GLOVES

- Gown front and sleeves and the outside of gloves are contaminated!
- If your hands get contaminated during gown or glove removal, immediately wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Grasp the gown in the front and pull away from your body so that the ties break, touching outside of gown only with gloved hands
- While removing the gown, fold or roll the gown inside-out into a bundle
- As you are removing the gown, peel off your gloves at the same time, only touching the inside of the gloves and gown with your bare hands. Place the gown and gloves into a waste container



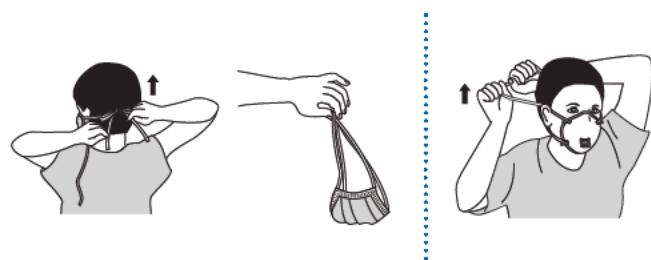
2. GOGGLES OR FACE SHIELD

- Outside of goggles or face shield are contaminated!
- If your hands get contaminated during goggle or face shield removal, immediately wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Remove goggles or face shield from the back by lifting head band and without touching the front of the goggles or face shield
- If the item is reusable, place in designated receptacle for reprocessing. Otherwise, discard in a waste container

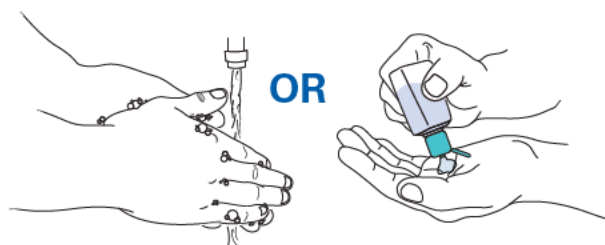


3. MASK OR RESPIRATOR

- Front of mask/respirator is contaminated — DO NOT TOUCH!
- If your hands get contaminated during mask/respirator removal, immediately wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Grasp bottom ties or elastics of the mask/respirator, then the ones at the top, and remove without touching the front
- Discard in a waste container



4. WASH HANDS OR USE AN ALCOHOL-BASED HAND SANITIZER IMMEDIATELY AFTER REMOVING ALL PPE



PERFORM HAND HYGIENE BETWEEN STEPS IF HANDS BECOME CONTAMINATED AND IMMEDIATELY AFTER REMOVING ALL PPE



RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Response Protocol

NUMBER: Policy # 702.51

POLICY:

This protocol is in response to the emergence of Coronavirus (COVID-19), a viral infection that causes respiratory illness. This policy is based on the best information possible at the time of its writing, and while it is intended to keep all involved people safe including the community at large there are many unknowns about this emerging pandemic. This document is subject to change as information becomes available. This protocol was developed to address unattended deaths in people in Riverside County reportedly experiencing "flu-like symptoms" during this current emerging novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

REFERENCE: N/A

PROCEDURE:

Preface: This is an internal protocol of the Riverside County Coroner and may not be generalizable to other agencies. It should not be construed as a directive to any other agency but the Riverside County Coroner. This protocol is based on the best information possible at the time of its writing, and while it is intended to keep all involved people safe including the community at large there are many unknowns about this emerging pandemic. This document is subject to change as information becomes available.

Issue being addressed by this protocol: In Riverside County, the Riverside County Coroner is responsible for investigating not obviously natural deaths that occur within the County. In that capacity, the Riverside Coroner is routinely involved with deaths that occur outside of a healthcare facility, such as in a residence, outdoor setting, or motor vehicle. These deaths are referred to as "unattended" due to a lack of presence of a healthcare provider at the time of death. Deaths involving people experiencing "flu-like" symptoms are very commonly reported to our office. This protocol is being developed to address unattended deaths in people in Riverside County reportedly experiencing "flu-like symptoms" during this current emerging novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Overview of Riverside County Coroner strategy for handling unattended deaths with "flu-like" symptoms:

The Riverside Coroner will be triaging unattended deaths in people with concerns of "flu-like" symptoms prior to death into four tiers:

- Tier 1: Unattended deaths with potential COVID-19 infection (rule out COVID-19)
- Tier 2: Unattended death with general "flu-like symptoms" / low risk for COVID-19
- Tier 3: Unattended death without information on cause of death
- Tier 4: Unattended death with very limited or no risk for covid-19 infection

Each tier will have specific protocol for Riverside Coroner personnel.

The CDC has issued guidance for handling decedents with potential COVID-19 infections for medical examiners, coroners, pathologists, other workers involved in the postmortem care of decedents with potential COVID-19 infections, and local and state health departments. It can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019->

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[ncov/hcp/guidance-postmortem-specimens.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-postmortem-specimens.html). The CDC refers to people with potential COVID-19 infections as "Persons Under Investigation (PUI)". In general, the CDC believes COVID-19 to be spread by passage of respiratory droplets from person-to-person that generally occur while sneezing and coughing. It is believed that the risk of a deceased person to be able to transmit COVID-19 to a person handling the deceased is low because of the lack of production of respiratory droplets via coughing or sneezing by the decedent. The CDC has issued guidance on the risk for health care providers associated with treating patients with COVID-19 infections, however it does not discuss autopsy personnel specifically; this can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html>

The CDC believes that standard precautions including good hand hygiene and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) including gloves, face masks, protective eye wear, face shields, and protective clothing (e.g., reusable or disposable gown, jacket, laboratory coat) are sufficient to protect someone handling a deceased individual with possible COVID-19 infection from acquiring it. More information on CDC recommendations for Standard Precautions can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/summary-infection-prevention-practices/standard-precautions.html>

The CDC also offers a risk assessment for people encountering live persons with COVID-19 infection including offering definitions for "High Risk for Exposure", "Medium Risk for Exposure", and "Low Risk for Exposure". These definitions are intended for living individuals and do not translate exactly to deceased individuals who may have unknown past medical and social histories. Therefore this document has developed an alternative four-tier triage system for classifying unattended deaths in people with flu-like symptoms prior to death. The CDC risk assessment document can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html>

Triage System for Decedents with "Flu-like" symptoms (Four Tiers)

TIER 1: UNATTENDED DEATH WITH POTENTIAL COVID-19 INFECTION (RULE OUT COVID-19)

Decedent had symptoms consistent with an acute infectious illness (such as a flu or cold) and died while experiencing those symptoms. Symptoms may include: fever, chills, cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, muscle/body aches, fatigue, vomiting, and diarrhea. Furthermore, no sufficient explanation for this illness exists (such as medical testing diagnostic for influenza A infection); thus COVID-19 infection cannot be ruled out. An example of this would be a person who recently traveled to China, with no other significant medical history, who died after complaints of chills, fever, muscle aches, and coughing for one week.

Decedents who would otherwise be considered in Tiers 2-4 may also be elevated to Tier 1 status if they meet the CDC criteria for high risk or medium risk for COVID-19 exposure based on geography/travel and/or contact with persons with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection.

(CDC) High Risk for Exposure:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Travel from Hubei Province, China.-Living in the same household, being an intimate partner of, or providing care in a nonhealthcare setting (such as a home) for a person with symptomatic laboratory confirmed COVID-19 infection without using recommended precautions for home care and home isolation.
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- (CDC) Medium Risk for Exposure:
- Travel from mainland China outside Hubei Province or Iran.
 - Travel from a country with widespread transmission, other than China or Japan.
 - Travel from a country with sustained transmission.
 - Close contact with a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19.
 - On an aircraft, being seated within 6 feet (two meters) of a traveler with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection; (i.e., approximately 2 seats in all directions).
 - Living in the same household, being an intimate partner of, or providing care in a nonhealthcare setting (such as a home) for a person with symptomatic laboratory confirmed COVID-19 infection while consistently using recommended precautions for home care and home isolation.

TIER 2: UNATTENDED DEATH WITH GENERAL "FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS" / LOW RISK FOR COVID-19

Decedent had symptoms described as "flu-like," but has other significant co-morbidities (medical conditions) that most likely account for their death. There are no CDC conditions described in the Tier 1 section above for "medium risk" or "high risk" for COVID-19 exposure as described above. In particular, high and medium risk factors are excluded. A COVID-19 infection has not been definitively ruled out (for example, a person with an infectious illness has a laboratory diagnosed Influenza A infection therefore presumptively ruling out COVID-19 as a potential cause of death). Examples of comorbid medical conditions can include heart failure due to cardiovascular disease, chronic alcoholism, cerebral stroke, etc. An example of an unattended death that would be considered a Tier 2 case would be a person who smokes a pack of cigarettes daily, has had stenting of the coronary arteries of the heart due to blockages (coronary artery atherosclerosis), has high blood pressure, and 2 days of "flu-like" symptoms including nausea and vomiting prior to death, without any recent travel or contacts with sick people; in this case, the likely cause of death is a heart attack, however a COVID-19 infection cannot be absolutely excluded.

Decedents who would otherwise be considered in Tiers 3-4 may also be elevated to Tier 2 status if they meet the CDC criteria for low risk for COVID-19 exposure based on geography/travel and/or contact with persons with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection.

- (CDC) Low Risk for Exposure:
- Travel from any other country
 - Being in the same indoor environment (e.g., a classroom, a hospital waiting room) as a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time but not meeting the definition of close contact (high and medium risk criteria).

TIER 3: UNATTENDED DEATH WITHOUT INFORMATION ON CAUSE OF DEATH

Decedent has no or very limited information regarding the circumstances of their death. An example of this would be a reclusive individual with limited social contact who was discovered deceased in their home after a neighbor

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notices their mail piling up; no further information about their health is known. No information to assess for "low risk", "medium risk", or "high risk" for COVID-19 exposure is available.

TIER 4: UNATTENDED DEATH WITH VERY LIMITED OR NO RISK FOR COVID-19 INFECTION

Decedent does have a pre-death history available (due to review of medical records, acquaintance interviews, etc.) and did not experience flu-like symptoms prior to death. The decedent did not travel anywhere recently. The decedent either 1) did not have any interactions with any person with a known laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection, or 2) had an interaction with a person with a known laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection that did not meet any of the high-, medium- or low-risk conditions described in Tier 1 and Tier 2 above (for example, the maximum encounter was walking by an infected person or being briefly in the same room). An example of this would be a person who was otherwise healthy, did not recently travel, and had no known sick contacts who hugged himself.

Riverside County Coroner Protocol for handling unattended deaths in decedents with "flu-like" symptoms by TIERS

GENERAL PROTOCOL

Guidelines regarding jurisdiction of COVID-19 cases.

- a. COVID-19 cases do not fall under our jurisdiction unless there is another factor that would require the Coroner to take jurisdiction or the virus is suspected and has not been diagnosed.
- b. All COVID-19 cases should generate a case number regardless of whether or not the Coroner takes jurisdiction.
- c. The department is actively involved in planning meetings. We do not anticipate taking jurisdiction on these cases, but we do have a role in pandemic situations where the number of fatalities overwhelm the medical system ability to handle. In these instances, we would become involved to assist with transportation, storage, and disposition. We are actively reviewing our mass fatality plan and communicating with our county partners.
- d. If a known or suspected COVID-19 death is reported to the department, whether we take jurisdiction, please let a supervisor know so administration can be made aware of the case.

Initial Investigation:

1. Acquire all known information about decedent in order to be able to assign tier to case. Ask the following questions of all decedents wherein death is not apparent:

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- a. Travel history? Domestic/Foreign, Plane travel, High-Risk countries (China, Japan, Iran, Italy, South Korea).
 - b. Contact with persons with a known COVID-19 infection.
 - c. Flu-like symptoms prior to death (headache, cough, sore throat, fever, shortness of breath / difficulty breathing, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chills). Document which ones.
 - d. Contact with other people with flu-like symptoms (not known to be COVID-19 infections).
2. If information obtained is affirmative for any of the above questions, notify a Supervisor who will contact the Chief Forensic Pathologist for determination of risk. If a case is determined to be Tier 1 or 2, Coroner Administration will be advised via email.
 3. Conduct investigation per routine policies. Request all pertinent investigatory records (health, EMS, PCP, PD, etc.) and social and health histories.
 4. Tier 1 cases shall be transported to the Riverside County Coroner, where microbiological testing for COVID-19 shall be completed by a forensic pathologist.

TIER SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS:

TIER 1 PROTOCOL: UNATTENDED DEATH WITH POTENTIAL COVID-19 INFECTION (RULE OUT COVID-19)

- 1) Response to a Tier 1 case will include performing all necessary components of a Coroner's Case investigation, including an external examination with documentation at the death scene, taking photographs, examining the body, and obtaining information from family, witnesses, law enforcement and any other first responders or sources. The body will be transported to the Riverside County Coroner following the scene investigation. Standard precautions with good hygiene will be observed at all time.
- 2) Deputy Coroners shall stock, bring to the scene and wear the following items. Note, it is helpful to have PPE pre-sorted and bagged as a kit prior to arrival at scene. **Guidelines for putting on and taking off PPEs can be found in Policy and Procedure 702.51 (a).**
 - a. **Personal Protective Equipment / Supplies:**
 - i. Tyvek suits or isolation gown with booties
 - ii. 1 set of shoe covers (to be worn as inner most layer before putting on Tyvek suits)
 - iii. Respirator mask (N95)
 - iv. Sufficient gloves to complete the investigation
 - v. Goggles or disposable face shield

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- vi. Sealable property and biohazard bags of varying sizes
- 3) Procedure for Death Scene:
 - a. Prepping:
 - i. Communicate with law enforcement at scene informing them additional precautions will be taken and the investigation may take longer than usual.
 - ii. Ask lead law enforcement investigator to collect a list of first responders and community members who may have had contact with decedent, including contact information and what type of contact. This is a courtesy list – it is for the safety and well-being of the scene responders and it is not mandatory for the Coroner to collect names of potential exposed people; therefore no one is required to provide their name to the Coroner. Other agencies, such as the Department of Public Health, may have different policies and procedures in terms of collection of information.
 - b. Upon arrival at scene
 - i. Follow usual Riverside County Coroner protocol for arrival at scene.
 - ii. Put on personal protective equipment (PPE) as described above. Always wear 2 sets of gloves keeping the innermost pair of gloves clean.
 - iii. Personal Property should be released on scene to the legal next of kin with a recommendation to properly disinfect the items. If property must be collected and brought into the Coroner's Bureau, it shall be handled as normal property and then sealed in a biohazardous bag with "COVID-19 RISK" written on bag in permanent marker. Property shall be sealed in such a manner that all items are visible for inventory upon release to the mortuary or next of kin (use of multiple bags for ease of viewing). Contaminated money / evidence shall be handled as per existing policies.
 - iv. Coroner personnel shall be notified of a potentially infectious case being brought into the Coroner's Bureau by indicating such on the body bag and bag tag with "COVID-19 RISK" written with permanent marker.
 - c. Intake & Forensic Pathologist Examination / Testing
 - i. Coroner staff shall utilize PPE to include a respirator mask (N95), Tyvek suite or isolation gown and gloves when processing Tier 1 decedents arriving to the Coroner's Bureau.
 - ii. Processing of the body should occur in the Infectious autopsy suite.
 - iii. Examination of the body shall be performed with full standard PPE in the infectious room (respirator mask (N95), Tyvek suite, gloves, booties, bouffant cap, and apron.)
 - iv. Only the minimum number of personnel needed to safely handle the body should be present during body-handling procedures (such as processing or examining).

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- v. External examinations are sufficient if the cause and manner of death are known from viewing the body and reviewing pertinent investigatory and medical records. Autopsies should be performed only when necessary to determine cause and manner of death. Aerosolizing fluids by use of the oscillating saw when opening the head is problematic and the benefits of an autopsy should strongly outweigh the risk involved.
- vi. Clothing shall be placed in a biohazardous bag with "COVID-19 RISK" written on the bag in permanent marker.
- vii. The IN/OUT Boards shall be update with "COVID-19 RISK" on the comments section.
- viii. The triage committee shall determine the level of forensic investigation required on a case by case basis.
- ix. Cases of suspected COVID-19 risk may have samples collected and taken to Department of Public Health for testing according to existing infectious disease testing protocols.
- x. Cleaning considerations: These are spelled out in the CDC guidance for handling postmortem specimens, and largely reflect what we currently do.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-postmortem-specimens.html>

TIER 2 PROTOCOL: UNATTENDED DEATH WITH GENERAL "FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS" / LOW RISK FOR COVID-19

- 1) Response to a Tier 2 case will be on a case by case basis, based on the circumstances surrounding the death. Cases that fall under the jurisdiction of the Coroner will be investigated accordingly.
- 2) Protocol specific for Tier 2 COVID-19 (Low Risk) cases.
 - a. Deputy Coroners shall observe standard precautions when handling decedents with minimum personal protective equipment (PPE) to include a N95 respirator face mask and gloves.
 - b. Coroner staff shall wear PPE (N95 respirator face mask and gloves when processing of the body).
 - c. Processing of the body should occur in the infectious autopsy suite.
 - d. Examination of the body should be performed with standard PPE in the infectious room.
 - e. Only the minimum number of personnel needed to safely handle the body should be present during body-handling procedures (such as processing or examining).
 - f. External examinations are sufficient if the cause and manner of death are known from viewing the body and reviewing pertinent investigatory and medical records. Autopsies should be performed only when necessary to determine cause and manner of death. Aerosolizing fluids by use of the oscillating saw when opening the head is problematic and the benefits of an autopsy should strongly outweigh the risk involved.
 - g. Of note, these cases **do not** have to be reported to DPH Epidemiologist-on-call, unless they become a Tier 1 case due to the availability of additional information.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE: COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Response Protocol

NUMBER: Policy # 702.51

TIER 3: UNATTENDED DEATH WITHOUT INFORMATION ON CAUSE OF DEATH

- 1) Riverside County Coroner will respond following standard protocol to cases that are determined to be Tier 3 cases. No further testing will be conducted unless additional information is obtained to upgrade the case to Tier 1 or Tier 2. Good hygiene and use of standard precautions and PPE are expected.

TIER 4: UNATTENDED DEATH WITH VERY LIMITED OR NO RISK FOR COVID-19 INFECTION

- 1) Riverside County Coroner will respond following standard protocol to cases that are determined to be Tier 4 cases. No further testing will be conducted unless additional information is obtained to upgrade the case to Tier 1 or Tier 2. Good hygiene and use of standard precautions and PPE are expected.

RELEASING OF REMAINS WITH KNOWN COVID-19 INFECTION:

- 1) After autopsy or examination, the remains will be placed back into a body bag, which will be cleaned and disinfected prior to being released to the mortuary.
- 2) The words "COVID-19 POSITIVE" will be written on the outside of the body bag in permanent marker in large text which is easily readable from at least 6 feet away.
- 3) It shall be noted in the remarks section of the OUT Boards that the case is COVID-19 positive as soon as test results are received by either the Bureau supervisor or morgue staff.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: **Receiving Remains**

NUMBER: Policy # 703.01

POLICY: **The Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner is committed to the safety of all employees. All remains should be treated as if they have a contagious or infectious disease.**

Remains received at the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Centers shall be processed in a manner to prevent identification errors of the remains. All personal property accompanying the remains shall be safeguarded against loss. All necessary procedures are to be performed in a dignified, effective, safe and efficient manner. Trained personnel are authorized to take body measurements, retrieve blood, urine, or vitreous samples from the body of a decedent at the direction and supervision of a coroner supervisor or forensic pathologist.

REFERENCE: GOV. CODE 27522

PROCEDURE:

- 1.0 When a contracted coroner transportation service is utilized, they are responsible for tagging and transporting all remains to one of the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Centers.
 - 1.1 Transport personnel shall note the date/time on their transport form upon arrival.
 - 1.2 Transport personnel shall place an empty forensic center gurney onto the floor scale and zero out the scale. The remains shall then be transferred from the cot to the gurney and weighed. The weight of the remains and the gurney number shall then be noted on the transport form and left for the Sheriff-Coroner.
 - 1.2.1 Forensic staff shall only assist when necessary.
 - 1.2.2 Severely obese cases, 300 lbs. and over, shall be placed on a steel table. Use of a lift mechanism may be used at the discretion of the coroner technicians and transport personnel.
 - 1.3 Any personal property accompanying the remains shall be inventoried pursuant to the Personal Property Procedure 702.03. The Deputy Coroner shall then be notified that property was received from transportation. It should be noted on the receiving form and on the property form that property was brought in by transportation.
- 2.0 The forensic staff, when checking in the remains, shall first ensure that the remains are properly tagged with a numbered Sheriff-Coroner toe tag.
 - 2.1 The forensic staff shall ensure that the toe tag was properly affixed and contains all of the necessary information, decedent's name, Sheriff-Coroner case number and type of case.
 - 2.2 The forensic staff shall double-check the toe tag number and name on the toe tag with the transport form to ensure that it is correct.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE:	Receiving Remains	NUMBER: Policy # 703.01
2.3	The forensic staff shall check the toe tag to ensure the type of death is properly marked on the toe tag. The forensic staff should also look at the toe tag to see if x-rays are requested.	
2.4	If a toe tag or bag tag is incorrectly filled out or if the information is incomplete, contact the Deputy Coroner immediately. If there is no toe tag on the body, or if a Deputy Coroner is not available, contact a supervisor immediately.	
2.4.1	Transportation is not to leave the morgue until the tag issues are resolved.	
2.5	If the body bag has been sealed by a Deputy Coroner, the seal shall not be broken without a Deputy Coroner, or supervisor, being present.	
3.0	The forensic staff shall then start a Sheriff-Coroner Receiving Form by entering the name of the deceased (or unidentified number), coroner file number, toe tag number and deputy coroner's name.	
4.0	With the exception of sealed body bags, the following steps shall be taken by the forensic staff to check in remains.	
4.1	Remove all clothing from the deceased and log the articles of clothing on the receiving form. Search all clothing articles for items of personal property that may have been missed by the Deputy Coroner or transport personnel. The clothing shall then be placed in a clothing bag labeled with the decedent's name and case number.	
4.1.1	Children two years of age and under shall not be undressed.	
4.2	Examine the body for items of personal property that may have been missed by the Deputy Coroner or transport personnel.	
4.2.1	If items of personal property are discovered, the forensic staff shall complete a property inventory form and place in a secured property locker. Forensic staff shall then mark the appropriate property locker on the receiving form.	
4.2.2	If jewelry is present that cannot be removed, it shall be inventoried and noted on the property inventory form that it is "On Body." It shall also be noted on the receiving form that there is jewelry "On Body." The jewelry items shall be photographed. The property inventory form should be kept with the receiving paperwork.	
4.3	A wristband shall then be filled out by the forensic staff with the decedent's name, case number and coroner technician's legible initials included. The wristband will then be placed on the decedent's wrist.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Receiving Remains

NUMBER: Policy # 703.01

- 4.3.1 If the body is missing both arms, the wristband should then be attached to the ankle or other part of the body capable of holding the wristband.
- 4.4 Record gender, race, weight, hair and eye color, decomposition status and table number on the receiving form. Record any tattoos, distinguishing scars, missing limbs, or other significant conditions present on the body to help identify the decedent upon release.
 - 4.4.1 If the body bag is sealed only record the weight.
- 4.5 Take one digital picture, of the decedent's face with the decedent name and case number. Log and save the digital picture in the Coroner database under the decedent's case number and indicate on the receiving form that you completed the task. This photograph is for identification and needs to be stored within the ID file under that decedent name/case.
- 4.6 Obtain one set of fingerprints on identified cases and two sets of fingerprints on unidentified cases. Indicate on the receiving form that the task is complete.
 - 4.6.1 Children under the age of 14 years are not required to be fingerprinted unless specifically requested.
- 4.7 Obtain a peripheral blood sample, label the sample and complete the receiving form.
 - 4.7.1 Refer to separate procedures for obtaining blood sample and labeling.
 - 4.7.2 Forensic staff shall not attempt to obtain the blood sample on homicides, coroner review cases, and children 2 years of age or younger without direction from supervision.
 - 4.7.3 If a blood sample cannot be obtained indicate this on the receiving form.
 - 4.7.3.1 If a blood sample cannot be obtained and the Deputy Coroner is requesting an immediate blood draw for diabetic testing, contact an on duty or on call forensic pathologist.
 - 4.7.3.2 Refer to separate procedures to obtain, treat, and store tiger top diabetic blood samples, 703.11.
- 4.8 Take necessary x-rays if applicable and indicate x-rays taken on receiving form.
 - 4.8.1 Refer to separate x-ray policy and procedure, 703.05.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Receiving Remains

NUMBER: Policy # 703.01

- 4.9 Place remains into refrigeration and indicate location (which unit) on receiving form.
 - 4.9.1 Severely decomposed remains and infectious cases should be placed into the infectious refrigerator.
- 4.10 Sign and date/time receiving form.
- 4.11 Place original copy of receiving form, transport form, and fingerprints into a clear plastic file jacket and place in proper area of file holder in the receiving office.
- 4.12 Log the case into the computer's "In & Out Boards," Include any significant information in the remarks section. Include weight, note if property is still on the body, and any infectious information. Indicate under the x-ray column what type of, if any, x-rays need to be done and your initials if you completed them.
- 4.13 Log the case into the Alpha database system.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Releasing Remains

NUMBER: Policy # 703.02

POLICY: Upon completion of the coroner's investigation, the deceased shall be released to the next of kin in accordance with California Health and Safety Code Section 7100.

REFERENCE: California Health and Safety Code Section 7100

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Release Forms:

- 1.1 When a mortuary arrives at one of the Forensic Centers to pick up remains they shall bring with them (or have previously faxed) a release form that is signed by the next of kin authorizing us to release the remains to them.
- 1.2 The Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner Request for Release of Remains is the preferred release form. Other release forms that are acceptable are as follows.
 - 1.1.1 Out of county Coroner release forms may be accepted. However, if a mortuary contacts the Sheriff-Coroner prior to meeting with the family, we should fax them one from the County of Riverside.
 - 1.1.2 A generic mortuary release.
 - 1.1.3 A copy of a pre-need agreement form signed by the deceased prior to death.
 - 1.1.4 A handwritten letter.

2.0 Verifying Release:

- 2.1 Upon receipt of the release, the employee should check to see if it has been signed by the next-of-kin authorized for receipt of the remains. This may require checking the database to see who is listed as the next of kin.
 - 2.1.1 When a release does not appear to be signed by the next of kin, contact the deputy coroner or on duty supervisor.
 - 2.1.2 On cases that are referred to the Public Administrator, an estate investigator or deputy public administrator will sign the release.
 - 2.1.3 On occasion, the Public Administrator may authorize someone such as a distant relative or friend of the deceased to handle funeral arrangements. A reason for handling if not next of kin should be noted on the release in the "Relationship" space.
- 2.2 If a release is written in a foreign language, a county employee must translate it in writing. Notify a supervisor if a translator is unavailable.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Releasing Remains

NUMBER: Policy # 703.02

3.0 Holds:

- 3.1 Remains can generally be released once the death certificate worksheet is complete and ready to be faxed to the mortuary. A body shall never be released without the worksheet being complete unless authorized by a supervisor.
- 3.2 A Deputy Coroner or supervisor may put a hold on a body for a number of reasons. The hold shall be noted in the computer with the reason for the hold.
 - 3.2.1 If a hold is present at time of release, the Coroner Technician shall personally verify the release status with the person who placed the hold, prior to release.
- 3.3 On occasion, a homicide victim could be placed on hold and could be sent out to a mortuary of our choice for embalming and returned to the Forensic Center for post-embalming photographs. A supervisor will be responsible for making these arrangements.

4.0 Release procedure:

- 4.1 When a mortuary or its agent arrives to pick up remains, the Coroner Technician shall obtain the signed release form from the mortuary representative (unless it was previously faxed) and check to be sure it was signed by the next-of-kin.
- 4.2 Upon receipt of the release paperwork, the Coroner Technician shall check for the decedent on the In and Out Boards of the computer and begin a "Morgue Release Form." A transportation fee in the amount approved during the given fiscal year by the Board of Supervisors shall be collected by the Coroner Technician.
 - 4.2.1 Most Riverside County mortuaries and some out of county mortuaries have an account set up and are billed monthly for these fees. For these mortuaries, enter the decedent's name, case number, date of pick up in the individual mortuary's log and have the mortuary representative sign for the fee.
 - 4.2.1.1 If being paid for the transportation fee at the time of pick up, obtain cash or a check made out to the Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner. Write a receipt for the fee and give the mortician the white copy. Enter the check number (or "cash") and the receipt number in the journal. Stamp the back of the check with the County endorsement and place the check along with the yellow copy of the receipt in the check box.
 - 4.2.1.2 Transportation fees collected from family and brought in by the mortuary shall be in the form of cash or a US Postal Money Order.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Releasing Remains

NUMBER: Policy # 703.02

Any other form of payment, such as a personal check, requires supervision approval.

4.2.1.3 Do not collect the transportation fee for the following cases.

4.2.1.3.1 Homicide/Coroner Review Cases

4.2.1.3.2 Children, 14 years of age and under

4.2.1.3.3 When release is signed by Public Administrator

4.2.1.3.4 California Department of Corrections In Custody Deaths

4.2.1.3.5 When waived by a supervisor

***Fees are NOT waived in homicides/coroner reviews wherein the decedent was involved in a criminal act that contributed to his/her own death.**

4.3 Once the Coroner Technician removes the remains from the cooler, he/she shall verify the following items on the "Morgue Releasing Form."

4.3.1 Decedent's first and last name on mortuary release form match that of the toe tag and Sheriff-Coroner records.

4.3.2 First and last names match morgue receiving form/out board

4.3.3 Toe tag number matches morgue receiving form/transport paperwork

4.3.4 ID photo matches body being released

4.3.5 Case number on toe tag matches morgue receiving form/transport paperwork

4.3.6 Search of similar names was completed on In and Out boards

4.3.7 Verify no holds on remains being released

4.3.8 Checked to see if tattoos, scars, deformities correspond with any listed on morgue receiving form

4.3.9 Mortuary representative signed and initialed all appropriate spaces on release form

4.3.10 Coroner Technician's signature, date and time that above information was verified. (This information then needs to be verified by a supervisor prior to release of remains.)

4.3.11 In the event a supervisor is not on duty, the release information shall be verified by a second employee, then approved by a supervisor when available.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Releasing Remains

NUMBER: Policy # 703.02

- 4.3.12 Remove the perforated end from the toe tag and allow the mortuary representative to transfer the remains to his/her cot.
- 4.3.13 Verify wristband information (case/name) matches name in Alpha, photo identification, toe tag and release paperwork.
- 4.4 If a release other than the Sheriff-Coroner Request for Release of Remains has been used by the mortuary, attach it to the back of a Sheriff-Coroner release and write the name of the deceased in the proper space, including "see attached" where the name of the mortuary is normally entered.
- 4.5 The mortuary representative shall complete paperwork in full prior to removing the remains from the morgue receiving area.
- 4.6 Coroner Technicians shall assure that the mortuary representative has completed the following;
 - 4.6.1 The mortuary representative must initial that he has checked the toe tag and confirmed that he/she is receiving the proper remains. Have he/she confirmed the toe tag number with the perforated end of the toe tag that was removed.
 - 4.6.2 The mortuary representative must initial the spaces that he/she has received the decedent's clothing. If no clothing is released, enter "none" in the space for initials.
 - 4.6.3 The mortuary representative shall then print and sign his/her name and the mortuary they are representing in the appropriate spaces.
 - 4.6.4 The Coroner Technician shall then sign their name in the "released by" space.
- 4.7 Coroner Technicians shall sign date/time the bottom of the release form to document the date/time when the remains were released.
- 4.8 Coroner Technicians shall attach the perforated end of the toe tag to the back of the release form with the clear plastic envelope with adhesive backing.
- 4.9 Coroner Technicians shall remove the deceased from the In and Out boards in the computer and update the database system with the name of the mortuary and date released.
- 4.10 Coroner Technicians shall attach all receiving paperwork together and provide to clerical for placement into the case file.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Releasing Remains

NUMBER: Policy # 703.02

5.0 Release of Personal Property:

- 5.1 Personal property shall only be released to a mortuary when that mortuary has provided a completed Sheriff-Coroner "Request for Release of Decedent's Personal Property" form, (RCSC Form CR1007.)
- 5.2 Personal property shall be released in accordance with Section 702.03 of this P&P.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: OBTAINING OF PERIPHERAL BLOOD SAMPLE

NUMBER: 703.03

POLICY: The coroner's bureau will obtain a peripheral blood sample within 24 hours of receiving the remains. This peripheral blood sample will be the primary sample utilized for toxicological examinations and will reduce discrepancies regarding the normal post mortem re-distribution of some drugs in the body. Trained personnel are authorized to take body measurements, retrieve blood, urine, or vitreous samples from the body of a decedent at the direction and supervision of a coroner supervisor or forensic pathologist.

REFERENCE: GOV. CODE 27522

PROCEDURE:

1.0 The peripheral blood sample will be obtained by forensic staff during the check-in process on all cases, unless specifically excluded below.

1.1 Forensic staff will not attempt to obtain the blood sample on known or suspected homicides, coroner review cases, and children two years of age or younger.

1.1.1 With the exception of children cases, and where there is no hospital admission blood, a supervisor may authorize a blood sample to be taken on a coroner review or homicide case. The supervisor should be conscious of the case if it is not scheduled for autopsy within 24 hours of death.

1.1.2 If the seal on a body bag needs to be removed to accomplish phlebotomy tasks on any case, the forensic staff shall do so in the presence of a deputy coroner, a supervisor, or a pathologist. The deputy coroner, supervisor, or pathologist will remain with the forensic staff until all phlebotomy tasks are completed and the body bag is resealed.

1.2 If hospital admission blood is not available, a peripheral blood sample could not be obtained, or an inadequate amount of blood (less than 30 cc's) could only be obtained, and the autopsy cannot be performed within 24 hours, the on duty supervisor shall be notified. This information should be placed into the coroner's database and brought to the attention of the triage committee.

1.2.1 If the peripheral blood sample could not be obtained and the autopsy could not be performed within 24 hours, a minimum of 50 cc's of heart blood shall be obtained at autopsy in addition to a peripheral blood sample. Liver and brain specimens shall also be retained and may be submitted along with the blood to the toxicology laboratory for possible examination.

2.0 The preferred site for obtaining the blood sample will be the femoral veins. If the preferred site of obtaining blood cannot be used for any reason (i.e. evidentiary, injuries, etc.), then an

alternate site will be used. The alternate site will be the subclavian veins. This should be noted in the coroner's database and brought to the attention of the triage committee.

3.0 The method of obtaining the blood sample shall be with the use of a new 18-gauge hypodermic needle and new 35cc syringe.

3.1 Extreme care shall be taken to prevent puncture and exposure injuries.

3.2 Hypodermic needles and syringes shall be appropriately discarded after use.

4.0 The blood sample will be dispensed directly from the syringe into the standard 50 cc specimen bottle that contains sodium fluoride. A minimum of 30cc's is required.

5.0 The punctures that are made during this procedure shall be circled and initialed to identify to the pathologist that the punctures did not exist on the body prior to arrival.

6.0 A specimen label is then completed and initialed by the staff member that obtains the sample. The label shall be thoroughly completed including decedent's name and coroner file number, date and time the sample is obtained, and the site where the sample is obtained from. The label is placed on the specimen bottle and immediately placed into refrigeration.

7.0 All forensic personnel performing phlebotomy tasks shall be trained and/or certified by a forensic pathologist or supervisor prior to performing the task.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: HISTOLOGY AND TOXICOLOGY SPECIMEN RETENTION **NUMBER: 703.04**

POLICY: California Government Code 27491.4(a) states in part that the Coroner shall have the right to retain those tissues of the body removed at the time of the autopsy as may, in his or her opinion, be necessary or advisable to the inquiry into the case, or for the verification of his or her findings.

Storage constraints do not allow for indefinite retention of wet tissue and specimens.

REFERENCE: CA Government Code 27491.4

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Wet tissue and toxicological specimens obtained by this department will be retained as follows.

- 1.1 Homicide and Coroner Review Cases shall be retained indefinitely.
- 1.2 Undetermined - The deputy coroner and pathologist shall review undetermined cause and manner of death cases every five years for consideration of disposal.
- 1.3 All traumatic deaths, except as specified above shall be retained for two years.
- 1.4 On natural deaths, all specimens shall be retained for thirteen months.
- 1.5 Unidentified deceased cases shall be retained indefinitely or until the decedent is identified.

2.0 Wet tissue and toxicological specimens may be discarded after one day following the expiration of the retention period unless a hold has been placed on the tissue as provided in Section 3.0 of the policy.

3.0 Requests for holds of wet tissue or toxicological specimens beyond the scheduled discard date will be handled as follows.

- 3.1 The deputy coroner or forensic pathologist may request a hold be placed on the tissue beyond the scheduled discard date on a case by case basis.
- 3.2 When any party (decedent's family, attorneys, etc.) is requesting tissue be held, they shall be advised of the retention schedule in writing by certified mail by the coroner's bureau where the tissue is stored. The letter shall include the fact that unless a court order is produced to stop such discard, it will proceed on schedule.

4.0 Paraffin blocks and microscopic slides will be retained by the bureau indefinitely.

(Revised: 3/10/09)

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensic

TITLE: X-raying of Remains

NUMBER: Policy #703.05

POLICY: Coroner technicians shall take all necessary x-rays upon receiving remains into the forensic centers of the Coroner's Bureau.

REFERENCE: California Code of Regulations, Title 17

PROCEDURE:

- 1.0 A complete copy of the California Code of Regulations, Title 17, shall be maintained in each facility's receiving office.
 - 1.1 A copy of the Radiation Safety Instructions (CCR, Title 17) shall be given to each employee and discussed with them. A copy shall also be posted in each facility's receiving office. The discussion shall be documented in each employee's file at the Coroner's Bureau.
 - 1.2 The "Notice to Employees" Standards for Protection Against Radiation (form RH 2364 from the Department of Health Services) shall be posted in each facility's receiving office.
- 2.0 When x-rays are taken, every care and precaution shall be taken to ensure safety.
 - 2.1 At the Perris facility, both sets of automatic doors to the x-ray room will be closed and the switches to allow them to open shall be turned off.
 - 2.2 The red x-ray warning lights shall be turned on.
 - 2.3 Forensic staff shall wear their radiation monitoring badges when taking x-rays.
 - 2.3.1 When not in use, monitoring badges shall be left in the processor room. They are not to be worn outside or taken home.
- 3.0 X-rays may be taken through a body bag if necessary.
- 4.0 The following cases require full body x-rays, no exceptions.
 - 4.1 Homicides
 - 4.2 Coroner Review
 - 4.3 Severely Burned
 - 4.4 Severely Decomposed

- 4.5 All children two years of age and under.
- 5.0 All pedestrians struck by motor vehicle shall have x-rays taken of the pelvis and lower extremities.
- 6.0 Gunshot wound victims by suicide or accident may have limited x-rays taken such as just the head or chest/abdomen as determined by the deputy coroner or forensic pathologist.
- 7.0 Other cases that require full body or limited x-rays are done at the discretion and request of the deputy coroner or forensic pathologist such as unidentified remains or massive trauma.
 - 7.1 No unidentified case shall be released to the Public Administrator for burial without full body x-rays being taken.
- 8.0 X-rays obtained prior to the digital x-ray system are marked accordingly:
 - 8.1 Homicide and Coroner Review x-rays will be placed into red x-ray envelopes with proper documentation of the decedent's name and coroner file number.
 - 8.2 All other x-rays will be placed in manila colored x-ray envelopes with proper documentation of the decedent's name and coroner file number.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: RETENTION OF X-RAYS

NUMBER: 703.06

POLICY: X-rays are taken of bodies in certain types of cases. Storage constraints do not allow for the indefinite retention of all x-rays. X-rays shall be discarded one day after the expiration of the retention period outlined below.

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

- 1.0 X-rays that are taken of bodies by this department shall be retained as follows.**
- 1.1 Homicide and Coroner Review cases shall be retained indefinitely.
 - 1.2 All other traumatic cases except homicide and coroner review cases shall be retained for two years.
 - 1.3 Natural deaths shall be retained for thirteen months.
 - 1.4 Unidentified cases shall be retained until identified.
- 2.0 X-rays may be discarded after one day following the expiration of the retention period unless a hold has been placed on the tissue as provided in section 3.0 of this policy.**
- 3.0 When any party (decedent's family, attorneys, etc.) is requesting x-rays be held they shall be advised of the retention schedule in writing by certified mail by the coroner bureau where the x-rays are stored. The letter shall include the fact that unless a court order is produced to stop such discard, it will proceed on schedule.**

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensic

TITLE:	Sealing of Body Bags	NUMBER: 703.07
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POLICY: Body bags shall be sealed on all homicide, coroner review and suspicious cases to preserve evidence and/or protect personal property of the deceased.

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

- 1.0 All homicide, coroner review and suspicious cases shall be transported to the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center in a sealed body bag. The deputy coroner handling the case shall secure the seal and document the number of the seal in his notes.**
- 1.1 A sealed bag shall not be opened prior to autopsy without the presence of a deputy coroner or supervisor. If the seal must be broken, the deputy or supervisor present must document in a supplemental report when and why the seal was broken. When done, the bag shall be re-sealed with a new seal. The deputy or supervisor present shall document the number of the new seal when it is resealed.
- 1.2 The forensic pathologist shall document the number on the seal in his/her autopsy notes when he/she receives the body for autopsy. This information shall also become a part of the autopsy protocol.
- 2.0 A deputy coroner may choose to place a seal on a bag in other types of cases such as an at scene traffic collision during inclement weather. This can be done to protect the personal property until he/she can return to the facility to inventory the property in a controlled environment. The deputy shall secure the seal and document the number of the seal in his notes.**
- 2.1 The sealed bag shall not be opened by anyone other than the deputy coroner.
- 2.2 The deputy coroner shall come directly to the forensic center from the scene or notification to accomplish the inventorying of the personal property. The bag can remain unsealed when done.
- 3.0 In all cases that body bags will be sealed, the number of the toe tag being affixed to the body must be written on the body bag tag. The deputy coroner shall complete and affix the toe tag and body bag tag or directly supervise transport personnel and ensure that it is done properly. If a bag tag is not available then the toe tag number shall be written on the outside of the bag.**

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE:	Notification of Contagious Disease	NUMBER: 703.08
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POLICY: The coroner's bureau is responsible by law and shall notify the person receiving the body when it is known to have a contagious disease.

REFERENCE: California Health and Safety Code Section 1797.189 (b)

PROCEDURE:

1.0 When a body is known or suspected to have a contagious disease and it is being transported to one of the coroner forensic centers, the deputy coroner shall advise transport personnel to tag the body as contagious and the deputy coroner shall also notify the forensic staff in a timely manner.

1.1 A deceased is suspected to have a contagious disease when the information is obtained from an unofficial source, such as statements of family members and friends who may not know for a fact that proper diagnosis was made.

1.2 A deceased is known to have a contagious disease when the disease has been diagnosed and the deputy coroner has spoken to the medical provider or has reviewed the medical records which document the diagnosis.

1.3 Confirmation of the known contagious disease or a higher degree of suspicion may come at the completion of the autopsy.

2.0 The employee releasing the body is responsible for making notification of a known contagious disease prior to release of the body.

2.1 The law does not mandate notification of suspected contagious disease, but should be done as a courtesy.

2.2 All bodies that are known to have a contagious disease shall be placed in a body bag prior to release and "CONTAGIOUS" is to be written on the bag in large red letters.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE:	UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS AT AUTOPSY	NUMBER: 703.09
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POLICY: Universal precautions shall be employed at all times to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. All body fluids shall be considered and treated as potentially infectious. The level of universal precautions employed depends on the task being performed. The following procedure addresses universal precautions in the autopsy rooms.

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Upon completion of initial set up by the forensic staff and external examinations by the forensic pathologists, and prior to any body cavities being opened, all personnel working or viewing autopsies, including visiting law enforcement personnel, in the autopsy room shall be protected as follows until they are leaving the autopsy room or the clean up process is completed.

1.1 Full body protective jump suit and plastic apron for Sheriff-Coroner personnel.

1.1.1 Visiting law enforcement personnel will wear a protective plastic apron either with or without arm protection. A full body protective jump suit may be provided at the request of the law enforcement personnel viewing the autopsy.

1.2 Disposable particulate respirator.

1.3 Eye protection or face shield for all Sheriff-Coroner personnel. Visiting law enforcement personnel may be provided with eye protection upon request.

1.4 Kevlar gloves covered by protective gloves are required for all Sheriff-Coroner personnel, to be worn on the non-cutting hand.

2.0 Any other personnel of the bureau should not enter the autopsy room while autopsies are in progress. If it is absolutely necessary to enter the autopsy room, the following precautions shall be taken.

2.1 The forensic supervisor shall approve entry. If the forensic supervisor is not available, the investigations supervisor shall approve or deny the entry.

2.2 All entry shall be made through the sliding doors directly across from the main refrigerator unit. **Do not enter via the x-ray room.**

2.3 Shoe covers and mask shall be worn.

- 2.4 Remain just inside the sliding doors and away from the bodies being autopsied.
- 2.5 Time in the room shall be kept to an absolute minimum.

CLEANING OF WORKSITE AFTER AUTOPSY:

- 3.0 When an autopsy is complete and the remains removed from the autopsy suite, a thorough cleaning of the work site shall occur. This will require certain minimum cleaning procedures will take place using the designated cleaning equipment and sanitizer ratio. These procedures are as follows:
 - 3.1 Wash down any table decedent occupied during autopsy.
 - 3.2 Wash down any and all countertops or tables used during the autopsy to place human tissue, autopsy equipment (e.g.: scalpels, saws, bodily fluid tubes, syringes, PPEs, tissue jars, etc), or fluid samples.
 - 3.3 Wipe down all walls and sink areas of any blood, tissue or dry erase marker.
 - 3.4 Clean, replace, or leave in proper cleaning solutions, all equipment used during the autopsy.
 - 3.5 Mop all floors in the morgue.
 - 3.6 Take the time during cleaning to identify any workplace hazards and promptly notify supervision of such.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Triage of cases reported to the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau NUMBER: Policy #703.10

POLICY: It is the Policy of the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau to thoroughly investigate the cause and manner of all decedent's deaths coming within the legal purview of the Sheriff-Coroner. Triage refers to the process of reviewing the circumstances surrounding a decedent's death and determining what appropriate disposition action should occur: Autopsy, consultation, sign out to mortuary. All Sheriff-Coroner cases shall be processed within the criteria set forth in the TRIAGE POLICY and PROCEDURES.

REFERENCE: 27491 Government Code

1.0 PROCEDURE:

The Deputy Coroner shall refer coroner cases involving the following circumstances to the Coroner's Bureau Triage Committee immediately following the initial investigation.

1.1 TRIAGE TEAM:

The Triage Committee is established by the Bureau Commander and consists of the following personnel: Chief Forensic Pathologist, all Staff Pathologists, Sheriff-Coroner's Lieutenant, Morgue Supervisor, Sheriff-Coroner's Supervisors, and other members as designated by the Bureau Commander. Other staff members may attend the daily Triage meetings to review and better understand the process.

1.2 The Triage Committee shall review the following incoming cases:

Homicides
Traffic fatalities (driver & passenger)
Sudden unexpected deaths
Fatalities from aircraft accident and other type of public or commercial flights
Parachute deaths
Public transportation fatalities
Suspected suicides
Suspected overdose (intentional or accidental).
Suspected therapeutic misadventure
Fatalities from burns
Any case that meets the criteria for a "Coroner Review Case," (law enforcement officer present at time of death)
Boating & water sports accidents
Drowning or suspected drowning
Exposure or suspected exposure to heat/cold.
Electrocution
Death from occupational related accidents
Any death that is suspicious or upon initial review indicates cause and manner may be undetermined.
Accidental deaths

Hospital deaths that meet criteria for coroner case
Any trauma related death
Any death of a child under the age of 18 years
Any in custody deaths
Any case where the deputy coroner feels that an autopsy is warranted due to the overall circumstances of their investigation.
Accidental poisoning
Sudden or unusual deaths
Deaths within a nursing care facility
Deaths from mental hospital (state or private)
Other deaths that may occur from natural causes without an attending physician available to provide a cause of death.

2.0 Toxicology:

The Triage Committee shall determine what toxicological tests are required for their assigned autopsies or as required by law. If any question arises as to what tests are needed the staff pathologist shall confer with the Chief Pathologist or the Investigations Lieutenant (s). The recommended minimum tests to be conducted by type of case are listed in 2.3.

2.1 Toxicology/Coroner Review Cases

Contract pathologists performing autopsies on a Sheriff- Coroner review case shall designate any test(s) that are required as a result of their examination. Additional test(s) may be requested and performed at the direction of the Triage Committee, Bureau Commander, or Chief Deputy.

2.2 Other Contract Pathologists

Contract pathologists shall request test(s) to be performed on the decedent at time of autopsy. All requests shall be reviewed and approved by the triage committee utilizing those standards set forth in 2.3.

2.2 Toxicological Guidelines; The following is a general guideline for requesting toxicology testing. Delayed deaths of a traumatic nature will not require ordering of toxicology if the hospital admission blood is no longer available.

2.2.1 **Natural deaths;** Necessary toxicology shall be ordered on a case by case basis.

2.3.2 **Homicides;** Coroner panel shall be requested at a minimum, with other testing requested on a case by case basis. Any burn victims shall have the carboxyhemoglobin level requested in addition to the toxicology.

2.3.3 **Traffic related;** Traffic panel shall be requested for all drivers, passengers and pedestrians. Burn victims shall have the carboxyhemoglobin level requested in addition to the traffic panel.

- 2.3.4 **Suicides**; Toxicology is not routinely performed on suicides unless it is necessary to determine the cause of death or unless the death is suspicious in nature. Necessary toxicology shall be ordered on a case by case basis for determination of cause of death. In cases of ingestion of medication or other substance, gastric content should be submitted for testing, if necessary, in addition to the blood.
- 2.3.5 **Miscellaneous accidents**; Necessary toxicology shall be ordered on a cases by case basis. Miscellaneous accidents such as drug overdose, drowning, boating and watercraft, aircraft and occupational accidents shall have at the minimum a coroner panel requested. Suspected heat exposure deaths shall have vitreous electrolytes requested in addition to the toxicology that is requested. Burn victims shall have the carboxyhemoglobin level requested in addition to the toxicology.
- 2.3.6 **Coroner Review**; All coroner review cases shall have a comprehensive panel requested.
- 2.3.7 **Child deaths**; All deaths of children age 17 years and under shall have a comprehensive panel requested. Sudden unexpected infant deaths shall also have vitreous electrolytes requested.
- 2.3.8 **Undetermined cause of death**; A case shall not be closed out as undetermined unless the minimum of a comprehensive panel has been run.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Blood sample for insulin analysis

NUMBER: Policy # 703.11

POLICY: In cases where the cause of death is suspected to be complications of diabetes mellitus, obtaining an accurate insulin level is very important. Deputy coroners shall make a verbal request to the on duty coroner technician to obtain an additional sample in a red top test tube, (tiger top).

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Peripheral blood sample should be collected as soon as possible:

- 1.1 The sample is to be collected into a 10ml red top test tube, (which has no preservative).
- 1.2 Centrifuge sample immediately.
 - 1.2.1 Centrifuge for a minimum of ten minutes at the highest centrifuge speed. Be sure to balance the 10ml test tube with another 10ml test tube filled with water in order to maintain balance as the centrifuge rotates.
- 1.3 When centrifuging is finished, take the upper layer, (should be free from hemolysis and blood clots), and put it into another red top test tube.
 - 1.3.1 This second tube shall be sent to Bio-Tox Labs for the actual analysis.
- 1.4 The coroner technician shall indicate on the receiving report that this sample was obtained in addition to the routine toxicology sample.

2.0 Storage of sample:

- 2.1 The sample may be refrigerated up to five days.
 - 2.1.1 If the sample is going to remain in the morgue for a period of more than five days, it shall be frozen, and ultimately transported to the lab in this same manner.

3.0 Transportation to Bio-Tox Lab:

- 3.1 The sample shall be transported to the lab as soon as possible.
- 3.2 In order to assure the sample is received within five days, the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau shall deliver the sample directly to the lab.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Blood sample for insulin analysis

NUMBER: Policy # 703.11

- 3.3 The coroner technician responsible for that blood shall notify a coroner supervisor that an insulin sample is ready for delivery to Bio-Tox Labs.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Body Storage Trailer

NUMBER: Policy # 703.12

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau maintains auxiliary cold storage for bodies in the event of a major disaster. In order to keep this cold storage in optimum running order, the Sheriff-Coroner has set forth guidelines to ensure this equipment is regularly tested.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Location:

1.1 Cold storage trailers are stored to the rear of the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Centers.

2.0 Weekly Checks:

2.1 One person shall be designated to conduct weekly checks. In Perris this person shall be the estate property technician.

2.2 Weekly checks shall consist of the following;

2.2.1 Check tires for proper air pressure and cracking.

2.2.2 Check fuel level, if low arrange for re-fueling of unit.

2.2.3 Start generator and allow to run for 15-30 minutes.

2.2.3.1 On the side of the refrigeration unit, located at the front of the trailer, is a control panel with two toggle switches.

2.2.3.2 One switch is marked on & off. Push this switch to the on position.

2.2.3.3 The second switch is marked preheat & start. Hold this switch down in the preheat position until you hear a click, approximately 30 seconds, then move the switch to the start position and the unit should start.

2.2.3.4 Allow refrigeration unit to run for 15-30 minutes and check temperature on digital readout located next to toggle switches. Temperature should maintain at 55 Degrees.

2.2.3.5 Turn the switch to the off position and the refrigeration unit will shut down.

2.2.3.6 Take note of the total hours, located on the hour meter next to the switches.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Body Storage Trailer

NUMBER: Policy # 703.12

3.0 Completion of Log:

3.1 The person checking the refrigeration unit shall also be responsible for completing the maintenance log.

3.1.1 The log for Perris is located on the wall just inside the warehouse door from the hallway leading into the office area. This log is continuous, showing all previous checks of the refrigeration unit.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Forklifts

NUMBER: Policy # 703.13

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner expects employees to be familiar with the forklift(s). Operating them within the manufacturers specifications and in accordance with State mandated safety guidelines.

REFERENCE: California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 3664

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Training:

1.1 Prior to operating a forklift, the employee shall be trained and certified by the County Safety Office.

1.1.1 In the event the employee is being trained in the operation of the forklift, he/she may operate the forklift in the presence of a trained forklift operator.

2.0 Operation:

2.1 An employee shall complete an "Operator's daily checklist" at the beginning of the work shift. A new checklist shall be started at the beginning of each workweek.

2.1.1 Employees shall complete both visual and operational checks on the forklift.

2.1.2 Any/all problems with the forklift shall be immediately reported to a supervisor. He/she shall determine whether or not the forklift will be taken out of service pending repair.

2.2 Employees are never to ride on the forks or the lift trucks themselves.

2.3 Employees shall never stand, pass, or work under the elevated portion of the forklift, whether loaded or not.

2.4 Drivers shall not exceed the authorized or safe speed, always maintaining a safe distance from other employees or obstacles.

2.5 Drivers shall slow down and sound the horn at cross aisles and other locations where vision is obstructed.

2.6 If a load obstructs the driver's view, the driver shall be required to travel with the load trailing.

2.7 Operators shall look in the direction of travel and shall not move a vehicle until certain that all persons are clear.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Forklifts

NUMBER: Policy # 703.13

- 2.8 Forklifts shall never be driven up to anyone standing in front of a fixed object of such size that the person could be caught between the truck and the object.
- 2.9 The forks shall always be carried as low as possible, consistent with safe operation.
- 2.10 When leaving a vehicle unattended, the forks shall be left in the down position with the brakes set.
- 2.11 Forklifts are not to be operated outside of the manufactures specifications.

3.0 Charging:

- 3.1 Forklift batteries should only charge for 3-5 hours on the Big Joe model.
 - 3.1.1 Excessive charging may damage the batteries.
- 3.2 The Crown forklift has a trickle charger and may be left plugged in.
- 3.3 Forklifts should not be charged or stored in the cooler.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Autopsy Photos

NUMBER: Policy # 703.14

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner will take autopsy photos on all homicides, Coroner Review cases, babies and children under two years of age, suicides, accidental deaths, and traffic accidents. The protocol for the use of digital vs. 35mm film and the photo content is discussed within this procedure.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Cases requiring photos:

1.1 Homicides/Coroner Review.

1.1.1 All homicides and Coroner Review cases should be single shot with a digital camera; the investigative agency may be present and take their own photographs as well.

1.1.1.1 A photo should be taken "as is" when the body bag is opened. Photos are taken to show the overall body, the body is then shot at 90-degree angles. This accounts for two to three photos on each side of the body.

1.1.1.2 A frontal face shot and additional photos from a ladder are taken to view the chest if injuries are apparent or as directed by the pathologist. These photos are repeated after the body has been cleaned.

1.1.1.3 Photos of injuries include a medium range shot to show placement of injury on the body and close ups with the scale.

1.1.1.4 If nail scrapings are requested, photos of both sides of the hands are taken prior to any collection. Photos are taken of the hands again after being cleaned.

1.1.1.5 Tattoos are not usually photographed individually, nor is clothing, as this is covered by law enforcement forensics. However, this is dependent upon the request of the investigator or pathologist.

1.1.1.6 Photos inside the body cavity are not generally taken unless directed by the investigator or pathologist.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Autopsy Photos

NUMBER: Policy # 703.14

- 1.1.1.7 Photos of the skull are taken when the skin is retracted, when the cranium is opened with the brain still intact and after the brain and dura mater has been removed.
 - 1.1.1.8 Photos of body organs, hyoid bone, evidence (bullets), are placed on a clean area, (blue board), for better contrast with a scale present.
 - 1.1.1.9 All efforts are taken to have photos free of blood and instruments.
 - 1.1.1.10 The body may be draped with a towel to exclude viewing an open body cavity.
 - 1.1.1.11 It is often difficult to take photos without an item in the background. Preferably a screen should be placed behind the body for a more professional appearance.
 - 1.1.1.12 Photos of x-rays are generally limited to the head, torso and extremities if bullets or injuries are apparent.
- 1.2 Babies and children under two years should be single shot on digital film.
 - 1.2.1 At minimum, overall body photos front and back will be taken.
 - 1.2.2 Additional photos may be requested by the pathologist or investigator and may include mouth, eyes, vaginal and rectal views. Photos may be expanded based on the presence of trauma.
- 1.3 Accidents/auto accidents.
 - 1.3.1 Digital photos should be taken of traumatic injuries sustained as a result of accidents, traffic accidents and suicides.
 - 1.3.2 Decedents of auto accidents shall have a photo of the chest from above at a 90-degree angle showing absence or presence of seatbelt marks.
 - 1.3.3 A photo of the left and right side of body.
 - 1.3.4 A photo of the face and any major trauma.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Autopsy Photos

NUMBER: Policy # 703.14

1.3.5 Pedestrians will have overall photos of the body including photos of the x-rays if fractures are present.

1.4 Suicides.

1.4.1 Photos should include a left and right upper body profile. Areas of injury, neck or gunshot defects, with a face profile and ID frontal view.

1.4.2 Hangings should have photos with ligature in place and after removal to demonstrate furrowing.

1.4.3 All photos should be taken at a 90-degree angle.

1.5 Consultation Cases.

1.5.1 Overall photographs shall be taken on ALL cases wherein a consultation and is performed, this includes posterior and anterior photographs.

2.0 **Storage of photos:**

2.1 Digital photos will be saved to the server by the end of shift, according to Sheriff-Coroner Policy 702.08, section 2.0

2.2 35mm negatives and prints are to be stored at the coroner facilities where the autopsy was performed. A forensic technician or coroner technician will be responsible for storing, maintaining, and inventorying of all negatives and prints. They will also be responsible for the security of all negatives and prints.

2.3 Digital photos will be archived in conjunction with the policy & procedure as set forth for deputy's investigative photos.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Evidence Disposition

NUMBER: Policy # 703.15

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner proposes to dispose of evidence in a timely manner after determining that it is no longer of evidentiary value to a case.

REFERENCE: Refer to Policy and Procedure 703.04

PROCEDURE:

- 1.0 On a monthly basis, the Coroner Technician in charge of property and evidence will prepare a list of items, except for undetermined cases, which have been held in the evidence lockers.
 - 1.1 The list at minimum will contain the decedent's name, case number, date of death, deputy coroner, investigating agency, and a description of the item(s).
 - 1.2 The list will be provided by E-mail to Supervisors and Deputy Coroners for review. The Deputy who has evidence will then determine whether the item(s) may be discarded, or need to be retained for further use. The Deputy Coroner should consult with the investigating agency for input as to whether the evidence should be retained for further investigation or be destroyed.
- 2.0 After making a determination of the status of the evidence, the Deputy Coroner will advise the Coroner Technician as to the disposition of the evidence.
 - 2.1 Supervisors should periodically monitor the list to assure compliance by Deputy Coroners.
 - 2.2 The Coroner Technician will note on the property/evidence receipt, the date, time and person authorizing the release/destruction of the evidence. The Coroner Technician destroying the evidence will then date and sign the receipt and provide it to the Deputy Coroner for return to the case file.
- 3.0 Items of evidence from undetermined cases will be retained for an undetermined period of time.
- 4.0 Evidence collected at homicide/trauma autopsies will be released to the attending agency by the Forensic Technician or Coroner Technician.
- 5.0 Evidence collected at autopsies not attended by investigating agencies will be documented by the Forensic Technician, or Coroner Technician. The agency will then be contacted by forensic staff to retrieve the evidence collected. If the agency declines to accept the items collected, the forensic staff will refer the items to the investigating Deputy Coroner for disposition.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE:	Pathologist Workload	NUMBER: Policy # 703.16
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POLICY: Monitoring of the pathologist workload is essential for budgetary reasons and to ensure quality performance in the forensic division. Every attempt will be made by the Sheriff-Coroner to maintain a reasonable workload per pathologist to protect the quality of forensic service to the community, while conforming to potential budget constraints and the economic climate of the Sheriff-Coroner, the County of Riverside and the State of California. Multiple factors contribute to total workload including, though not necessarily limited to, performance of autopsies and consultations, dictations, paperwork, courtroom and deposition testimony, meetings, conferences, research, teaching, and travel during business hours. Standards recommended by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) include workload targets that are utilized by many coroner/medical examiner offices. One practical method of assessing the appropriateness of the pathologist workload is to consider the numbers and complexity of autopsies and consultations, in conjunction with all other responsibilities of the pathologist over a reasonable period of time, generally over weeks or months. Day to week workload will be distributed amongst the pathologists in the most equitable way possible.

REFERENCE: National Association of Medical Examiners

GUIDELINES:

1.0 Autopsy and Consultation Case Assignments:

- 1.1 Forensic Pathologists shall be assigned autopsy examinations and consultations at the conclusion of each morning triage meeting. The Chief Forensic Pathologist, Sheriff-Coroner administration or their designee will make the case assignments.
- 1.2 Autopsy examinations and consultations are generally performed during the morning hours. On occasion, it may be necessary to perform them during the afternoon or evening hours, on weekends, or on holidays.
- 1.3 Consultations assigned to cases in the Indio Forensic Center may be viewed on the autopsy suite closed circuit television for purposes of providing a cause of death. Examinations conducted in this manner will be at the discretion of the forensic pathologist assigned the case. If necessary, additional digital photographs may be taken by the coroner technician and sent to the pathologist to facilitate closer examination as needed. If desired, the forensic pathologist assigned the case may elect to perform the examination in person rather than using the closed circuit television system.

- 1.3.1 All consultation cases in which the pathologist recommends that the consultation be upgraded to an autopsy will be brought to the attention of the Chief Forensic Pathologist and Sheriff-Coroner Administration. Upon review, The Chief Forensic Pathologist and/or Sheriff-Coroner administration or their designee will decide if the assigned forensic pathologist should respond to the Indio Forensic Center to perform the autopsy that day or if the case should be held over until the following work day. Cases that are held over for this reason may be assigned to the initial or another forensic pathologist as needed and upon the discretion of the Chief Forensic Pathologist and/or Sheriff-Coroner administration or their designee.

2.0 **Business Days:**

- 2.1 A “business day” is defined as a regular workday whereby the pathologist performs no autopsies or consultations, though has primary responsibilities outside of the autopsy suite. These responsibilities include paperwork, courtroom and deposition testimony, meetings, conferences, research, and teaching.
- 2.2 The pathologist scheduled for a business day is expected to perform duties pursuant to the normal course of business outside of autopsy and consultation examinations as described in 2.1 above.
- 2.3 Every attempt will be made to provide (1) business day per week per pathologist; however staffing shortages and short (holiday) weeks may preclude business day scheduling.
- 2.4 Business days are “floating,” as they may be altered based on the needs of the office.

3.0 **Triage:**

- 3.1 At least one pathologist, typically the chief forensic pathologist, is required to attend and contribute to the morning triage meeting, as pathology participation is vital to the decision making process of the committee. Additional triage sessions may be necessary, based on the workload environment of the office, and at the discretion of the Sheriff-Coroner administration.
- 3.2 At times, the urgency of a decision made normally by the triage committee may preclude participation by one or more members of the committee. Exclusion of any triage member or members from a decision normally made by the committee is at the sole discretion of the Sheriff-Coroner administration. In such situations, it is favorable for the administration to include one or more available members of the committee.
- 3.3 When the chief forensic pathologist is absent, the pathology triage responsibility will be assigned to another pathologist.

4.0 **Dictations:**

- 4.1 Autopsy dictations are to be completed following the examination, generally the same day, or at the latest, within twenty four (24) hours of the start of the examination.
- 4.2 If a dictation tape is used in place of digital dictation, it shall be promptly delivered to the transcriptionist following completion of the dictation.

5.0 **Autopsy Protocols:**

- 5.1 Pending draft autopsy protocols shall be corrected, amended if necessary, finalized, signed by the pathologist, and delivered to Sheriff-Coroner administration as soon as possible following receipt of the results of necessary ancillary studies, and always within six (6) weeks of the date of the autopsy examination. Exceptions are considered when the basis for delay is external to the control of the pathologist (e.g., pending histology, neuropathology, toxicology, further testing or investigation).

6.0 **Courtroom/deposition testimony, meetings, conferences:**

- 6.1 Every attempt shall be made by the pathologist to conduct courtroom/deposition testimony, meetings, conferences, etc., on business days (see 2.0), or as a second priority, during the afternoon portion of the workday, thereby protecting the morning session for the performance of autopsy examinations and consultations.
- 6.2 Performance of afternoon autopsies and/or consultations may be necessary, following morning responsibilities such as deposition or courtroom testimony, in the event that such responsibilities could not be conducted on a business day or workday afternoon.
- 6.3 Depositions shall be held at a Sheriff-Coroner facility, unless another venue is approved by the chief forensic pathologist or Sheriff-Coroner administration.
- 6.4 Sheriff-Coroner pathologists may discuss their cases with the appropriate district attorneys.
- 6.5 Discussions between a Sheriff-Coroner pathologist and defense attorney or public defender involved in criminal matters shall be first approved by the district attorney handling the case. If approved by the district attorney, the district attorney shall have the option of attending any discussions.
- 6.6 Discussions between a Sheriff-Coroner pathologist and any attorney involved in civil litigation shall be first approved by the chief forensic pathologist or Sheriff-Coroner administration.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Forensic Pathologist Expense Report

NUMBER: Policy # 703.17

POLICY: The Forensic Pathologist Expense Report shall be completed and submitted to accounting by any Sheriff/Coroner pathologist, who performs any service to an outside agency on a non-Riverside County Coroner's case. This form was developed to recover actual costs for pathologist services provided to outside agencies wherein the Coroner does not have jurisdiction.

REFERENCE: Schedule of Fees

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Expense Report:

- 1.1 The Forensic Pathologist Expense Report shall be completed by the pathologist who is requested and performs any services for another agency, or department, not directly linked to a Riverside County Sheriff/Coroner case.
- 1.2 Upon a Sheriff-Coroner pathologist's services being requested, Coroner administration should be appraised of the request and approve or disapprove the services.
- 1.3 The requester should be advised of the fee as determined by the Department Fee Schedule.
 - 1.3.1 Arrangements for payment should be determined as should estimated total cost, prior to beginning consultation and/or service.

2.0 Completion of the form shall include the following:

- 2.1 Name and title of the pathologist requested to perform outside duties.
- 2.2 Requestor, point of contact for the department, agency, or firm requesting the service.
- 2.3 Name of the department, agency, or firm requesting the service.
- 2.4 Case, incident, or reference number from the requesting agency.
- 2.5 Total time spent, including start and finish time and date.
- 2.6 Number of miles traveled by the pathologist going to and from the location where the services are rendered.
- 2.7 Pathologist Signature and Date.

3.0 Routing of form:

- 3.1 The Chief Pathologist will be assigned as the point of contact for all Forensic Pathologist Expense Report Forms.
- 3.2 Upon completion by the pathologist, the forms should be turned into the Chief Pathologist or his designee.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Forensic Pathologist Expense Report


NUMBER: Policy # 703.17

- 3.3 The Chief Pathologist will be responsible for tracking each request for service, which meets the requirements for recouping of fees.
- 3.4 The Chief Pathologist will then review the form for accuracy and forward the form to the accounting section for total calculation and billing.

4.0 Accounting:

- 4.1 The bottom portion of the form should be completed by accounting. Accounting personnel will be responsible for computing the following:
 - 4.1.1 The total hours noted by the pathologist computed by the current rate for that pathologist's rate of pay. The fee schedule is split in to two separate rates, ***pathologist and chief pathologist***.
 - 4.1.2 The total miles noted by the pathologist, computed by the current rate per mile.
- 4.2 The **accounting section will then be responsible for totaling all expenses**, and submitting for payment.

5.0 (Example of Forensic Pathologist Expense Report form)

	SHERIFF-CORONER COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST EXPENSE REPORT
<input type="checkbox"/> Chief Pathologist <input type="checkbox"/> Pathologist	
Name: _____	
Requester: _____	
Agency: _____	Agency Case Number: _____
Activity: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	
Start: _____ End: _____ Total Time: _____ Date: _____	

RECORD OF EXPENSES - ACCOUNTING USE ONLY

CHIEF PATHOLOGIST – TOTAL HOURS _____ @ \$ _____ PER HOUR = \$ _____

PATHOLOGIST – TOTAL HOURS _____ @ \$ _____ PER HOUR = \$ _____

PATHOLOGIST – TOTAL MILEAGE _____ @ \$ _____ PER MILE = \$ _____

PREPARED BY: _____ DATE: _____ APPROVED BY: _____

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: CCTV System

NUMBER: Policy # 703.18

POLICY: The Sheriff-Coroner provides video closed circuit television monitoring of cases autopsied in the homicide viewing room of both forensic centers. The purpose of this is to improve the viewing ability of investigators, district attorneys, and others who desire to observe autopsies conducted at the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Centers without the need to enter the autopsy suite itself.

REFERENCE: Refer to Policy and Procedure 702.20

PROCEDURE:

- 1.0 On a daily basis, the on duty supervisor will evaluate the need to conduct an autopsy within the homicide viewing room. In most cases, homicides, coroner reviews and baby cases should be conducted within the homicide viewing room. Cases with known or suspected infectious disease should be autopsied in the specialized infectious disease autopsy room.
 - 1.1 If law enforcement (including the District Attorney) request to attend an autopsy, the case should be scheduled prior to the deputy coroner leaving the scene or as soon thereafter as possible.
 - 1.2 Cases that are scheduled for autopsy, in which law enforcement will be attending, will be listed on the In/Out Boards with the scheduled date and time. If the case is not a homicide, coroner review or baby the autopsy can be conducted on the main autopsy floor. Homicides, Coroner Reviews and baby cases should be listed with the autopsy date and time in red text to denote the reservation of the homicide viewing room. All other scheduled cases will be listed in green text.
- 2.0 Prior to beginning autopsies conducted in the homicide viewing room, the on-duty morgue supervisor or their designee will insure that the Close Circuit Television (CCTV) digital video recorder (DVR) is on and functioning normally.
 - 2.1 The CCTV – DVR is located in the data room within the Perris and Indio Forensic Centers. The DVR can be powered on by pressing the power button located on the front of the unit. Once powered on, the unit will load the NetPromax software automatically.
 - 2.2 Upon start-up, the operator will select the 4 panel view option and confirm that video feed is seen on the monitor from both cameras.
 - 2.3 The operator should check to make sure that the video feed does not have the letter “R” next to the camera description in the upper left corner of the monitor screen. If the screen has the letter “R” the operator will turn the recording software off.
 - 2.4 Autopsies will not be recorded without the authorization of the Coroner Bureau Commander.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: CCTV System

NUMBER: Policy # 703.18

- 3.0 Law enforcement personnel will then be lead into the homicide viewing room. In most cases, one law enforcement representative and one forensic technician will be allowed into the autopsy suite for the purposes of evidence collection and photography. All other observers will be directed to the homicide viewing room where they will be directed to the instructions for the use of the CCTV system. Upon request, additional law enforcement personnel may be permitted into the morgue area for the purposes of observing an autopsy. Although, these requests should be evaluated based upon need, not merely desire. Such requests must go through the on-duty morgue supervisor or investigations supervisor upon their absence. At no time shall civilians or District Attorney personnel be allowed inside the autopsy suite itself during autopsy.
- 3.1 The on-duty morgue supervisor or designee will turn on the LCD monitor and perform a routine function test of the joystick. The center camera will be positioned directly over the center of the body to allow for viewing of the chest, head, abdomen, and pelvic regions. The head camera will be centered on the head of the autopsy table and zoomed into allow for viewing of the decedent's head.
- 3.2 If law enforcement personnel intend to utilize the joystick for purposes of moving the pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) cameras during the autopsy then they will be asked to sign on the CCTV user log, which is located in the homicide viewing room.
- 3.3 The CCTV viewing log will include the date, time entering the viewing room, time leaving the viewing room, agency name (initials) and case number, coroner case number, and initials of both the Coroner's Bureau employee and attending agency employee confirming that the CCTV equipment is working properly and without damage.
- 4.0 Although the DVR has the ability to record data received from the cameras located within the homicide viewing room, no recording will be done without the permission of the Coroner's Bureau Commander or his/her designee.
- 4.0 Upon completion of each scheduled autopsy, the on-duty morgue supervisor or their designee will assure that all CCTV equipment including the LCD monitor, joystick controller, and CCTV – DVR are in good working order and without damage or defect. The user log, if used, will then be initialed verifying that the system is free of damage or defect.
- 5.0 Upon completion of all scheduled autopsies the morgue supervisor or designee will make sure that all CCTV - DVR and LCD monitor are turned off.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: CCTV System

NUMBER: Policy # 703.18

| 6.0 The ability exists to monitor autopsies in both Indio and Perris via a personal desktop computer. Viewing of autopsies and/or autopsy suites via PC is forbidden unless authorized by the Coroner Bureau Commander.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Therapeutic Medical Devices

NUMBER: Policy# 703.19

POLICY: Therapeutic medical devices are often attached to/or transported along with remains to the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center. Common therapeutic medical devices include, but are not limited to: pacemakers, implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD), implantable cardiac monitors, insulin pumps and morphine pumps. The purpose of this policy is to classify these therapeutic medical devices into two distinct categories: evidence or personal property, and to set forth a plan for disposition of such devices. Care must be exercised in the gathering and preservation of these devices. All property retained by this department shall be inventoried, witnessed, and receipted.

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491.3, – California Probate Code 330.
Sheriff-Coroner Policy 702.03.

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Discovery of Therapeutic Medical Device:

- 1.1 Of those cases that are transported to the Sheriff-Coroner Forensic Center, once an employee learns of the presence of a medical device, within, on, or accompanying the remains, they should make note of it in the coroner database case notes ensuring that the information is sent to the triage committee.
- 1.2 If the device is external, then it should be photographed and left in place for examination by a pathologist. The device should then be removed under the direct supervision by the pathologist. After the device is removed it should be classified as either *Evidence* or *Personal Property* by the pathologist.
- 1.3 If the device is internal, the pathologist should remove it during autopsy. After the device is removed the pathologist should classify it as either *Evidence* or *Personal Property*.
 - 1.3.1 If a consultation is being preformed in lieu of an autopsy, and it is known that the decedent has a medical device implanted, the pathologist should direct the coroner technician to make the notation of the device on the releasing paperwork, and cause the mortuary to be notified of its presence.
 - 1.3.2 Prior to the release of a decedent who has an implanted device, the employee conducting the release shall inform the mortuary that there is a device implanted in the remains.

2.0 Evidence:

- 2.1 Once a device is removed from the remains and the pathologist feels that the device may have been contributory to the death, the pathologist may direct the device be retained as evidence.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Therapeutic Medical Devices

NUMBER: Policy# 703.19

- 2.1.1 If the device is retained as evidence, it shall be photographed in place and upon removal, the make, model and serial number shall be noted on a property receipt; if such descriptions are identifiable.
- 2.1.2 The device should be cleaned, dried, and placed into a bio-hazard bag. The technician should inventory the device on a Coroner's property receipt. At a minimum, the receipt number, decedent's name, and Sheriff-Coroner case number, shall be written on the bag. The receipt shall then be stapled to the exterior of the bag and processed the same as any other evidence.
- 2.2. The device may be sent to the manufacturer or an independent contractor for consultation. Ultimately, this decision will be made by Coroner Administration in consultation with the Chief Forensic Pathologist.
- 2.3 As with any evidence, a chain of custody will be established between this office and the contractor and/or the manufacturer.
 - 2.3.1 Once the contractor and/or the manufacturer completes the device consultation, the device will be returned to the Coroner's Bureau. If the device is no longer needed as evidence, it will be converted to personal property.

3.0 Personal Property:

- 3.1 In those cases where the pathologist believes the device was not contributory to the death, the device should be handled as personal property.
 - 3.1.1 All personal property should be handled and released in accordance with Sheriff-Coroner's Policy 702.03. (Many of these therapeutic devices hold a monetary value wherein the next of kin should direct disposition of the device).

4.0 Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillators (ICDs):

- 4.1 Once an employee learns of a decedent that has an ICD, they should make note that the device exists and include of the make and model, if known, within the database case notes. The employee should also inform the triage committee and the coroner technician receiving the decedent that the remains have an ICD.
 - 4.1.1 The coroner technicians should make note on the "In and Out Boards" that the decedent has an ICD.
- 4.2 If it is determined that the deceased requires an autopsy, and the pathologist feels deactivations cannot be done safely by coroner staff, then a consultant may be contacted to deactivate the ICD.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Therapeutic Medical Devices

NUMBER: Policy# 703.19

- 4.3 If it is determined the deceased only requires a consultation, then the technician releasing the body will ensure the information is passed on to the mortuary and notate such on the release form.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Neuropathology

NUMBER: Policy# 703.20

POLICY: In specific types of deaths, neuropathology can play an essential part in determining an accurate cause of death. The transportation of neuropathology specimens to the County of San Diego-Medical Examiner's Office will provide neuropathology expertise to assist in death inquiries. The proper handling and transporting of neuropathology specimens is crucial.

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491.45 (a) (1)

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Neuropathology:

- 1.1 Brains, dura and, if obtained, the spinal cord will be placed in a formalin filled container using string threaded under the basilar artery, anywhere within the *Circle of Willis*. Brains (and other specimens) shall be labeled at the time of post and then placed in the histology room. The coroner case number shall be written on the lid with a permanent marker.
- 1.2 The coroner technician responsible for the neuropathology log will check in the brain by case type and doctor and place the corresponding information onto the neuropathology log located in the morgue file. Brains will be placed on the shelf for storage in the histology room.
- 1.3 Brains require at least 2 weeks to set. If it is an extremely bloody specimen, the existing formalin shall be replaced with fresh formalin within two days of the autopsy.
- 1.4 All brains are to be transported from the Indio Forensic Center to the Perris Forensic Center (PFC) for storage.
- 1.5 The assigned forensic pathologist will determine if the brain is to be examined at PFC or if they should be scheduled for transportation to the County of San Diego Medical Examiner's Office (CSDMEO).
- 1.6 After brains have been examined and the tissue has been discarded, the case will be removed from the neuropathology list.

2.0 Transportation Of Brains To CSDMEO:

- 2.1 Selected neuropathology specimens will be taken to CSDMEO, located at 5570 Overland Avenue, San Diego, California, 92123, on designated dates each month. Brains shall only be transported in special, designated tissue transportation containers.
- 2.2 Eyes retained for examination shall not be transported to CSDMEO.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Neuropathology

NUMBER: Policy# 703.20

- 2.3 The coroner technician transporting the specimens to CSDMEO must get a release from the coroner technician responsible for neuropathology prior to leaving PFC.
 - 2.3.1 The neuropathology log will be updated to indicate that the brain has been transported to CSDMEO.
- 2.4 A Coroner Sergeant must sign the release form (RSO Form 409), verifying the correct specimens are being transported to CSDMEO. Brains will be checked to ensure they are labeled correctly and placed in the appropriate transporting container. No brain is to leave PFC without authorization from a supervisor.
- 2.5 The technician will ensure a histology request form accompanies each brain transported to CSDMEO, as well as the itemized specimen list and any medical records, deputy coroner report, and initial autopsy protocol associated with the specimen(s). The technician will also take blue cassettes and formalin filled containers that the cassettes will be placed in by CSDMEO along with neuropath labels.
- 2.7 The specimens will then be transported and released to CSDMEO. Coroner technicians transporting specimens will sign a log to record mileage, case number(s) of specimens and the date.
- 2.8 When arriving at CSDMEO, the coroner technician will take the specimens to the exam room located at the back (north side) of the building. The technician will release the specimens and then bring back any specimens requiring return transport to PFC.
- 2.9 A representative from CSDMEO must sign the release form (RSO Form 409) and the histology request form indicating they are receiving the specimens.
- 2.10 When picking up specimens that have previously been taken to CSDMEO, the technician shall verify they are picking up the correct brain, making sure that it is labeled and that the proper histology request form has been filled out. The technician will have the CSDMEO representative sign the release form. Upon completion of this, the technician will return to the Riverside County Coroner's office. They will drop off the cassettes in the histology room and notify the technician in charge of histology and tissue, who will enter them into the computer and send out histology as needed.

3.0 Forensic Pathologist Responsibility:

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of the Pathologist to complete the Neuropathology Consultation Request Form. Additionally, pathologists will gather any medical records that are pertinent to their case.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: Neuropathology

NUMBER: Policy# 703.20

- 3.3 The packet will be given to the morgue supervisor to provide to the technician transporting specimens to CSDMEO.

4.0 Releasing and Receiving Slides with CSDMEO:

- 4.1 The coroner technician will verify case information on each slide and verify all slides are accounted for. A histology request form shall also be completed.
- 4.2 When the slides are returned from CDC, the technician responsible for histology will log them out of the spreadsheet to reflect they are being transported to CSDMEO. The slides will be taken to CSDMEO and released, along with a copy of the histology request form.
- 4.3 Slides returned to PFC will be given to the technician responsible for histology who will log them back in and then file them.

5.0 Transporting specimens between Indio Coroner's Office and the Perris office:

- 5.1 The specimen is to be put into a special transport container.
- 5.2 A supervisor needs to verify that the sample is labeled, as well as the container. The technician will then transport the specimen to PFC.
- 5.3 The specimen will be logged out of the Indio neuropathology list and then logged into the Perris neuropathology list.
- 5.4 The specimens will be put on the shelf with other brain specimens for storage.
- 5.5 The specimens are to be released to CSDMEO in the same manner as listed above.

6.0 Motor vehicle accidents:

- 6.1 If a motor vehicle accident occurs during specimen transportation, the coroner technician shall call and report the accident and any damage to a supervisor immediately.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE:	Histology	NUMBER: Policy #703.21
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POLICY: Additional testing may be deemed necessary to determine or more accurately document a cause of death. Histology may be requested by the assigned forensic pathologist for further investigation into such cases.

REFERENCE: California Government Code section #27491.4(a)

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Histology:

- 1.1 All histology requests will be sent from the Perris Forensic Center (PFC), therefore all cassettes prepared at the Indio Forensic Center will be sent to PFC for cataloging and delivery for Cyto-Pathology Diagnostic (CDC).
- 1.2 Histology is performed on a case by case basis, as deemed necessary by the assigned forensic pathologist. Cassettes of potential histology specimens will be collected during time of autopsy.
 - 1.2.1 All cassettes will be labeled with the name of the Doctor and the corresponding case #.
 - 1.2.2 All cassettes will be placed into a formalin filled container with the case number on the lid and a label on the container that has the corresponding case #, name of decedent and Doctor's name.
 - 1.2.3 Any cassettes taken after autopsy using tissue from the stock jar must be labeled accordingly.
- 1.2 The Pathologist is to fill out the histology request form at the time the cassettes are made. The cassettes cannot be sent out without this form.
- 1.3 Once the form has been completed, the coroner technician responsible for histology is to place the cassettes, verifying that the case number and the number of cassettes match, into a small biohazard bag with the histology request form.
- 1.4 A histology log order form will be filled out by the technician sending out the samples for every case sent out. Both histology specimens and the histology log order form are to be placed in the white transport container and placed in the reception area for pick up.
 - 1.4.1 The technician sending out the specimens will call CDC to request a pickup.
 - 1.4.2 The histology Log Order Form must be signed by the person releasing the transport container to CDC, as well as the

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE:	Histology	NUMBER: Policy #703.21
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representative from CDC.

- 1.4.3 CDC usually delivers slides and/or blocks within a week of the pick up date.

2.0 When CDC returns the blocks and slides:

- 2.1 The technician that is responsible for histology is to make sure that the number of slides and blocks correspond with the histology log order form, the histology request form, and the CDC histology request form to ensure everything is accounted for.

- 2.1.1 The technician is to contact CDC immediately if any slides/blocks are damaged or missing.

- 2.2 The number of slides and blocks returned will be recorded on the slide log.

- 2.4 The slides are then separated and placed into the slide folder and a copy of the histology request form is attached.

- 2.5 Prior to returning the slide folder(s) to the appropriate doctor, the dates received from the lab and given to the doctor are filled in on the histology request form.

- 2.5.1 If the slides are to go to CSDMEO, the slide folder will be placed into a histology transport tote, awaiting transportation to CSDMEO.

- 2.6 Blocks are to be filed in the corresponding boxes kept in the supply room.

- 2.7 The histology request form and the CDC inventory sheet are to be filed in the histology notebook in the receiving office.

- 2.8 When the slide folders are returned from the Doctor, the slides are to be removed and filed in the corresponding file holder in the supply room.

3.0 Slides taken to CSDMEO:

- 3.1 When the slides and blocks are returned from CDC they are to be recorded in the slide log, per instructions listed in section 2.0.

- 3.1.1 The slide catalog should reflect the slide folders are being transported to CSDMEO.

- 3.2 When the slide folders are ready to be transported to CSDMEO, RSO form 409 will be filled out reflecting which slides are being transported. A Coroner Sergeant must sign the release form (RSO Form 409), verifying the correct specimens are being transported.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE:	Histology	NUMBER: Policy #703.21
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3.2.1 The technician is to place the slide folders in a transport tote along with the releasing form to CSDMEO; the technician in San Diego is to sign the form that they are receiving the slides.

4.0 Slides returned from CSDMEO:

- 4.1 When the slides are ready for pick up, a technician is to fill out a form (RSO form 409) stating which slide folders are to be picked up. A San Diego employee will sign the form when releasing the slide folders to a technician.
- 4.2 The slides are to be given to the technician responsible for histology, who will file them and sign the form; the dates on the histology request form will be filled out accordingly.
- 4.3 The technician is to log them into the slide log reflecting the slides have been returned and are filed.
- 4.4 The slides and blocks are to be filed in the corresponding boxes kept in the supply room based on case number and year.
- 4.5 The histology request form and the CDC inventory sheet shall be filed in the histology notebook in the receiving office, as per section 2.0.

5.0 Retention of slides and blocks:

- 5.1 Slides and blocks are kept in Perris for the entire county. The slides and blocks are kept in the supply room organized by year and case number.
- 5.2 Slides and blocks are kept indefinitely.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE:	Toxicology	NUMBER: Policy# 703.22
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POLICY: Scientific testing of specific body tissues and/or fluids may be deemed necessary by the assigned forensic pathologist in an effort to determine or more accurately document a cause of death. Such specimens shall be handled with extreme care with chain of custody procedures adhered to.

REFERENCE: California Government Code section 27491.45 (a) (1)

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Toxicology:

- 1.1 The case number is to be written on all specimen jars or containers.
- 1.2 A technician will label all specimens, as well as initial the Doctors' paperwork prior to the Doctor leaving the autopsy suite.
- 1.3 The appropriate specimens are to be placed in the tray in the toxicology fridge after autopsy is completed.
- 1.4 A Coroner Sergeant (or his/her designee) will have all Doctors' paperwork with approved causes and toxicology orders entered into the coroner database system.
 - 1.4.1 Copies of paperwork will be made for toxicology, as well as the Deputy Coroner in charge of the case. Original paperwork will go to the medical transcriptionist for all autopsy cases.
- 1.5 The technician that is responsible for toxicology will take any copies, placing them into numerical order and enter the case information into the toxicology log.
- 1.6 All cases are classified based on the type of case it is.
 - 1.6.1 Types of cases:
 - Coroner Reviews/Homicides
 - Natural
 - Traumatic
 - Undetermined
 - Pending
- 1.7 All specimens are pulled from the toxicology fridge to verify that the name and case number correspond with one another and are then placed into a biohazard zip lock bag.
 - 1.7.1 All "sign out" blood containers collected are classified as a Natural case.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE:	Toxicology	NUMBER: Policy# 703.22
1.8	The specimens are inventoried onto the toxicology log. A notation is to be made if there is more than one of the same samples.	
1.9	Blood, vitreous, and urine are always sent out for toxicology. They are separated and placed into a separate biohazard zip lock bag along with any other specimens to be sent out for toxicology. A copy of the toxicology request form is to be placed into the bag with the case number facing out. The bag is then placed into the toxicology box that is to be sent out.	
	1.9.1 For Coroner Reviews and Homicides <i>all specimens</i> are sent out for toxicology, except the purple top and red top.	
1.10	When hospital admitting blood has been obtained it is to be sent out for toxicology.	
	1.10.1 If the toxicology request states admit blood and there is no admit blood available, then the case specimens do not go out until the admit blood is received or as directed otherwise.	
1.11	All specimens placed in the toxicology box will be inventoried on the Outgoing Toxicology Specimen log (Form 292-137).	
1.12	When the toxicology is ready for pick up, the technician who placed the specimens in the toxicology box will sign the Outgoing Toxicology Specimen log (Form 292-137) and then place the log on top of the locked toxicology box.	
	1.12.1 All specimens in the toxicology box are to be kept in the fridge, until the transport company comes to pick up the box on their scheduled pick up day.	
1.13	All specimens not being sent out will be left in a biohazard zip lock bag with the case number written on the bag and a color dot that represents the case type.	
	1.13.1 Color Coding: Coroner Reviews/ Homicides- Red Natural/Sign out- Green Traumatic- Yellow Undetermined- Black Pending-None	
1.14	Color-coded specimens are stored in the freezer by case type and the date that the specimens were taken.	
1.15	After the specimens have either been put in the freezer or in the toxicology box, then the technician shall enter the specimens into the toxicology log by case number.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE:	Toxicology	NUMBER: Policy# 703.22
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1.15.1 The toxicology spreadsheet is also color-coded; if marked in green then the specimen is outgoing, if marked in black then the specimen is in the freezer.

1.15.2 All Coroner Reviews and Homicides are to be marked in red.

1.15.3 As stated above in section 1.7.1, all sign out cases are classified as a natural case.

1.16 If a mistake is made and not caught until the toxicology company has the samples, then they will send the bag and paperwork back for the technician to correct.

1.16.1 The technician shall notify a supervisor and work backwards to figure out how the mistake occurred and how to correct it.

2.0 Retention of Toxicology (for complete policy see 703.04):

2.1 Baby cases are retained for two years and one month, except homicides, undetermined, or Coroner Reviews, which are kept indefinitely.

2.2 Private posts are retained for two years and one month, or until a cause of death is determined, such as in a natural death, wherein regular discarding guidelines are utilized.

2.3 Wet tissue and toxicology specimens obtained by this department will be retained as follows.

2.3.1 Homicide and Coroner Review Cases shall be retained indefinitely.

2.3.2 All traumatic deaths, except as specified above, shall be retained for two years and one month.

2.3.3 For natural deaths, all specimens shall be retained for thirteen months.

2.3.4 Unidentified deceased cases shall be retained indefinitely or until the decedent is identified.

2.4 When discarding specimens:

2.4.1 Pull the specimen from the freezer.

2.4.2 Double check the case number and type.

2.4.3 Specimens are then put into the pathology waste containers.

2.5 If the type of case has changed, re-label under the new type. If the retention

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE:	Toxicology	NUMBER: Policy# 703.22
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period has already passed, then discard the specimen.

2.6 The discard date is then entered into the toxicology log.

3.0 Bloods splits:

3.1 Blood removed from a specific color tube must be split into a tube of the same color (purple top to purple top, etc.)

3.2 When a blood split is needed, the coroner technician will locate and verify the amount of blood in the tube. If the blood is still here and there is enough blood for a split, then put half of it should be transferred into another tube.

3.3 **When releasing blood for a blood split, the receiving party must sign RSD Form 304 upon receipt of the specimen. The form will then be placed in the case file and maintained as part of the record.**

4.0 Spin down on blood:

4.1 Blood spins can only be taken from a red top. If the blood needs to be spun down, after it has been split, place one red top into the centrifuge and balance it with another red top filled with water (usually kept in the machine). Spin the blood for ten minutes.

4.1.1 The original red top should be placed back with the rest of the specimens.

4.2 After the blood has been spun, the red top is labeled with the case number and name and placed in the hold bin in the left side of the specimen fridge with any paperwork needed.

4.2.1 The person requesting the blood is contacted to inform them that the blood is ready to go and placed into the hold bin.

5.0 DNA:

5.1 When a blood split is needed for DNA purposes, it can be split into another purple top or the blood can be put on a DNA card and then given to the front desk.

5.2 Requests for DNA will come from the front office, make sure paperwork is filled out and the specimen is correctly labeled.

5.3 If there is a blood split, it needs to be kept in the hold bin in the specimen fridge.

5.4 No refrigeration is needed if the blood is put on a DNA card.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Forensics

TITLE: HISTOLOGY, TOXICOLOGY AND TISSUE REQUISITIONS **NUMBER: 703.23**

POLICY: California Government Code 27491.4(a) states in part that the Coroner shall have the right to retain those tissues of the body removed at the time of the autopsy as may, in his or her opinion, be necessary or advisable to the inquiry into the case, or for the verification of his or her findings.

REFERENCE: CA Government Code 27491.4

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Request for Slides. (If blocks have already been prepared, subpoena is sufficient)

1.1 Recuts of slides (H&E) can be made (including unstained slides) at a cost of \$10.00 per slide.

2.0 Request for Toxicology Specimen Split. (If sufficient sample is available, subpoena is sufficient)

2.1 Blood samples can be split at a cost of \$28.00

2.2 Tissue samples for toxicology can be split at a cost of \$35.00

3.0 Requests for Stock Jar only. (When slides have been previously made, Court Order required)

3.1 We DO NOT release the original stock jar or its contents, unless a court order is obtained, SIGNED BY THE JUDGE, in which case our office may proceed in filing

3.2 We can arrange a mutually agreeable time for interested parties to examine the contents of the stock jar, and to photo-document if necessary, but without the court order, the specimens cannot leave the facility, and no samples may be obtained.

NOTE: *Depending on the manner of the case, the stock jar is retained for a specified amount of time. It is possible that the contents of the stock jar have been discarded, if the set period of retention time has lapsed.*

4.0 Request to extend the retention period.

4.1 A request to extend the retention period requires a Court Order; a Subpoena duces tenem WILL NOT suffice to extend the hold. A letter of intent will be acceptable until a court order can be obtained. If a court order is not received within 45 days, the Coroner's bureau will comply with the original retention dates.

(Revised:)

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Function and Duties of Public Administrator	NUMBER Policy # 800.01
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau manages decedent's estates and the indigent burial program.

REFERENCE: Gov Code Sections 27440 et. seq., Health and Safety Code Sections 7100 et. seq., and Probate Code Sections 7600 et. seq.

1.0 Public Administrator Function

The Sheriff-Public Administrator's authority is acquired through sections of various California codes, primarily the California Probate Code. All fees received for services are paid to the County of Riverside. The Public Administrator maintains an office staff experienced in the investigation and administration of estates of deceased persons. Actions in estate matters are subject to the supervision of the Superior Court, and all records are subject to periodic audits by the State and County authorities.

In accordance with the California Probate Code Section 7601, the Public Administrator must take immediate charge of the property within Riverside County of all persons who have died when no executor or administrator has been appointed, and in consequence thereof, the property or any part thereof, is being wasted, uncared for, or lost; and of all estates ordered into his hands by the court. He must apply for Letters of Administration upon estates of decedents who have no known heirs, or heirs unwilling or unable to act, and where no executor named in the Will is willing to act or able to qualify, and he may apply for such Letters upon any other estate, which he is entitled to administer.

Upon appointment by the court, as administrator of an estate, the duties of the Public Administrator are similar to those of other administrators. They are mainly to collect, manage and account for the estate property; to pay funeral and last illness expenses, taxes and all other debts, as far as the estate is able; and to sell property, both real and personal, as ordered by the court.

2.0 Indigent Burial/Cremation Program

The Sheriff-Public Administrator manages the County's Indigent Burial/Cremation Program. When a resident dies and his/her family is unable to manage the financial costs of the disposition of the remains, the family may apply for financial assistance.

The Sheriff-Public Administrator contracts with a mortuary to provide such assistance. The mortuary works with the families to complete applications. The information is provided to the Public Administrator's Bureau, and, if it is determined that the family meets the criteria, the payment for funeral services is made to the mortuary by the Bureau.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Function and Duties of Public Administrator	NUMBER Policy # 800.01
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3.0 Definitions:

- 3.1 Executor – An executor is the person named in a decedent's Will to handle the administration of the estate. The executor must be 18 and decedent can name more than one person to act as co-executor. If appointed, the executor receives Letters Testamentary.
- 3.2 Administrator – When a decedent leaves no Will, the court appoints someone to handle the administration of the estate. This person is called an administrator, and his/her duties and responsibilities are virtually identical to those of an executor. If appointed, the administrator receives Letters of Administration, as General Administrator.
- 3.3 Administrator With Will Annexed – Granted when a testator's Will does not name an executor or when the executor named is incompetent to act, is deceased, or refuses to act. If appointed, the administrator receives Letters of Administration as General Administrator.
- 3.4 Special Administrator – An administrator with authority to deal with only some of a decedent's effects, as opposed to administering the whole estate. The appointment is usually made to preserve the estate pending appointment of an executor or general administrator, where, for example, there may be a Will contest, or where assets of the estate are subject to immediate loss. If appointed, the administrator receives Letters of Special Administration.
- 3.5 Successor Administrator – An administrator appointed after original executor or administrator is removed by the probate court, either because of incapacity, death or malfeasance. If appointed, the administrator receives Letters of Successor Administration (perhaps with Will annexed, if a Will exists).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Persons Having Priority to Act	NUMBER: Policy # 800.02
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POLICY: If no Will exists, certain persons are entitled to appointment as administrator of the estate.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 50, 8461

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Domestic partners – One of two persons who have filed a Declaration of Domestic Partnership with the Secretary of State pursuant to Division 2.5 (commencing with Section 297) of the Family Code, provided that the domestic partnership has not been terminated pursuant to Section 299 of the Family Code.
- 1.2 Issue – All his or her lineal descendants of all generations, with the relationship of parent and child at each generation being determined by the definitions of child and parent.
- 1.3 Lineal descendant – a direct blood relative.

2.0 PROCEDURE:

- 2.1 Per section 8461 of the Probate Code, if no Will and testament (intestate) exists, a person in the following relation to the decedent is entitled to appointment as administrator in the following order of priority:
 - 2.1.1 Surviving spouse or domestic partner
 - 2.1.2 Children
 - 2.1.3 Grandchildren
 - 2.1.4 Other issue
 - 2.1.5 Parents
 - 2.1.6 Brothers and sisters
 - 2.1.7 Issue of brothers and sisters
 - 2.1.8 Grandparents
 - 2.1.9 Issue of grandparents
 - 2.1.10 Children of a predeceased spouse or domestic partner
 - 2.1.11 Other issue of a predeceased spouse or domestic partner
 - 2.1.12 Other next of kin
 - 2.1.13 Parents of a predeceased spouse or domestic partner
 - 2.1.14 Conservator or guardian of the estate acting in that capacity at the time of death who has filed a first account and is not acting as conservator or guardian for any other person.
 - 2.1.15 Public Administrator
 - 2.1.16 Creditors
 - 2.1.17 Any other person

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
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TITLE: Persons Having Priority to Act

NUMBER: Policy # 800.02

2.2 Exceptions to Priority:

2.2.1 The surviving spouse or domestic partner, a relative, or a relative of the predeceased spouse or domestic partner of the decedent has priority **only if the person takes** part of the estate. (Probate Code § 8462)

2.2.2 If the surviving spouse or domestic partner is a **party to an action** for separate maintenance, annulment, or dissolution and was **living apart** from the decedent at the date of death, he or she has priority after brothers and sisters. (Probate Code § 8463)

2.2.2.1 The spouse must be a party to the dissolution **on the date of death**; an action that was previously filed, but dismissed prior to death, does not disqualify the spouse.

2.2.3 Neither a **minor** nor a person subject to a **conservatorship of the estate** may serve as personal representative. (Probate Code § 8402(a))

2.2.3.1 The court has discretion to appoint the guardian of the minor (if there is one) or the conservator. (Probate Code § 8464)

2.2.4 Non-residents of the United States may not serve as administrator. (Probate Code § 8402(a)).

2.2.4.1 The court may appoint as administrator a person nominated by a non-resident of the United States. (Probate Code Section 8465(a)(2))

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
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TITLE: Decedent Referrals With Minor Children as Next of Kin **NUMBER:** Policy # 800.03

POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will take all necessary actions when safeguarding assets in decedent cases where next of kin are minor children.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 330, 890, 3401, 7600, 7604, 13100

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Minor – An individual who has not yet reached legal age (18 years).
- 1.2 Guardianship of Minor's Estate – The court process in which a person is vested with the power, and charged with the duty, of managing the property of another person, who, for defect of age, is considered incapable of administering his own affairs.

2.0 Procedure:

- 2.1 The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau is notified of the death of a decedent survived by minor children. The purpose of this notification is to ensure that the rights of the minor children as pertains to the estate are protected. The notification is made pursuant to Probate Code Section 7600 and there is no provision requiring our intervention in these cases. Therefore, it is imperative that we assist rather than interfere when investigating these estates.
- 2.2 A parent, grandparent, or person with custody of a minor child has no legal right to sign for valuables from an estate on behalf of that child. Neither money nor property can be released to the custodian solely by execution of the 13100 Affidavit.
- 2.3 A guardian of the estate of a minor is responsible to the court for property or money received for the minor. Most individuals do not encounter the need to act in this capacity until an event such as death occurs, requiring the collection of estate distribution or insurance proceeds. Prior to release of any item from this office to a person basing their right to said property under guardianship proceedings, a certified copy of the Letters of Estate Guardianship must be on file with us (an intent to obtain same is not sufficient).
- 2.4 A custodian of a minor does not have priority to act as administrator of the minor's parent's estate unless Letters of Guardianship have first been received. The person claiming to have priority should be aware of the need for guardianship proceedings prior to petitioning for Letters of Administration as we will assert our priority at the hearing if they fail to obtain same.
- 2.5 If the total estate does not exceed \$166,250, or as adjusted periodically in accordance with Section 890, and the total estate of each minor child (including the property to be delivered from the estate) does not exceed \$5,000 and the estate

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TITLE: Decedent Referrals With Minor Children as Next of Kin	NUMBER: Policy # 800.03
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otherwise is appropriate (within the confines of Section 13100), property may be delivered to the surviving parent by execution of affidavits pursuant to Section 330 and 3401. This is only applicable for delivery to a parent. A grandparent or custodian cannot execute a 3401 Affidavit. As this is a written assurance to hold the delivered assets for the minor until he/she attains majority, this method should not be implemented when you have reason to believe that the assets will not be held or that claims against the estate will not be paid.

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TITLE:	Public Administrator Referrals	NUMBER: Policy # 800.04
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will review all estate referrals and will take necessary steps to safeguard the assets of estates falling under its jurisdiction.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 48, 7600, 7600.5 and 7601

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Decedent Estate Referral – A written or telephonic reporting of the death of a Riverside County resident with possible ownership rights to either real or personal property.
- 1.2 Interested Person – (1) An heir, devisee, child, spouse, creditor, beneficiary, and any other person having a property right in or claim against a trust estate or the estate of a decedent which may be affected by the proceeding. (2) Any person having priority for appointment as personal representative. (3) A fiduciary representing an interested person. The meaning of "interested person" as it relates to particular persons may vary from time to time and shall be determined according to the particular purposes of, and matter involved in, any proceeding. (Probate Code Section 48.)

2.0 Procedure:

- 2.1 Case referrals made to the Public Administrator will be forwarded to the Office Assistant. Any questions concerning the validity of an incoming referral should be directed to a supervisor. Criteria used to determine appropriateness will include:
 - 2.1.1 Decedent was a resident of Riverside County.
 - 2.1.2 The responsible party, i.e., the next of kin, named executor of a Will, or the individual with nomination priority, is either unavailable or unwilling to act.
 - 2.1.3 There appears to be an estate, i.e., identifiable and collectable assets vested in the decedent's name.
 - 2.1.4 Case is being referred by a public officer under provisions of Section 7600 of the Probate Code.
 - 2.1.5 Referring party has a valid interest in the decedent's estate and is authorized to invoke action by the Public Administrator's Bureau (an "interested person" as defined in Probate Code Section 48).

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TITLE:	Public Administrator Referrals	NUMBER: Policy # 800.04
2.2	Sources of referrals: <ul style="list-style-type: none">2.2.1 Coroner's Bureau2.2.2 Private attorneys2.2.3 Families2.2.4 Mortuaries2.2.5 Nursing homes2.2.6 Hospitals2.2.7 Public Guardian2.2.8 Probate Court	
2.3	Upon intake of a decedent referral, the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator, or a designee, will assign the referral to a specific Estate Investigator. That investigator will be listed on the computer as the department contact person for that estate. All incoming calls will be directed to the assigned Estate Investigator.	
2.4	The Estate Investigator will then investigate the various aspects of the case to determine: (1) if the decedent's assets are subject to potential harm as defined in Sections 7600 – 7601 of the Probate Code (loss, injury, waste or misappropriation); (2) if the estate could benefit from the Public Administrator's involvement, and/or (3) if the person with priority to act wishes to nominate this office to manage the estate.	
2.5	After making this determination, the Estate Investigator will forward the case, along with his/her recommendation for action (classification) to the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator who will review, assign to a Deputy Public Administrator, and then forward the case to the Office Assistant.	
2.6	The Office Assistant will classify the case on the computer, activate the case from "Public Administrator Referrals" to "Public Administrator Case Management," prepare Report of Investigation (advising what action, if any, the Bureau will take) and direct it to referring party, prepare the appropriate case folder, and forward the file to the assigned Deputy Public Administrator. All incoming calls, inquiries and correspondence will be directed to the deputy.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Releasing Remains	NUMBER: Policy # 800.04a
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POLICY: The Estate Investigator will issue a release form to the contract mortuary for transfer of the remains when family and next of kin cannot be located.

REFERENCE: None

1.0 Procedure:

- 1.1 After receiving a referral, the Estate Investigator will conduct an immediate search for family and next of kin to handle disposition through a mortuary of their choice.
- 1.2 If family cannot be located and the decedent died in a hospital, convalescent care center or any facility that does not normally provide long-term storage, a release form is to be sent to the contract mortuary for the pick up and holding of the remains, until disposition can be arranged.
- 1.3 The contract mortuary will pick up remains from the Perris and Indio Forensic Centers, and other mortuaries, only after receiving a release form with accompanying disposition arrangements.

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TITLE:	Work Flow of Public Administrator's Bureau (General Outline)	NUMBER: Policy 800.05
	Record Keeping, HIPAA Compliance, Signatures	

POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will administer each estate in a timely manner, from referral intake to final distribution.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 890, 7600-7601, 7604, 13100, 13114

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Receiving Referrals:

- 1.1 The Duty Deputy receives telephonic referrals and determines whether or not the Public Administrator has jurisdiction. If the referral is accepted, information is given to the Office Assistant.
- 1.2 The Office Assistant receives referrals, Coroner's Preliminary Report for Public Administrator, Public Guardian Decedent Referral Report, Probate Court Notices of an Order to Show Cause (OSC), and other written referrals.
- 1.3 The Supervising Deputy Public Administrator assigns an Estate Investigator to investigate referrals received by the bureau. In the absence of the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator, the Assistant Public Administrator, or a designee, will make these assignments.
- 1.4 The Supervising Deputy Public Administrator assigns a Deputy Public Administrator to investigate the Order to Show Cause (OSC) referrals received from the Superior Court. In the absence of the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator, the Assistant Public Administrator, or a designee, will make these assignments.

2.0 Investigation

- 2.1 It is the Estate Investigator's responsibility to safeguard the estate assets.
- 2.2 The Estate Investigator will make every effort to locate and notify the next of kin of the decedent's death.
 - 2.2.1 Due diligence is required in the search for family through Ancestry.com, Accurint.com, CLETS, etc. A report describing steps taken to locate next of kin and the amount of time spent performing the search will be entered in the computer "Event". A printout of Ancestry.com and Accurint.com search results will be placed in the case file.

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TITLE:	Work Flow of Public Administrator's Bureau (General Outline)	NUMBER: Policy 800.05
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2.2.2 Prior to making death notification, the investigator shall establish that the decedent is related to the family member. An initial "Contact Letter" will be sent to the possible relative in order to communicate with and confirm the relationship.

2.2.3 Death notification will be made once the relationship is verified.

2.3 If the family has been notified of the death, but has hesitated or refused to act, the "7-Day Letter" shall be sent to the nearest next of kin (person or persons of highest authority), via certified mail, within three (3) working days following death notification.

2.4 The initial thrust of the investigation by the Estate Investigator will be to determine if the decedent has a Will, and if the decedent has burial/cremation or funeral instructions. If a valid Will is found, the Estate Investigator will ascertain whether or not the named executor will act or nominate someone to act in his or her place. If the executor or his/her nominee will act, the Public Administrator's jurisdiction terminates. If the executor is unwilling to act, the Estate Investigator should determine if the executor wishes to nominate the Public Administrator. If a nomination is given to the Public Administrator, the Estate Investigator will continue to handle the investigation.

2.5 If no Will is found, the Estate Investigator will determine if the heirs wish to handle the case themselves, or, if the case meets the appropriate criteria, handle the estate pursuant to Section 13100 of the Probate Code. If the family wishes to handle the case themselves, the Public Administrator's jurisdiction terminates. (NOTE: If the Public Administrator's jurisdiction terminates, the Estate Investigator should determine if the Public Administrator is entitled to reasonable costs incurred for the preservation of the estate, together with reasonable compensation for services pursuant to Probate Code Sections 7604 and 13114, and initiate a billing.) If jurisdiction does not terminate, the Estate Investigator will continue the investigation.

2.6 The appropriate appointment authority will be determined by the size and character of the decedent's estate. The Estate Investigator will take the necessary actions to secure accurate information regarding the estate's asset inventory. These actions may include (but are not limited to): (1) On-site evaluations of the decedent's real and personal property; (2) Notices of death and information requests obtained from or sent to banks, insurance companies, employer, securities agents, etc.; (3) Interviews with any interested parties who may have knowledge of the decedent's assets or affairs; and (4) Review of the Assessor's records, Department of Motor Vehicle's records, and any other records regarding possible real or personal property.

2.7 If funeral arrangements are pending, the Estate Investigator will forward a file to the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator for disposition of remains. The file is

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	assigned to a Deputy Public Administrator to contact the mortuary. If burial instructions are found, and this office is handling the case, the deputy should follow through on finalizing the process. If no instructions are found, the deputy should, if at all possible, honor the family's desires regarding disposition.	

- 2.8 After burial/cremation arrangements are made, the deputy will return the file to the Estate Investigator to conclude the investigation. Upon completion of the investigation and a recommendation for classification (type of case: Formal, Summary, Miscellaneous, Miscellaneous-Indigent) the Estate Investigator will forward the case to the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator for review and assignment to a Deputy Public Administrator. (If the investigator determines that there are no assets or that the family will act, the investigation is concluded, the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator will review the file and the case is closed.)

3.0 Investigation of Order to Show Cause

- 3.1 The investigation of OSC referrals are a matter of priority for the Bureau because of the impending court hearing. The Bureau must be prepared to report to the Court the appropriateness/inappropriateness of the appointment of the Public Administrator as successor administrator/trustee. The focus of a Deputy's OSC investigation is to determine:
 - 3.1.1 The nature, extent and current status of assets owned by the decedent at date of death.
 - 3.1.2 The various issues/complications hindering the current personal representative's ability to complete the management of the estate.
- 3.2 When conducting an OSC investigation, the Deputy will access the Riverside County Superior Court's Website, Probate- Decedent's Estates, to review case activity, and request copies of pertinent documents from the Riverside County Superior Court to determine:
 - 3.2.1 The names and contact information of interested parties and their attorneys.
 - 3.2.2 The nature and extent of inventoried items.
 - 3.2.3 Accounting activity.
 - 3.2.4 Whether or not the executor/administrator posted a bond.

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- TITLE:** **Work Flow of Public Administrator's Bureau (General Outline)**
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- 3.3 While investigating the OSC, the Deputy will make every effort to be neutral in his approach to the various issues involved. After ascertaining the contact information of interested parties and attorneys representing interested parties, the Deputy will make telephonic contact with them, as required, to determine:
- 3.3.1 Current status of case.
- 3.3.2 Whether or not there are identifiable and collectable assets vested in decedent's name.
- 3.3.3 Why the current administrator/executor is unable to fulfill his/her duties and responsibilities.
- 3.3.4 The disposition of assets formerly contained within the estate.
- 3.4 The Deputy will perform a search for other assets including real estate, vehicles, property placed with the California State Controller, and bank accounts. The Deputy may request the assistance of an Estate Investigator to help with these tasks.
- 3.5 At the conclusion of the investigation, if the Deputy has been unable to locate assets and the current executor/administrator is not bonded, the Deputy will prepare a declaration to be filed with the court recommending that the Public Administrator not be appointed in this matter. If identifiable and collectable assets vested in decedent's name are located, or the current personal representative is bonded, the Deputy will request an attorney be assigned to represent the Public Administrator at the OSC hearing.
- 4.0 **Administration of the Estate:**
- 4.1 Depending upon the type of case, the Deputy Public Administrator's initial focus will be to safeguard assets belonging to the estate. The deputy will immediately verify that each piece of real property, both improved and unimproved, are properly insured, and that personal property is secured (i.e., decedent's residence is secure and property is reasonably secure until the Public Administrator's court-appointment). If the decedent's property is at risk, the deputy arranges for its delivery to the Public Administrator warehouse or other secure location.
- 4.2 Upon assignment of a miscellaneous probate (valued at less than \$50,000), the Deputy Public Administrator will take control of the decedent's assets. Notices of the decedent's death will be sent to banks, insurance companies, the Department of Health Services, Social Security Administration and the Post Office. Personal

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property will be sold (after notice given to beneficiaries or heirs). Creditors are provided notice and debts satisfied if estate is solvent.

- 4.3 Upon assignment of a summary probate (valued between \$50,000 and \$166,250 or as adjusted periodically in accordance with Section 890), the Deputy Public Administrator will retain the services of legal counsel to prepare a summary petition and order. With supervision's permission, the Deputy can proceed to manage a summary probate without retaining counsel. In that situation, the Deputy will direct the Office Assistant to prepare the petition and order for appointment of the Public Administrator. Upon assignment of a formal probate (valued at greater than \$166,250 or as adjusted periodically in accordance with Section 890), the Deputy Public Administrator will retain the services of legal counsel to prepare a petition for appointment. Notices of the decedent's death are sent to banks, insurance companies, the Department of Health Services, Social Security Administration and the Post Office. Upon receipt of Letters of Administrator or Order Appointing Public Administrator Summarily, the Deputy Public Administrator will perform the following duties and responsibilities:
- a) Marshal assets.
 - b) Submit wage claims and insurance claims.
 - c) Collect bank accounts, inventory and takes possession of the contents of safe deposit boxes, and obtain all securities and stocks.
 - d) Inspect and manage real property and/or any business.
 - e) Collect and inventory all personal property.
 - f) Sell real and personal property when necessary.
 - g) Provide notice to creditors in summary matters; provide information to attorneys in formal proceedings so they may provide notice to creditors.
 - h) In a formal proceeding, provide attorney with inventory information for preparation of the Inventory and Appraisement.
 - i) Distribute personal effects (no value items) to the next of kin or arrange for their storage or disposal.
 - j) Review incoming creditor's claims for validity and accuracy, and recommend approval or rejection.

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- k) Provide Certified Public Accountant with any information in the deputy's possession regarding all tax related matters. Ensure the prompt filing of all personal and fiduciary tax returns as required.
- l) Respond to any inquiry (written or oral) from a beneficiary, creditor, or any other interested party.
- m) Provide the attorney with pertinent information for preparation of court accounting, including Estate Transaction History, and real and personal property sales reports.
- n) Track the case along the various stages of the administration, ensuring that the estate is closed as quickly and as equitably as possible.
- o) Prepare distribution sheets, letters of transmittal, and receipts for beneficiaries in summary and miscellaneous estates.
- p) Prepare Statements of Disposition in summary estates.
- q) Order the appropriate checks from Accounting and forward them to the attorney in formal estates upon receipt of a court-approved order for distribution. Upon filing of receipts with court, a Declaration for Final Discharge will be prepared by the attorney, signed by Public Administrator, and filed with the court, terminating the jurisdiction of the Public Administrator.

5.0 Record Keeping:

- 5.1 All data, information and/or documentation pertaining to the investigation or case management will be kept with the file upon receipt in the office.

6.0 HIPAA Compliance and Security:

- 6.1 All files will be kept in locked cabinets by the estate investigators, deputies, and the office assistant at the end of their respective shifts. Each staff person is responsible for the securing of his or her files in their individual cabinets. Duplicate keys will be kept by supervision for access.
- 6.2 The doors to the warehouse will be kept locked in the absence of an Estate Property Technician. This will ensure the privacy of stored files and security of personal property.

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7.0 Signatures:

- 7.1 Authorized signers consist of the following members of the Public Administrator Bureau:
 - a) Chief Deputy
 - b) Captain
 - c) Assistant Public Administrator
 - d) Supervising Deputy Public Administrator
- 7.2 Every effort shall be made to obtain signatures from authorized signers for all correspondence, form letters, forms, checks and legal documents.
- 7.3 The Sheriff's signature stamp will be used only with the approval of an authorized signer or his/her designee.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Death Notifications	NUMBER: Policy #800.05 a
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POLICY: Estate Investigators shall make death notifications as soon as reasonably possible. Utmost priority should be given to locating next of kin.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Notification procedure:

1.1 Notification should first be made to the decedent's next of kin. The investigator is to make sure there is no possibility of misidentity in either the decedent, or the next of kin.

1.1.1 Notification of death shall be made without delay. If for some reason notification is delayed, the investigator shall notify a supervisor of the circumstances.

1.1.1.1 When a supervisor is made aware of the delay, other arrangements are to be made to handle the notification as soon as possible.

1.1.2 If the Estate Investigator is unable to locate the next of kin at the last known address or telephone number, a "Contact Letter" is to be mailed to the person with a corresponding name and telephone number of the investigator.

1.2 The responsibility of notification rests on the Estate Investigator.

1.2.1 If the Estate Investigator is consumed with other case details, another Estate Investigator may assume the task.

2.0 Weekly Agenda:

2.1 Estate Investigators are required to submit a "Weekly Agenda" to their supervisor.

2.1.1 Each agenda must include a list of bodies above ground as a means of noting the urgency in locating and notifying family, and to avoid unnecessary delay in the decedent's disposition.

2.1.1.1 The list shall be complete with the decedent's name, date of death and location of body.

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TITLE:	Burial Arrangements	NUMBER: Policy # 800.06
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will perform the duty of interment, or burial disposition, as required by Section 7100 of the Health and Safety Code. If the Bureau is required to make the burial disposition, the arrangements shall be based on established measures of reasonable costs and the specific circumstances of individual cases.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 7600-7666, and 11420(3)
Health and Safety Code Section 7100

1.0 PROCEDURE:

- 1.1 Whenever possible, a decedent's next of kin should arrange and pay for the decedent's appropriate funeral disposition. If the Deputy Public Administrator has to determine or approve the amount spent on burial arrangements (i.e., the estate will be responsible for payment or reimbursement of the funeral expense), the following factors regarding the appropriate disposition should be considered by the assigned deputy:
 - 1.1.1 The decedent's own wishes.
 - 1.1.2 The gross value of the decedent's estate.
 - 1.1.3 The apparent solvency/insolvency of the estate.
 - 1.1.4 The court rules concerning the expenditure of burial funds (if any).
 - 1.1.5 The decedent's station in life.
 - 1.1.6 The funds available to pay.
 - 1.1.7 The wishes of heirs or legatees.
 - 1.1.8 Previous arrangements by the decedent; for example, burial arrangements for a predeceased spouse.
 - 1.1.9 The approval of the probate court.
- 1.2 No firm rule is enforced in the area of funeral arrangements or costs. Based upon a survey of average costs of selected mortuaries and cemeteries, the total cost of the "average" disposition (mortuary and cemetery) amounted to approximately \$5,000. The Public Administrator's Bureau will take the current average into consideration when making burial arrangements. A decision to expend more than the current average is to be discussed with the Assistant Public Administrator or Bureau Commander.
- 1.3 Grave markers will be purchased when appropriate in given case situations. Absent input by relatives or beneficiaries, the Deputy Public Administrator will make the decision based on funds available, total amount already obligated, and the actual cost of the marker. As a rule, the deputy should order a minimum price item. If estate solvency is questionable, the marker decision should be deferred until the estate is ready to close.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE: Burial Arrangements

NUMBER: Policy # 800.06

- 1.4 Upon arriving at an agreeable cost, the deputy should note in "events" or on the investigator's worksheet, the name of the mortuary/cemetery handling the funeral and the exact price agreed upon. Any variance of this amount on the mortuary's bill will subject that portion of the obligation to disapproval.
- 1.5 Upon receipt of the funeral bill, the deputy should ensure that it is accurate. If it is not accurate, it is the deputy's responsibility to reconcile the difference with the mortuary. When the amount is correct, the deputy should allow the bill.
- 1.6 Payment of the cost of the funeral is usually given priority over other obligations and may be paid as soon as the funds are available.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Indigent Disposition and Abandoned Cremains	NUMBER: Policy # 800.07
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will perform the duty of Indigent Burial Officer in accordance with all state and local laws and guidelines.

REFERENCE: California Health and Safety Code Section 7100

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Direct Cremation – An immediate cremation disposition without service or viewing.
- 1.2 Direct Burial – An immediate burial disposition without service or viewing.
- 1.3 Indigent Burial/Cremation – The general term used for indigent funeral dispositions authorized and paid for by the Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau.
- 1.4 Contract Mortuary – The mortuary under contract with the Bureau to provide indigent cremation/burial services.

2.0 Referrals from families for indigent cremation/burial assistance:

- 2.1 The Bureau's contract mortuary will assist families with the application process and forward the documentation to the Bureau.
- 2.2 A Deputy Public Administrator will review the application and supporting documents. If the application is incomplete, the Deputy will interview family members and verify information.
- 2.3 The Deputy will note his/her findings and forward the information to supervision with a recommendation for approval or denial of the application.
- 2.4 The approval or denial will be faxed to the contract mortuary.

3.0 Estates administered by the Public Administrator's Bureau meeting criteria for indigent cremation or burial:

- 3.1 If an estate under the jurisdiction of the Bureau is unable to pay for the cost of burial (mortuary and cemetery charges), the Deputy Public Administrator will arrange for cremation or burial with the Bureau's contract mortuary.
- 3.2 The arrangements shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the contract, which include, but are not limited to, transportation, storage, cremation, disposition of cremated remains, or direct burial.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Indigent Disposition and Abandoned Cremains	NUMBER: Policy # 800.07
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3.3 Unidentified Decedents

3.3.1 Upon receipt of a Referral from the Coroner's Bureau, and instruction that the decedent's identity cannot be determined and that disposition arrangements may now be made, the Deputy Public Administrator will arrange for *burial*. Cremation arrangements *will not be made without approval of a supervisor*.

3.4 Homicide Victims

3.4.1 Upon receipt of a Referral from the Coroner's Bureau, and in the absence of family and/or pre-need funeral arrangements, the Deputy Public Administrator will arrange for the *burial* of homicide victims. Cremation arrangements *shall not be made without supervisor approval*.

3.5 Cremated Remains Abandoned at Mortuaries

3.5.1 When families have failed to retrieve cremated remains from mortuaries, the Bureau will accept a referral from the mortuary and investigate the matter *prior to taking possession of the cremated remains*.

3.5.2 The Deputy will obtain the following information from the mortuary:

3.5.2.1 Name, relationship, and address of any next of kin.

3.5.2.2 A written statement from the mortuary as to their efforts to locate family.

3.5.2.3 A copy of the mortuary contract and burial permit.

3.5.3 The matter will be assigned to an Estate Investigator.

3.5.4 The Investigator will search for family. If family is located and willing to accept the cremated remains, they will be directed to the mortuary.

3.5.5 If the Investigator is unable to locate family, or the family is uncooperative, the Bureau will accept the cremated remains from the mortuary.

3.5.6 The Investigator will determine the decedent's veteran status.

3.5.7 The Investigator will document his/her findings, close the investigation and submit the file to supervision.

3.5.8 Supervision will assign to a Deputy Public Administrator.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Indigent Disposition and Abandoned Cremains	NUMBER: Policy # 800.07
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3.5.9	The Deputy will contact the contract mortuary with instructions for interment of the cremated remains. Mortuary will sign a receipt when the cremated remains are released to them.
3.6	Cremated Remains Abandoned At Various Locations (Excluding Mortuaries)
3.6.1	The Bureau will immediately accept abandoned cremated remains from anyone possessing them (excluding mortuaries)
3.6.2	A file will be opened and the matter assigned to an Estate Investigator.
3.6.3	If the Investigator finds family the cremated remains will be released to them.
3.6.4	If family is unwilling to accept the cremated remains or, if family is not located, the Investigator will determine the decedent's veteran status.
3.6.5	The Investigator will document his/her findings, close the investigation and submit the file to supervision.
3.6.6	If interment must be arranged, supervision will assign a Deputy Public Administrator to the task.
3.6.7	Arrangements for disposition will be made with the contract mortuary.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Management and Control of Estates	NUMBER: Policy # 800.08
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will ensure that all estates handled by the Bureau are managed with ordinary care and diligence.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Section 9600

1.0 Probate Code Section 9600 states in part:

- (a) The personal representative has the management and control of the estate and, in managing and controlling the estate, shall use ordinary care and diligence. What constitutes ordinary care and diligence is determined by all the circumstances of the particular estate.

2.0 **Procedure:**

- 2.1 The Deputy Public Administrator, acting as personal representative, will review his/her assigned cases every ninety (90) days. After completion of the review, notes will be entered in the computer "Events" indicating that the review has taken place, along with a brief explanation of the status of the case.
- 2.2 In checking the status of each estate, the deputy should review the case events, the estate inventory, the estate transaction ledger, the creditor's claims, and, if solvent, the heirship status.
- 2.3 The deputy should immediately address any problems or deficiencies discovered during the deputy's case review.
- 2.4 Any matters of concern should be brought to the attention of a supervisor, the Assistant Public Administrator or Bureau Commander.

3.0 **Formal case reviews:**

- 3.1 To ensure the proper management of each estate, case reviews will be routinely conducted. Bureau staff members will participate in the review and the Assistant Public Administrator, or designee, will then audit each estate file.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Independent Administration of Estates Act	NUMBER: Policy #800.09
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau may elect to administer Formal Estates using authority provided by the Independent Administration of Estates Act (IAEA).

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 10500, et. seq.

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Devisee – A recipient of property (usually real property) by Will.
- 1.2 Legatee – One who is named in a Will to take personal property; one who has received a legacy or bequest. Loosely, one to whom a devise of real property is given.
- 1.3 Ex Parte – Done or made at the instance and for the benefit of one party only, and without notice to, or argument by, any person adversely interested (an exparte hearing).
- 1.4 Interested person – (1) Devisees and legatees whose interest in the estate is affected by the proposed action. (2) Heirs of the decedent in the intestate estates. (3) The State of California if any portion of the estate is to escheat. (4) Persons who have requested special notice.

2.0 Procedure:

- 2.1 The assigned Deputy Public Administrator and attorney representing the Public Administrator will make the final determination on whether or not to request that the estate be administered under IAEA.
- 2.2 All Creditor's Claims are to be filed with the court. As prior court approval is not required to make payment, Creditor's Claims Allowances are filed for record purposes only.
- 2.3 Once the executor or administrator has obtained authority to administer under IAEA, it becomes discretionary whether or not to obtain court approval for certain transactions. If at any time the deputy believes that prior court approval should be obtained even when it is not required, the situation should be discussed with a supervisor and the attorney.
- 2.4 The IAEA was designed to be used in administering simple estates in which there are no disputes between interested parties and the parties have a cooperative attitude toward the administrator. If a large number of persons are interested in the estate or if there are any disputes, authority to administer an estate under IAEA should be requested, but used sparingly.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Independent Administration of Estates Act	NUMBER: Policy #800.09
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- 2.5 The Deputy Public Administrator determines whether or not to request authority to administer under IAEA. The decision to do so is strictly optional. Upon determining to petition for authority to administer under the Act, the deputy requests the attorney to incorporate the IAEA petition into the Petition for Letters of Administration. Upon obtaining Letters with such powers, the estate will be administered without court approval for most transactions.

3.0 Actions Requiring Court Approval

- 3.1 The IAEA is designed to eliminate the need for obtaining prior court approval for most of the transactions taken by the executor or administrator between the time of appointment and the time of final distribution. Certain actions, however, continue to require court approval (Probate Code Section 10501):

- 3.1.1 Sale or exchange of real property whether sold individually or as a unit with personal property (unless accomplished through a Notice of Proposed Action);
- 3.1.2 Allowance of executor's and administrator's commissions and attorney's fees;
- 3.1.3 Settlement of accountings;
- 3.1.4 Continued payment of a family allowance for a period in excess of twelve (12) months (Probate Code Sections 6540 et.seq.);
- 3.1.5 Preliminary and final distributions and discharge (subject to Section 10520);
- 3.1.6 Borrowing money or executing a mortgage or deed of trust or giving other security;
- 3.1.7 Leasing any real property (1) if the Will does not authorize or direct the personal representative to lease property; (2) and the term exceeds one year;
- 3.1.8 Completing a contract entered into by the decedent to convey real or personal property;
- 3.1.9 Determining third party claims to real and personal property if the decedent died in possession of, or holding title to, such property, or determining decedent's claim to real or personal property, title or possession of which is held by another.

4.0 Actions That Do Not Require Court Approval (Probate Code Sections 10530-10564)

- 4.1 Manage and control the estate (except as specific provisions of the IAEA require court supervision or notice of proposed action).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Independent Administration of Estates Act	NUMBER: Policy #800.09
4.2	Enter into a contract (except as noted in subdivision (b), Probate Code Section 10532);	
4.3	Deposit money in an insured account in a financial institution in California;	
4.4	Invest in direct obligations of the United States or the State of California that mature within one year;	
4.5	Invest in certain money market funds that invest in United States government obligations;	
4.6	Invest in common trust funds described in Fin C Sec. 1564;	
4.7	Continue the decedent's business operations or act in the decedent's place as a general partner of a partnership for a period no longer than six months after the date letters were issued;	
4.8	Pay a family allowance;	
4.9	Lease real property for a period of one year or less, lease estate personal property for a period of two years or less, or lease personal property for any period while retaining the unrestricted right to terminate the lease within two years of its making;	
4.10	(1) Sell or exchange personal property consisting of securities sold on an established stock or bond exchange or listed and sold through NASDAQ by a broker-dealer, (2) sell subscription rights for cash, (3) sell personal property that is perishable or uneconomic to keep or that is needed to provide for payment of a family allowance for cash, or (4) surrender certain securities for redemption or conversion;	
4.11	Grant an exclusive right to sell estate property for a period not exceeding a cumulative total of 270 days;	
4.12	Take any action that a personal representative without authority under the IAEA could take without court supervision;	
4.13	Allow, pay, reject, contest, or settle any claim by or against the estate, compromise or settle any claim or action involving the decedent, the estate, or the personal representative; release uncollectible claims in whole or in part, as long as the provisions of Probate Code Section 10501 are complied with;	
4.14	Begin, maintain, and defend actions and proceedings for the benefit of the estate; defend actions or proceedings against the decedent, the personal representative, or the estate;	

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Estate Administration

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- 4.15 Extend, renew, or modify obligations to or favoring the estate of the decedent;
- 4.16 Convey or transfer property to implement any specific power granted under the IAEA.
- 4.17 Pay taxes and administration expenses
- 4.18 Purchase an annuity from an admitted insurer to satisfy a provision of the Will;
- 4.19 Exercise an option right that is an estate asset;
- 4.20 Purchase securities or commodities required to complete a sale made by the decedent;
- 4.21 Hold a security in the name of a nominee or any other form;
- 4.22 Exercise security subscription or conversion rights;
- 4.23 Repair and improve estate property;
- 4.24 Accept a deed to property subject to a mortgage in lieu of foreclosure or sale under a deed of trust; and
- 4.25 Give a partial satisfaction of a mortgage or cause the trustee of a deed of trust to execute a partial reconveyance.

5.0 Actions That Require A Notice Of Proposed Action (Probate Code Sections 10530-10538)

- 5.1 Manage and control estate property if the provision governing that particular action to be taken requires that a notice be given;
- 5.2 Enter into contracts if, by their terms, they are not to be fully performed within two years (unless the representative has the unrestricted right under the contract to terminate the contract within two years) or if the contracts are made to exercise specific powers granted under the IAEA which require the giving of notice for exercise of the power;
- 5.3 Invest money as permitted in Probate Code Section 10533(a)(2)(d) or (a)(3) except for investments in direct obligations of the United States or the State of California maturing within one year;
- 5.4 Continue the decedent's business operations or act in the decedent's place as a general partner of a partnership for a period beyond six months after the date letters were issued;

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Estate Administration

TITLE:	Independent Administration of Estates Act	NUMBER: Policy #800.09
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- 5.5 Pay a family allowance, but only if the payment is either the first payment of a family allowance or the first payment of a family allowance for a period beginning 12 months after the decedent's death, or an increase in the amount of a family allowance.
- 5.6 Enter into a lease of estate real property if the lease is for a period of more than one year (including any extensions to which the lessee is entitled), or the lease of estate personal property if the lease period is more than two years (unless the representative has the unrestricted right under the lease to terminate it within two years);
- 5.7 Sell or exchange personal property, except for (1) securities sold on an established stock or bond exchange or listed and sold through NASDAQ by a broker-dealer, (2) the cash sale or subscription rights, (3) the cash sale of personal property that is perishable or uneconomic to keep or that is needed to provide for payment of a family allowance, or (4) the surrender of certain securities for redemption or conversion; or
- 5.8 Grant a broker an exclusive right to sell property if the grant is for a cumulative period of more than 270 days.

6.0 Interested Persons Will Be Advised Of Transactions Not Requiring Court Approval (Probate Code Sections 10510-10519). The attorney representing the Public Administrator will give legal notice to all interested parties before any of the following actions take place:

- 6.1 Sell or exchange real property;
- 6.2 Sell or incorporate decedent's business or venture;
- 6.3 Abandon tangible property that is uneconomic to collect, maintain or safeguard;
- 6.4 Borrow or encumber property;
- 6.5 Grant an option to purchase real property within or beyond the period of administration;
- 6.6 Transfer property to one given an option in the Will to purchase that property;
- 6.7 Convey or transfer property in completion of decedent's contractual obligations;
- 6.8 Allow, compromise, or settle third party claims to property owned by or possessed by decedent and decedent's claims to property owned or possessed by another;
- 6.9 Make a disclaimer.

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7.0 Advice To Interested Parties Must Be In Writing And Be Delivered Either In Person Or By Mail

- 7.1 As a 15-day period is required for the advice, the transaction must not be consummated until at least 15 days after the personal delivery of mail.
- 7.2 The advice must contain a reasonably specific description of the proposed transaction.
- 7.3 Failure to give the advice could be cited as a reason for dismissal as administrator. However, such failure will not affect the validity of the action taken.
- 7.4 Any person to whom advice is required to be given has the right at any time to obtain an ex parte restraining order restraining the administrator from consummating any particular transaction without prior Court approval.

8.0 Preliminary Distributions Under IAEA (Probate Code Section 10520)

- 8.1 Under IAEA, the administrator may secure an ex parte order authorizing a preliminary distribution. With such an order, preliminary distribution can be made in a few days without need for a formal hearing and the filing of an accounting. In order to secure an ex parte order the following must be met:
 - 8.1.1 The time for filing creditor's claims must have expired.
 - 8.1.2 A partial inventory and appraisal must be filed because the assets to be distributed cannot exceed 50% of the net value of the estate.
 - 8.1.3 All taxes must have been paid or a Certified Public Accountant has consented to the distribution.
 - 8.1.4 The Court must find that the estate is but little indebted and that the distribution can be made without loss or injury to the estate or any person interested in it.
 - 8.1.5 If the distribution is to be made to a trust, an accounting must be made unless the trustee waives it.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE: Searches of Residences, Vehicles, Safe Deposit Boxes
Inventory / Residence Maintenance

NUMBER: Policy #800.10

POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will endeavor to take great care in the gathering and preservation of personal property. All personal property accessed and/or retained by this Bureau shall be inventoried, witnessed and receipted.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 330, 7603

1.0 PROCEDURE:

1.1 Searches of Residences:

- 1.1.1 If decedent maintained a residence (home, apartment, mobile home, etc.) two Estate Investigators will visit the premises as soon as it is established that the estate may fall under the jurisdiction of the Public Administrator's Bureau, or the residence is not secured. In the absence of a second investigator, one investigator and an additional staff person may search the residence.
- 1.1.2 All staff are provided safety gear (gloves, eye protection, masks, protective suits, shoe and boot covers) to wear during field work. All staff working in the field are Fit Tested to ensure their assigned masks are still appropriate for their use, and assigned masks are updated annually as needed. All staff working in the field are required to wear the provided safety gear and suit up accordingly prior to entering a decedent's residence, business or other dwelling.
- 1.1.3 Digital photographs or a video recording of each room are to be taken immediately upon entering the premises.
- 1.1.4 A thorough search is made of the residence especially looking for: a Will, burial instructions, relative information, bank accounts, insurance policies, property deeds, veteran papers, jewelry, weapons, or cash.
- 1.1.5 If a Will is found and/or relatives, the executor or family members are immediately contacted for the purpose of determining who will proceed with the estate. (If an executor or family member is located and they wish to proceed with the estate, the Estate Investigator shall immediately conclude the investigation.)
- 1.1.6 Estate Property Technicians and/or other P.A. staff, as required, will complete a **Real Property Inspection Report** which will document all property searches, inspections, cherry picks, vendor clean outs and routine checkups on the status of decedent's residences and real property managed by the bureau. The Estate Property Technicians and/or other P.A. staff will turn in the completed **Real Property Inspection Report** to supervision for review.

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Supervision will initial/date the form and then provide the **Real Property Inspection Report** to the assigned case manager for review and to enter an event note into Panoramic Software for tracking purposes.

2.1 Search of Vehicles:

2.1.1 If decedent owns a vehicle or vehicles, the Estate Investigators (or staff person conducting the investigation/search) will access the vehicle(s). If the vehicle(s) cannot be accessed, the staff person will contact supervision for further instructions.

2.1.2 Digital photographs or a video recording of the vehicle or vehicles will be taken of the exterior and interior, including the trunk (the vehicle's main storage compartment).

2.1.3 A thorough search of all areas of the vehicle or vehicles will be made including the interior, the trunk (the vehicle's main storage compartment), and the glove compartment or glove box (often used for miscellaneous storage) especially looking for a Will, burial instructions, important documents, next of kin information, cash, jewelry, or weapons.

2.1.3.1 In the event unsafe weapons or hazardous materials are found, supervision shall be contacted immediately for further instruction. If a Public Administrator supervisor cannot be contacted, then contact with a Coroner supervisor shall be made. The unsafe weapon and any type of hazardous materials will not be brought into the Perris facility. They will be managed at the residence.

2.1.4 The contents of the vehicle or vehicles will be inventoried by the Estate Investigators (or staff person conducting the search) at the time the search is conducted. An inventory may not be performed in the following circumstances: the staff person is unable to gain access to the vehicle (contact supervision); the vehicle is not registered to decedent; the vehicle is at a tow yard; the vehicle is in a "hoarder" condition; the death occurred in the vehicle and is unsanitary or unsafe to enter.

2.1.4.1 In the event the vehicle is not inventoried at the residence or its location, the vehicle will be inventoried by the Estate Investigator (or staff person managing the investigation/estate) or Estate Property Technicians once it is delivered to the Perris facility pursuant to **Estate Vehicles Policy #800.27**.

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TITLE: Searches of Residences, Vehicles, Safe Deposit Boxes
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3.1 Search of Safe Deposit Box:

- 3.1.1 If a safe deposit box key is located and the location of the box is determined, immediate arrangements will be made to access the safe deposit box.
- 3.1.2 If a key to the safe deposit box is not located, the Estate Investigator will consult with a supervisor as to the method to fund the payment of a locksmith to "drill" the box to gain access.
- 3.1.3 In most instances, the bank will not allow us to drill a box until we are able to pay the locksmith fee. If the decedent has an active bank account where the box is located, funds may be deducted from it for the cost of drilling. Supervision should be consulted if there are no immediate funds available.
- 3.1.4 Boxes should be entered as soon as possible for a Will search. The Estate Investigator assigned to the case shall be responsible for accessing the box, as early in the investigation as possible.
- 3.1.5 The safe deposit box shall be opened and the contents collected by the Deputy Public Administrator within four (4) months after the appointment of the Public Administrator.
- 3.1.6 A bank employee shall accompany the Estate Investigator during the search of the safe deposit box. Under no circumstances will an investigator perform a search or inventory without the presence of a bank employee.
- 3.1.7 To accomplish a Will search, the bank will require a certificate of Public Administrator's authority to proceed pursuant to Probate Code Section 7603, in the absence of Letters of Administration or a Summary Order.
- 3.1.8 A Will and/or funeral instructions search is conducted and removed if present in the box. (If a Will exists, then steps, as before, to locate and contact the executor are taken. If the executor is located and agrees to take charge of the estate, the Estate Investigator will conclude the investigation.)
- 3.1.9 Please refer to **Depositing Wills/Providing Copies, Policy #800.28** for the proper handling of wills.

4.1 Inventory / Maintenance of Residences:

- 4.1.1 The Estate Investigators shall conduct the formal inventory of the residence. No property will be omitted from the inventory sheets except for alcohol, food,

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pet food, and cleaning supplies. Items of little or no value may be grouped together.

- 4.1.2 The placing of an adequate description on property items, particularly jewelry, aids in identification, and serves as a basis of computation of a loss in the event of fire or theft. Items of lesser value may be grouped. Each item inventoried will reflect the condition of the property (i.e., good, fair, poor) and will also indicate the location of the property (i.e., "DR" decedent's residence; "W" warehouse; "AS" accounting safe, etc.).
- 4.1.3 At the conclusion of the residence search, the investigators shall empty the refrigerator of all perishable food, unplug it and leave the door ajar. The perishable food shall be discarded in a trash receptacle.
- 4.1.4 Prior to leaving the residence, the hot water heater shall be turned off, as well as any other appliances or units that would consume power and pose a threat to the integrity of the structure.
- 4.1.5 All staff searching or securing a residence of a decedent will take care to place the Public Administrator seals, which advise the property is under the control of this bureau, on all points of entry by placing the seal across the door and door frame (or other secured point of entry) to ensure if entry is made after our securing of the property, the seal would be visibly broken.
- 4.1.6 Residence, commercial and vehicle keys will be identified and marked separately. Residence commercial and vehicle keys will be placed on an inventory sheet and labeled, then the keys will be provided to the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator, in their absence to the Assistant Public Administrator, or in the absence of both the aforementioned, to a Coroner Sergeant or Lieutenant, to be stored in the Residence Key Box or Vehicle Key Box located in the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator's office.
 - 4.1.6.1 Residence, commercial and vehicle keys will also be logged in and out with the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator, in their absence with the Assistant Public Administrator, or in the absence of both the aforementioned, with a Coroner Sergeant or Lieutenant.
- 4.1.7 Miscellaneous keys will be identified and marked separately, stored in an envelope with the decedent's name clearly labeled. Miscellaneous keys will be placed on an inventory sheet and labeled, then the keys will be provided to the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator, in their absence to the Assistant Public Administrator, or in the absence of both the aforementioned, to a Coroner Sergeant or Lieutenant, to be stored in the Cage in the

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warehouse.

- 4.1.8 The Estate Property Technicians will inventory personal property located in the decedent's vehicle. pursuant to **Estate Vehicles Policy #800.27**.
- 4.1.9 Any property removed from the residence or safe deposit box and delivered to the Public Administrator's Bureau will be handled in accordance with **Policy #800.11 Personal Property Intake and Disposition**.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE: VIDEO RECORDING OF RESIDENCES

NUMBER: Policy # 800.10a

POLICY: The Estate Investigators may video record the decedent's residence as a means of documenting the condition of the premises and the decedent's personal property at the time of the referral.

REFERENCE: None

1.0 PROCEDURE:

1.1 Recording of Residences: If the decedent maintained a residence (home, apartment, mobile home, etc.) two Estate Investigators, or an investigator and staff member, shall visit the premises as soon as it is established that the estate may fall under the jurisdiction of the Public Administrator.

1.1.1 The Estate Investigator should video record the residence on the first visit.

1.1.2. Each room should be viewed and recorded in an attempt to document the condition of the residence and the items present in the home at that particular time.

1.1.3. Digital photographs will also be taken as a supplement to the video recording.

2.0 USE OF VIDEO CAMERA RECORDER:

2.1 The Estate Investigator will need to install the "First Step Guide" and software to their Windows computer. The installation is required only for the first time.

2.2 To prepare the camcorder for recording, the lens cover must be switched to "Open."

2.2.1 The LCD panel is to be opened 90°, then rotated to the best angle to record or play. The maximum rotation is 180°.

2.2.2 Images can be viewed using the viewfinder to avoid wearing down the battery, or when the image seen on the LCD screen is poor. The viewfinder adjustment lever should be moved until the image becomes clear.

2.2.3 A new 8 cm DVD-RW, DVD+RW, DVD-R or DVD+R DL is required for recording.

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NUMBER: Policy # 800.10a

2.2.4 Check that the power of the camcorder is on.

2.2.5 Turn the disc cover "Open" switch in the direction of the arrow. The disc cover slightly opens automatically. When the disc cover opens slightly, it must be manually opened further.

2.2.6 Set the disc with the recording side facing the camcorder (label side facing out), then press the center of the disc until it clicks.

2.2.7 Close the disc cover. It may take some time for the camera to recognize the disc. A screen appears to ask whether you will use [DISC SELECT GUIDE]. Using [DISC SELECT GUIDE] lets you format the disc by following the guidance on the screen.

2.2.8 Touch "OK" when the formatting is completed.

2.2.9 Insert the "Memory Disc Duo" into the "Memory Stick Duo" slot in the right direction until it clicks for still images.

2.3 Movies are recorded on the disc.

2.3.1 Turn the "Power" switch until the (Movie) lamp turns on.

2.3.2 Press "Start/Stop."

2.3.3 To stop recording, press "Start/Stop" again.

2.4 Still images are recorded on the "Memory Stick Duo."

2.4.1 Turn the "Power" switch until the (Still) lamp turns on.

2.4.2 Press "Photo." Press slightly to focus and press fully to record.

2.4.3 When "IIII" disappears, the image has been recorded.

2.5 To view a disc recorded on the camcorder, it must be finalized first.

2.5.1 Place the camcorder in a stable position, and connect the AC adaptor to the DC IN jack on the camera. It takes several minutes to finalize, and the adaptor is to be used to prevent the camcorder from running out of power.

2.5.2 Turn on the power.

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TITLE: VIDEO RECORDING OF RESIDENCES

NUMBER: Policy # 800.10a

2.5.3 Insert the disc to be finalized.

2.5.4 Touch "Manage Disc/Memory" of the "Home" menu and "Finalize."

2.5.5 Touch "Yes" to start finalizing.

2.5.6 When "Completed" appears, touch "OK."

3. STORAGE OF FINALIZED DISC:

3.1. Each disc is to be placed in a plastic sleeve and held in storage separately from the decedent's file, indefinitely.

3.1.1 The storage of the disc is to be maintained by the Office Assistant.

3.1.2 Each disc is to be labeled with the estate name, date of death, and the address of the decedent's residence.

4. STORAGE OF CAMCORDER:

4.1 The camcorder shall be stored in the carrying case with all the cables.

4.2 Storage of the case is to be in one of the unlocked storage bins in the Investigators' office, so it is available to anyone of the estate investigators at anytime.

4.3 The last investigator to use the camcorder will be responsible for re-charging the camcorder and having it functional for use.

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TITLE:	Personal Property Intake and Disposition	NUMBER: Policy # 800.11
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will follow all departmental guidelines regarding the acquisition and recording of personal property belonging to decedent's estates.

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE: Estate Investigators are frequently required to take charge of a decedent's personal property during the course of an investigation. Any staff person receiving property will ensure that all property coming into their possession is properly witnessed, documented and safeguarded.

1.0 Residence Searches Shall Be Conducted with No Less than Two Staff Members:

1.1 If a search must take place and only one staff person is available, the search must be approved by a supervisor.

2.0 Receipt of Property Received from Coroner:

2.1 At the time of delivery and before signing a receipt, sealed valuables received from the Coroner's Bureau must be opened and verified in the presence of Coroner staff.

2.2 The bag is to be re-sealed to re-secure the contents in the presence of Coroner staff.

2.3 The property must be inventoried by the staff person receiving the property on a Public Administrator inventory sheet in the presence of a witness upon receipt of the property (same day). If the property cannot be inventoried the same day, it is to be given to supervision for safe keeping and is to be inventoried the following business day.

2.4 All property will be photographed immediately upon receipt by a P.A. staff person, the photos will be uploaded and saved on the G Drive in a folder labeled with the decedent's estate name.

2.5 Notations are to be made on both the Coroner receipt and the Public Administrator inventory form by the staff person who received the property as to the condition of each item and its ultimate placement (i.e., accounting safe, warehouse, discarded or destroyed).

3.0 Personal Property Received from Facilities:

3.1 Property received from facilities is to be verified in the presence of a facility witness.

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TITLE:	Personal Property Intake and Disposition	NUMBER: Policy # 800.11
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- 3.2 Valuables must be placed in a sealed envelope and signed by the facility witness along the seal's edge by the staff person receiving the property and thereafter delivered to the office.
- 3.3 The property must be inventoried by the staff person receiving the property on a Public Administrator inventory sheet in the presence of a witness same day of receipt of said property. If the property cannot be inventoried the same day, it is to be given to supervision for safe keeping and is to be inventoried the following business day.
- 3.4 All property will be photographed immediately upon receipt by a P.A. staff person, the photos will be uploaded and saved on the G Drive in a folder labeled with the decedent's estate name.

4.0 Delivery of Property from Residences:

- 4.1 The Estate Investigator or Deputy Public Administrator will make arrangements for the property at the residence to be delivered to the Public Administrator warehouse.
- 4.2 If the decedent resided in a care facility or a rental situation, the personal property should be transported to the warehouse by the Estate Investigator and/or Estate Property Technician, as soon as it is determined that family will not be acting, and in an effort to avoid incurring future rents, or theft or vandalism of the property.
 - 4.2.1 The property can be "cherry picked" for items of value, leaving non-valuable items behind.
- 4.3 If the decedent resided in a mobile home or house, the Deputy Public Administrator or Estate Investigator shall make arrangements for the removal of personal property according to the circumstances of the case and the number of items.
- 4.4 Upon direction, the Estate Property Technician will arrange for the packing and transporting of the property through the vendor bidding process. A vendor can be utilized when there are sufficient funds whether it is a rental or an owned residence.
- 4.5 All property will be photographed immediately upon arrival to the P.A. warehouse, the photos will be uploaded and saved on the G Drive in a folder labeled with the decedent's estate name.

5.0 Inventory of Property:

- 5.1 Every effort will be made by the Estate Investigators (or other staff) to inventory property at the residence. The Estate Property Technicians will verify receipt of the property delivered to the warehouse by placing a check mark on the inventory sheet as an indication that they have, in fact, received the property. If the existing inventory

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	sheet does not include all items, the Estate Property Technicians will inventory those items on additional inventory sheets.	
5.2	Items delivered to the warehouse that have not been inventoried, will be inventoried by the Estate Property Technicians.	
5.3	The staff person completing the inventory will itemize property on an inventory form, including the top portion of the inventory sheet. For uniformity and identification purposes, all receipts and inventories should list the decedent's last name first, first name last, and indicate from where the property was removed (Coroner, residence address, hospital, safe deposit box).	
5.4	Have the witness (departmental employee or non-departmental employee) sign each new inventory page.	
5.5	While off-site (residence, facility, etc.), all non-inventoried valuables such as uncounted coins, and/or jewelry, must be placed in a container or bag (preferably evidence bag, brown paper bag, etc.), sealed, dated and signed on the seal by the person receiving said item and by the witness (departmental employee or non-departmental employee).	
5.6	If upon return to the office there is no time to inventory the collected items, deliver the non-inventoried valuables to the supervisor for safe keeping. If a supervisor is not available, the property can be placed with Accounting, or in the Cage, or inside a supervisor's office with the door locked. The following business day, the property will be collected and inventoried by the person who brought the property to the office. <u>Without exception, cash will be counted and inventoried the same day it is delivered to the office (see Policy 800.11a).</u>	
5.5	All personal property will be inventoried on an Inventory Sheet by the person who collected the property in the presence of another, with the completed paperwork signed by the witness. Upon completing the Inventory, place all items into a plastic evidence bag, seal it and attach a copy of the Inventory Sheet on the plastic bag. If the items that are inventoried are too large to use a plastic evidence bag (or multiple evidence bags), place items in a brown paper bag, staple or seal the bag with tape, then sign and date over the sealed area. Attach the completed Inventory Sheet to the brown paper bag.	
5.6	Once all personal property is inventoried, witnessed and sealed in either an evidence bag or brown paper bag, the personal property is to be deposited in Accounting. A member of Accounting will sign the Inventory Sheet, acknowledge receipt of the property, and retain a pink copy of the Inventory Sheet. The property must be received by a staff person and not simply left on a desk.	

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5.7	Photographs and personal papers are to be sorted and placed on an Inventory Sheet by the staff person delivering them to the office. Once sorted, the Estate Investigator and/or Deputy Public Administrator assigned to the case are to be notified that these items are available for review.	
5.8	The Estate Investigator will include an inventory of all estate assets in the computer Inventory case file during the course of the investigation (personal property, real property, bank accounts, insurance proceeds, etc.). The status of these items, and any additional assets found during estate administration, will be entered by the assigned deputy. The deputy will update the status of assets as items are sold, distributed, or abandoned.	
5.9	Personal property (excluding cash, jewelry and valuables) brought in during the course of the investigation should be placed in the investigator square (designated area), marked with the date it was brought in, and the estate name.	
5.10	A check mark will be made on the inventory sheet next to each item (or bag number) by the Accounting person to confirm delivery.	
5.11	After the inventory is witnessed and approved, the Accounting staff will log it into their records and retain the pink copy of the sheet(s). The pink sheet(s) will be filed alphabetically according to estate name.	
5.11.1	When the assigned deputy makes a determination that property held by the Accounting office is not to be sold, the deputy will personally mark the property and the pink copy of the inventory sheet "not to be sold" or "hold for family" or some other clear directive. The Accounting staff will not be responsible for marking the property.	
5.12	A list of items retained in the Accounting office will be updated on a monthly basis by Accounting personnel and made available to the deputies.	
5.13	Accounting personnel will deposit all monies in the agency's established pooled account as soon as possible.	
5.14	Photographs and personal papers are to be sorted (essential and non-essential) and inventoried within three (3) business days by the person who received the property. Photographs and non-essential personal papers are to be returned to the Estate Property Technician for storage in the property cage.	
5.15	The original inventory sheet is to be signed by all parties (i.e., Accounting staff or Estate Property Technician and Estate Investigator) and placed in the file. If the signatures are not obtained immediately, photocopies are to be used in the file until the original is available.	

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- 5.16 Essential papers to be utilized in the administration of the estate are to be placed in a clear bag and kept with the file.
- 5.17 No valuables are to be kept at any staff person's desk except the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator or Assistant Public Administrator as required and approved.
- 5.18 No property is to remain in the investigator's shelf once the investigation is concluded.
- 5.19 If the bureau will manage the estate, the investigator will move the property to the deputy square. If the bureau will not handle the estate, the investigator will deliver property to the person taking charge, or will properly dispose of the property.

6.0 Receiving Property from Accounting

- 6.1 Property that has been authorized for sale, or property to be distributed to next of kin or a beneficiary, can be received from the Accounting office by the deputy (or by a supervisor) assigned to the case. The deputy must provide Accounting staff with a written request for the property (via email or memorandum) and arrange with the Accounting staff for a convenient time to receive the property.
- 6.2 The deputy (or supervisor) will acknowledge receipt of the property by signing the pink copy of the Inventory Sheet maintained by the Accounting staff. Signing the receipt is mandatory.
- 6.4 To review and verify that property is, in fact, scheduled for an upcoming auction, a supervisor will also be present when a deputy is receiving property from the Accounting staff for liquidation purposes.
- 6.3 The deputy (or supervisor) will deliver the property to be sold to the auction company or to the Estate Property Technicians.
- 6.4 Proper receipts will be signed by next of kin and/or beneficiaries at the time property is distributed to them.
- 6.5 Property that is to be released to next of kin, executors, or beneficiaries can be received from the Accounting office by the assigned Estate Investigator (or by a supervisor). The investigator must provide Accounting with a written request for the property (via email or memorandum) and arrange with the Accounting staff for a convenient time to receive the property.

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- 6.6 The investigator (or supervisor) will acknowledge receipt of the property by signing the pink copy of the Inventory Sheet maintained by the Accounting staff. Signing the receipt is mandatory.

7.0 Release of Property:

- 7.1 If, subject to provisions of the Probate Code, another party establishes priority over the Sheriff-Public Administrator to handle the decedent's estate, the investigator will ensure that proof of the status and identity of the person to whom the property is being delivered is received before any valuables are released. (Also discussed at #800.23 Release of Property. See #800.17 Release of Weapons/Guns.)
- 7.2 All personal property items being released will be verified against the inventory sheet with the party.
- 7.3 The party will sign and date the inventory sheet where indicated as a form of receipt.
- 7.4 The original signed inventory sheet will remain with the file and a copy provided to the party.

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TITLE:	Personal Property - Cash	NUMBER: Policy # 800.11a
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will follow all appropriate departmental guidelines regarding the acquisition and recording of cash and currency belonging to decedent estates.

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

- 1.0 **This section applies to all forms of U.S. Currency**
 - 1.1 All other foreign currencies and checks will be handled as described in **Personal Property Intake and Disposition (Policy #800.11)**.
- 2.0 **Collection and Inventory of Cash**
 - 2.1 The receipt and inventory of cash will be handled with the same care as described in **Personal Property Intake and Disposition (Policy #800.11)** with the following requirements:
 - 2.1.1 All cash shall be counted and inventoried by the staff person that collected it the same day it is brought in.
 - 2.1.1.1 If overtime is required to accomplish the counting and inventorying of the cash, the staff person will seek supervisor approval. If a supervisor is not available, contact a supervisor by phone or ask for approval from a Coroner supervisor. Overtime will be approved for this purpose.
 - 2.1.1.2 If the person that brought in the cash cannot stay beyond end of shift, the task will be delegated to available personnel.
 - 2.1.2 All cash is to be counted and inventoried in the presence of another staff person.
 - 2.1.3 The cash will be counted and verified and placed on an Inventory Sheet, and witnessed by the staff person assisting with the count.
 - 2.1.4 Cash is to be bagged separately and inventoried separately from other personal property or paperwork.
 - 2.1.5 The cash and Inventory Sheet will be given to Accounting. If they are unavailable, the cash and Inventory Sheet will be placed in the drop safe. The Inventory Sheet will be stapled or attached to the bag.

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2.1.6 An email will be sent to Accounting advising that the funds are in the safe.

3.0 Coins

- 3.1 If the cash also consists of a few coins, the coins will be counted and inventoried along with the cash as explained above.
- 3.2 If the coins are too many to easily count in a few moments, the coins will be placed, uncounted, in an evidence bag or suitable container, and given to supervision for safe keeping. No later than the following business day, the coins will be retrieved and taken to a local business with a coin counter by the staff person that collected the coins.

3.2.1 A second staff person will assist with taking the coins to a local business for counting and will sign the Inventory Sheet as a witness.

4.0 Contaminated Monies

- 4.1 All money contaminated from body fluids, otherwise soiled, or that has been partially burned is still required to be counted. Contaminated money shall be placed in a bio-hazard bag by each individual dollar bill. For example; if there are five contaminated \$1 bills, each dollar bill will be placed in a 5 separate plastic bags, this will facilitate piece counting at the Federal Reserve Board Bank. In the event there is an inordinate amount of bills, they may be separated by denomination in reasonable increments, \$100 or \$1,000 depending on the amount of cash and fanned out in the bag so they can be easily counted. The bio-hazard bag(s) shall then be placed in a property bag, and the proper Inventory Sheet will be completed. All contaminated money, or partially destroyed money, shall be either provided to the Accounting staff or placed in the drop safe, if Accounting staff are not in. Accounting staff will be advised at the time the contaminated money is provided to them that the money is contaminated. Immediate notification of the contaminated money in the drop safe shall also be made to the Accounting staff. The contaminated money will then be picked up by the armored transport and transported to the bank for the decedents' estate account managed by the bureau and later will be transferred to the Treasury Dept. for reimbursement to the decedents' estate account.

4.1.1 Coins soiled or that have been contaminated by body fluids may need to be cleaned by the staff member assigned, staff are to seek supervisions approval prior to cleaning coins.

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TITLE:	Real Property Management	NUMBER: Policy # 800.12
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POLICY: Real property will be managed by the Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau in such ways as to maximize both the security and the estate value of the properties.

REFERENCE:

1.0 Procedure:

- 1.1 The Deputy Public Administrator will assume overall responsibility for real property upon receiving assignment of the case.
- 1.2 As soon as the deputy is assigned the case, the deputy will make arrangements to insure the property (if the property is uninsured or if there is no available proof of insurance).
- 1.3 The deputy will make an on-site inspection of each improved parcel of real property or mobile home located within the County of Riverside.
 - 1.3.1 If the property is occupied, the deputy will attempt to make contact with the occupant to inform them of the death of the owner, to inquire about their status as to the occupancy, and to request a copy of any lease or rental agreement.
 - 1.3.2 The deputy will be accompanied by another staff person for any on-site visit to a residence. The deputy is encouraged to ask for the assistance of law enforcement, if for any reason they are concerned about their safety.
- 1.4 The deputy will shut off the water, electric and gas service at the residence at the earliest possible time, unless there is a specific need to keep it on (pool, lawn sprinklers, escrow walk-thru, residence is occupied). Exceptions will need to be discussed with supervision.
 - 1.4.1 If the property is occupied, even if the occupancy is illegal, the deputy will keep the utilities on, or arrange for them to be turned on for the benefit of the occupant.
- 1.5 The deputy will ensure that the property is adequately safeguarded from potential damage or unauthorized occupancy by transients, vandals, or other individuals.
 - 1.5.1 If the property is found to be vacant or otherwise subject to vandalism, the deputy will contact the city or county law enforcement agency for the property jurisdiction and obtain a **Trespass Letter of Authority (602 Penal Code)** from said agency, fill out the form, and provide it to the Assistant Public Administrator for review and signature. This form will place local law enforcement on notice of the Public Administrator's management and oversight of said property and allow law enforcement to enforce their legal authority to reduce theft, loss or damage to the decedent's property. Most

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Trespass Letter of Authority forms are valid for only one year from date of submittal and need to be tracked by the assigned deputy to ensure a new form is submitted annually during the management of the property. Once the decedent's property is sold, or no longer under the management or control of the Public Administrator, the city/county agency where the **Trespass Letter of Authority** is lodged needs to be notified of this property authority change by the assigned deputy.

- 1.6 The deputy will initiate any required action regarding unauthorized occupancy, non-payment of rent, complaints regarding renters, complaints regarding the property, lease violations, or any other property problem.
 - 1.6.1 An action to remove the occupants will commence as soon as the Public Administrator is appointed.
 - 1.6.1.1 The deputy will not wait until the property is listed.
 - 1.6.1.2 The deputy will initiate the action even if the occupant states they will vacate the premises.
 - 1.6.1.3 The deputy will endeavor to have the occupants removed prior to listing the property for sale.
 - 1.6.1.4 Not commencing an action to remove the occupants will require approval by supervision.
- 1.7 The deputy will coordinate the rentals of properties in appropriate situations and any potential renovations required to make the properties suitable for renting.
- 1.8 The deputy will consult with the Assistant Public Administrator or Bureau Commander concerning the expenditure of estate funds to renovate or improve real property.
- 1.9 The deputy will make an on-site inspection of each improved parcel of real property or mobile homes located within the County of Riverside.
- 1.10 The deputy will make the appropriate first contact with all interested parties of the decedent estate, including those individuals concerned with the decedent's real property (i.e., renters, etc.). The deputy will inform these individuals of the authority by which the Public Administrator has taken charge of the estate.
- 1.11 The deputy will handle all issues regarding the decedent's real property.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
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TITLE:	Real Property Intake/Property Insurance	NUMBER: Policy # 800.13
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will take all necessary actions to identify, document, and safeguard all real property under the jurisdiction of the Bureau.

REFERENCE:

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Vesting – A recorded title to property indicating ownership.
- 1.2 Encumbrance – A claim or liability that is attached to property or some other right and that may lessen its value, such as a lien or mortgage; any property right that is not an ownership interest.
- 1.3 Easement – An interest in land owned by another person, consisting in the right to use or control the land, or an area above or below it, for a specific limited purpose (such as to cross it for access to a public road).

2.0 Procedure:

- 2.1 The Estate Investigator, in the course of the investigation, normally discovers the existence of real property in an estate. The investigator determines ownership and title vesting by checking available documentation and by reviewing the County Assessor's records.
- 2.2 The Estate Investigator will request a Property Profile.
- 2.3 The Estate Investigator will complete a Property Insurance Request form providing specific information concerning the nature of the property (i.e., type of roof, number of rooms, square footage, etc.).
- 2.4 The Estate Investigator will include in the case file all available information and any supporting documents, e.g., deeds, title policies, tax bills, etc., reference the real property.
- 2.5 Within five working days of being assigned the case, the Deputy Public Administrator shall verify that real property insurance is in place either by maintaining the insurance purchased by the decedent or by arranging for such insurance. The deputy need not wait for the court to appoint the Public Administrator, but shall endeavor to immediately ensure and protect the estate from loss.
 - 2.5.1 If the decedent has property insurance in place, the deputy shall, in writing, advise the insurance carrier or agent that the owner is deceased and that the Public Administrator has taken charge of the estate. The deputy will inquire as

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to whether or not the insurance company will cancel its coverage. In most instances, the company will cancel coverage. If it is questionable as to whether or not coverage exists, the deputy shall arrange for coverage.

2.5.2 Unimproved property requires liability insurance.

2.5.3 Mobile homes and improved real property, whether occupied or vacant, require fire, extended coverage, vandalism, malicious mischief, and liability coverage.

2.5.4 Improved real property requires fire insurance and extended coverage. Condition and value of mobile homes and improved real properties should be taken into consideration when purchasing insurance. The deputy will consult with supervision to determine if only liability insurance should be obtained on improved real properties.

2.6 The deputy will request a Preliminary Title Report to determine vesting, encumbrances, easements and other facts concerning real property. The deputy will review the Report and take any action required resolving issues (i.e., delinquent property taxes, Affidavit Re: Death of Joint Tenant, etc.).

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TITLE: **Authorization to Liquidate Real or Personal Property** **NUMBER: Policy # 800.14**

POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will liquidate real and personal property when necessary to meet the needs of the estate. Estate property shall not be sold without the supervisor's written authorization.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 68, 10000

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Property – Anything that may be the subject of ownership and includes both real and personal property and any interest therein.
- 1.2 Personal Property – Includes any movable or intangible thing that is subject to ownership and not classified as real property. (Furniture, furnishings, vehicles, mobile homes, jewelry, numismatic coins, stocks, bonds, debentures, bank accounts, investment accounts, etc.)
- 1.3 Real Property – Includes improved and unimproved real estate, and a leasehold interest in real property.

2.0 Procedure:

- 2.1 The Sheriff-Public Administrator has the statutory power to sell estate property subject to the following limitations, conditions and requirements as set out in Probate Code Section 10000:
 - 2.1.1 Where the sale is necessary to pay debts, devises, family allowance, expenses of administration, or taxes.
 - 2.1.2 Where the sale is to the advantage of the estate and in the best interest of the interested persons.
 - 2.1.3 Where the property is directed by the Will to be sold.
 - 2.1.4 Where authority is given in the Will to sell the property.
- 2.2 The Deputy Public Administrator will review the decedent's Will for instructions as to the disposition of estate property, and follow those instructions whenever possible. ***The deputy will consult with a supervisor before arranging to liquidate items specifically mentioned in a Will.***
- 2.3 The Deputy Public Administrator will consult with family members as to the disposition of estate property prior to its liquidation. Instructions from family should be obtained in writing, whenever possible.

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2.4 Once it is determined that estate property will be sold, the Deputy Public Administrator shall complete an Authorization to Sell Real or Personal Property (form 110 PA#83) and present it for review and approval by the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator and the Assistant Public Administrator. ***Estate property shall not be sold without a completed and approved Authorization to Sell Real or Personal Property form.***

2.4.1 When selling personal property, a copy of the Authorization to Sell Real or Personal Property shall be given to Accounting and to the Estate Property Technician. The technician shall provide a copy to the contract auctioneer.

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TITLE:	Sale of Real Property	NUMBER: Policy # 800.15
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POLICY: The sale of real property by the Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will be conducted in accordance with all Probate Code statutes, local court rules, and real estate guidelines.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 1220, 1230, 9940 et. seq., 10300-10363, 10510-10511, 10538

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Confirmation of Sale – The court hearing which approves the sale of estate property to a specific buyer.
- 1.2 Exclusive Listing – The granting by the court of an "Exclusive Right To Sell Agreement" to a specified broker for a period not to exceed ninety (90) days.
- 1.3 Minimum Overbid – The amount required as the minimum acceptable offer for real or personal property during the court confirmation hearing.

2.0 Requirements for Sale

- 2.1 No property, either real or personal, will be prepared for sale until **Authorization To Sell Real Or Personal Property** has been approved and signed by the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator, Assistant Public Administrator and/or Bureau Commander.

3.0 Legal Authorization

- 3.1 Generally, Probate Code Sections 10300-10351 govern real property sales.
- 3.2 The Sheriff-Public Administrator will enter into an Exclusive Listing Agreement with a real estate broker or agent. The attorney representing the Public Administrator will prepare the petition and order needed to obtain the court's permission to enter into such an agreement. Conditions/terms of the agreement are as follows:
 - 3.2.1 Probate Code Section 10150(c) permits a personal representative to grant an exclusive listing for a period not to exceed ninety (90) days after obtaining the permission of the court. To obtain such permission, the representative must file a petition setting forth in detail a description of the property to be sold, the broker to be employed, the listing price, and the terms of the exclusive listing agreement.

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3.2.2 Without seeking court approval, Probate Code Section 10538 permits a personal representative with Independent Administration of Estates (IAEA) powers to enter into an exclusive listing agreement for not more than ninety (90) days and the power to grant to the same broker one or more extensions, each extension not to exceed ninety (90) days. No notice of this action is required.

3.3 Regardless of the type of estate, the method of sale (auction or listing), or the powers granted (court supervision or independent authority), notice of sale of real property will be published pursuant to Section 10300 of the Probate Code. As noted in this statute, publication frequency will conform to standards specified in Government Code Section 6063(a), which reads in part:

3.3.1 Publication of notice pursuant to this section shall be for at least ten (10) days. Three publications in a newspaper published once a week or oftener, with at least five (5) days intervening between the first and last publication dates will be sufficient. The period of notice commences upon the first day of publication and terminates either at the end of the day of the third publication or at the end of the tenth day, including therein the first day, whichever period is longer.

As noted above, three (3) separate publications are required during a period of at least ten (10) days. The publication period shall be completed before "the day specified in the notice as the day on or after which the sale is to be made (Section 10300). The attorney representing the Public Administrator will prepare the notice of publication and cause its publication.

3.4 Once the above publication requirements have been met, sales may proceed on the stated sale date, or up to one (1) year after that date, without need for further publication. All other sale requirements (appraisal dates, special notice, etc.) must, of course, be adhered to regardless of the date of the sale.

3.5 As previously stated, real property sales are accomplished with the use of exclusive broker listings. An exclusive listing agreement must also conform to Probate Code and local court requirements for real property sales. These requirements include:

3.5.1 The exclusive listing agreement does not exceed ninety (90) days. The exclusive listing agreement can be less than a ninety (90) period.

3.5.2 There is no automatic renewal after the ninety (90) day period expires.

3.5.3 The sale is subject to court confirmation.

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Estate Administration

TITLE:	Sale of Real Property	NUMBER: Policy # 800.15
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3.5.4 The commission will not exceed six (6) percent for improved property and ten (10) percent for unimproved property, unless authorized by a supervisor. (The court ultimately determines the amount of the commission.)

3.5.5 The sale is "as is" with no warranties.

3.5.6 A ten (10) percent deposit accompanies the purchase offer. (This is the preferred amount. However, the deposit amount is subject to negotiation with supervisor approval.)

4.0 Confirmation

4.1 If the real property is listed for sale, the deputy will periodically review the comps and reduce the asking price, as necessary. *Every offer* will be discussed and considered.

4.2 Upon receipt of an acceptable offer, and its acceptance by the Assistant Public Administrator or Bureau Commander, the Deputy Public Administrator will provide the attorney with the information necessary to prepare the confirmation documentation. All sales of estate real property will be confirmed by the Superior Court.

4.3 Before the court will confirm the sale of real property, bidders other than the purchaser are permitted to make increased bids to the court. The minimum acceptable overbid will be equal to the original offer plus ten (10) percent of the first \$10,000.00 and five (5) percent of the remaining balance. For example, the minimum overbid amount on a \$100,000.00 sale would be as follows:

Original bid	=	\$100,000.00
10% of \$10,000	=	\$ 1,000.00
5% of \$90,000	=	\$ 4,500.00
Minimum overbid	=	\$105,500.00

4.4 Once the sale is confirmed by court, and escrow is opened, the Deputy Public Administrator will handle all questions or requests from the buyer, his broker or the title/escrow company during this period.

4.5 Generally, the sale of a promissory note secured by a deed of trust must be confirmed in court with the purchase price subject to overbid. The minimum bid is equal to the original offer plus ten (10) percent. Additionally, the leasing of real property may require confirmation in court (Probate Code Section 9940 et seq.).

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TITLE: Sale of Real Property

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5.0 Notice of Proposed Action

- 5.1 On rare occasion, circumstances will warrant the use of the Notice of Proposed Action, rather than the preferred court confirmation process. The Notice of Proposed Action shall only be used with the permission of the Assistant Public Administrator or Bureau Commander.

The court confirmation process is preferred because it allows the court to review and approve the sale, and because it allows individuals interested in the property to appear in court and participate in an overbid. The Notice of Proposed Action is allowed by the Probate Code and is a tool that can be used to affect a sale of real property. However, there is no court review process and no opportunity for an overbid. The Public Administrator's Bureau will strive in all instances to obtain court confirmation of the sale of real property.

Circumstances that warrant the use of a Notice of Proposed Action include:

- 5.1.1 Impending loss of property due to foreclosure.
- 5.1.2 All beneficiaries or heirs of the estate are in favor of the offer and wish to expedite the sale process.
- 5.2 When the decision to proceed with a Notice of Proposed Action has been made, the attorney representing the Public Administrator will prepare the Notice pursuant to Probate Code Sections 10580-10600.
- 5.3 If no objections are made by any person entitled to Notice of Proposed Action under Section 10581, the offer to purchase can be accepted and an escrow opened to accomplish the sale. If any person entitled to such notice makes an objection, the court confirmation process will be followed.

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TITLE: **Sale of Real Property**

NUMBER: Policy # 800.15

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Investigations

TITLE:	Sale of Personal Property	NUMBER: Policy # 800.16
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POLICY: The sale of personal property by the Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will be conducted in accordance with all Probate Code statutes and local court rules.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Section 10250-10264

1.0 PROCEDURE:

- 1.1 **Notice of Sale:** The Public Administrator may sell personal property, with or without notice, in any of the following cases:
 - 1.1.1 Where the property is directed by the Will to be sold.
 - 1.1.2 Where authority is given in the Will to sell the property
 - 1.1.3 Where property is perishable, will depreciate in value if not disposed of promptly, or will incur loss or expense by being kept.
 - 1.1.4 Where sale of the property is necessary to provide for the payment of a family allowance pending receipt of other sufficient funds.
- 1.2 The Public Administrator does not give notice when selling personal property in a Miscellaneous estate or where appointed with Independent Administration of Estates (IAEA) powers.
- 1.3 Unless one of the criteria as stated in 1.1 above is met, a Formal or Summary estate will require a Notice of Sale. The Deputy Public Administrator may choose one of the following methods:
 - 1.3.1 Posting at the courthouse at least 15 days before: (1) In the case of a private sale, the day specified in the notice of sale as the day on or after which the sale is to be made; (2) In the case of a public auction sale, the day of the auction.
 - 1.3.2 Publication in a newspaper: (1) In the case of a private sale, the day specified in the notice of sale as the day on or after which the sale is to be made; (2) In the case of a public auction sale, the day of the auction.
 - 1.3.3 In a Summary estate, the Deputy Public Administrator will be responsible for the Notice of Sale. In a Formal estate, the deputy shall request the attorney to prepare the Notice of sale.

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Estate Investigations

TITLE: Sale of Personal Property

NUMBER: Policy # 800.16

2.1 Authorization for Sale

2.1.1 Property will not be prepared for sale until an Authorization for Sale has been approved and signed by the Assistant Public Administrator or Bureau Commander.

2.1.2 Family members will be consulted concerning sales of personal property, regardless of the solvency of the estate. If the estate is insolvent, the family members shall have an opportunity to purchase items from the estate prior to a private sale or auction.

2.1.3 If there is a Will, and the estate is insolvent, the devisee shall have an opportunity to purchase the item at the appraised value prior to a private sale or auction.

3.1 Auctions

In most instances, the Public Administrator will sell personal property at auctions, which are to be conducted on the premises of the Perris facility by a contracted auctioneer. When the need arises, a contracted auctioneer will conduct auctions at a decedent's residence.

4.1 Individual Sales

In the instance of a family member wishing to purchase items from the estate, the Deputy Public Administrator will conduct such a sale. The deputy will prepare a Report of Sale, collect the funds, including sales tax, and deliver the report and funds to Accounting.

5.1 Vehicles

When vehicles are to be sold, either at auction or by individual sale, the Deputy Public Administrator will provide the Office Assistant with Letters of Administration, a Summary Order, or a Certificate of Public Administrator, and a Certificate of Death. The Office Assistant will prepare the Certificate of Title, Bill of Sale and Release of Liability prior to the sale.

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Estate Investigations

TITLE: **Sale of Personal Property**

NUMBER: Policy # 800.16

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Firearms / Weapons	NUMBER: Policy # 800.17
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator Bureau shall comply with all appropriate laws when selling firearms and other miscellaneous weapons.

REFERENCE: **Policy and Procedure #700.14 Firearms / Weapons**

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Transportation / retention:

- 1.1 Firearms shall be unloaded prior to transportation.
- 1.2 Once the firearm has been unloaded, the weapons shall be disabled by securing a plastic tie through the firing mechanism in the following manner:
 - 1.2.1 Hold open the cylinder on a revolver with a swing open cylinder, and hold the hammer back on a fixed cylinder revolver.
 - 1.2.2 Hold the slide back and prevent insertion of a magazine on a semi-automatic pistol.
 - 1.2.3 Hold the slide back on semi-automatic / pump shotguns.
 - 1.2.4 Keep the barrel from being locked into place on break open weapons.
 - 1.2.5 Hold the bolt open on bolt action weapons.
 - 1.2.6 Hold the slide back and prevent insertion of a magazine on magazine feed, and tube feed rifles.
- 1.3 Weapons are not to be stored or accepted for storage unless they are unloaded and secured with plastic ties.
- 1.4 All firearms should be transported, stored and released in approved firearm boxes.
 - 1.4.1 The firearms shall be secured to the box with plastic ties, so as to not bounce loose.
 - 1.4.2 The name of the estate shall be written on all sides of the box.
- 1.5 Ammunition shall be placed in ammunition storage containers and transported separately from the weapon, and not placed in the firearm box, firearm barrel, cylinder, nor in any magazine.

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- 1.6 If, for some reason, the weapon cannot be unloaded due to a malfunction, the staff person must contact the nearest law enforcement agency for assistance and notify a supervisor with the Coroner or PA Division. Under no circumstances will a loaded weapon be transported to the facility.
- 1.7 Prior to entering the firearm into inventory, the staff person shall be assured that the weapon is not stolen by running the weapon and serial number through CLETS.
- 1.8 Firearms and ammunition are to be inventoried on a separate Inventory Sheet and entered into the inventory portion of the data system.
- 1.9 Firearms that may be legally possessed are to be delivered to the gun safe located in the Accounting office, once inventoried and reviewed by supervision.
 - 1.9.1 Firearms deemed illegal upon review by a law enforcement officer are to be stored in the warehouse Cage, once inventoried and reviewed by supervision.
 - 1.9.2 Ammunition is to be stored in the warehouse Cage once inventoried and reviewed by supervision.
- 1.10 Estate ammunition metal containers should be properly emptied and stored with the personal property.

2.0 Gun release:

- 2.1 Firearms that may be legally possessed, can be released to next of kin, providing the next of kin is an adult, and legally able to possess a firearm.
 - 2.1.1 The Office Assistant shall send a certified letter to the next of kin indicating how they can apply, through the Department of Justice (DOJ), to recover the firearm. (Copy of sample letter and DOJ Form is attached to this policy.) DOJ forms and applications can be found at: <http://ag.ca.gov/firearms>, under General Information – Forms and Publications – Law Enforcement Gun Release Application.
- 2.2 The Estate Investigator shall not release any firearm until the following is accomplished:
 - 2.2.1 The next of kin shall sign a receipt for the firearm when it is accepted. If next of kin is legally incapable of possessing the firearm, the case shall be referred

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to supervision for disposition.

- 2.2.2 If the next of kin requests delivery, the transfer of the weapon must be handled through a licensed firearms dealer.
- 2.2.3 No illegal weapon shall be released. Weapons will be reviewed by a sworn deputy or officer of the Sheriff's Department.
- 2.2.4 Ensure the person requesting the item qualifies to receive the item:
 - 2.2.4.1 The person is over 18 years old; verified with governmental identification (i.e.: U.S. Military ID, driver's license, etc.).
 - 2.2.4.2 The person has the applicable Department of Justice approval letter.
 - 2.2.4.3 In order to retrieve a weapon for release, the assigned investigator or deputy or estate property technician will obtain a supervisor's written approval prior to the weapon being moved out of the warehouse Cage or Accounting gun safe.
- 2.2.5 Ammunition shall not be released without supervisor approval.
- 2.2.6 The person receiving the ammunition shall be informed of the requirement that Ammunition must be transported separately from weapons/firearms. The Estate Investigator or staff person releasing the weapon will document the case "event" notes that such admonition has been given.

3.0 Special Considerations:

- 3.1 In order to release a weapon that is not registered with DOJ and not found in AFS, the individual obtaining the weapon as personal property must fill out the following, and send both forms together within the same envelope with any applicable fees to the DOJ:

Firearm Ownership Report (BOF 4542A)
Law Enforcement Gun Release Application (BOF 119)

- 3.2 In order to release a weapon as property that is not registered to the decedent; however, is registered in AFS to an individual, the Estate Investigator must attempt to locate the registered owner within 90 days. If the Estate Investigator is unsuccessful in locating the registered owner, the weapon can be released to the NOK as long as the NOK has filled out the Gun release application and has been

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approved and can provide the letter or certificate from the DOJ.

- 3.3 If the registered owner of the weapon is located, then the following must be completed by the registered owner prior to release of the weapon:

Firearm Ownership Report (BOF 4542A)
Law Enforcement Gun Release Application (BOF 119)

- 3.4 All other release procedures and documentation for release of property shall be followed, to include, but not limited to, signature for the property by the releasing employee and the receiving individual and appropriate entry into the database for tracking.

4.0 **Disposal:**

- 4.1 A firearm may be destroyed in the following circumstances:

4.1.1 A signed letter authorizing destruction has been received from the decedent's next of kin.

4.1.2 (180) days has passed since a letter was sent to the next of kin, stating the firearm would be destroyed if not claimed in (180) days.

4.1.3 The firearm is illegal.

4.1.3.1 In all cases, the firearm must be run first to see if it is stolen.

4.1.3.2 In order to retrieve a weapon for destruction, the assigned investigator or deputy or estate property technician will obtain a supervisor's written approval on the Inventory Sheet prior to the weapon being moved out of the warehouse Cage or Accounting gun safe. Accounting staff and/or Estate Property Technicians will be provided with a copy of the signed Inventory Sheet.

- 4.2 The firearm shall be listed on the Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau "Firearm Disposal Log."

4.2.1 The firearm shall be described in detail: make, model serial number, caliber.

4.2.2 The stock, barrel, or butt of the firearm shall be wrapped with masking tape.

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	4.2.3	The Sheriff-Public Administrator's case number shall be written boldly in <u>red ink</u> on the masking tape. This will designate that the weapon is held for destruction.
	4.3	The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau shall dispose of firearms through Sheriff's Forensics of either the Jurupa or Indio stations.
	4.3.1	Appointments must be made with the forensics supervisor, prior to the delivery of any firearms.
	4.3.2	Sheriff-Forensics shall be provided with a copy of our completed "Firearm Disposal Log."
	4.4	A copy of the "Firearm Disposal Log" shall be attached to the respective letter authorizing destruction. These items shall become a permanent part of the Sheriff-Public Administrator case file.
	4.5	The original "Firearm Disposal Log" shall be retained with supervision.
	4.6	Other weapons, such as knives, etc. may be disposed of in similar fashion.
	4.6.1	The Deputy Public Administrator or next of kin may note the disposal on the original receipt. No formal letter is necessary.
	4.6.2	The weapons shall be wrapped in masking tape, with the case number and "destruction" in red ink.
	4.6.3	These weapons can be transported to Sheriff's Forensics, and disposed of through a contracted disposal company.
	4.7	Ammunition will not be sold. It will be released for destruction with an appropriate member of the Sheriff's Department through Ben Clark Training Center or Hazardous Device Team or Jurupa Valley Station, etc.
	4.7.1	Should next of kin or a beneficiary express an interest in receiving the ammunition, the release of ammunition can only be made with the approval of a supervisor. Do not initiate a conversation about the release of ammunition. Respond only to requests and indicate that it is our practice to destroy ammunition.
	4.7.2	The Inventory Sheet and computer data system are to be updated by the person releasing the ammunition indicating the date and to whom the ammunition was given.

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5.0 Sale of firearms and other miscellaneous weapons:

- 5.1 Firearms are to be inventoried and appraised.
- 5.2 Unless firearms contained in a particular estate are specifically requested for disposition by an entitled heir, they will be offered for sale on a consignment basis by a firearms dealer in Riverside County, sold at auction by a bonded auctioneer, or sold at auction to firearms dealers in Riverside County. If estate property does include firearms, heirs should be notified of this policy as soon as possible. Firearms should not be sold or destroyed prior to heir notification and response.
- 5.3 The firearms dealer handling the consignment sale or the licensed auctioneer will not divulge the estate name to prospective buyers or actual purchasers.
- 5.4 Prior to liquidation, a Sheriff's Department Range Master or Firearms Armorer will review each weapon to ascertain whether or not it is a legal firearm.
- 5.5 Any firearm placed on consignment that does not sell within an acceptable period of time, or any firearm that does not sell at auction, will be included in a request to the supervisor for transfer to the Sheriff's Department for destruction.
- 5.6 If an entitled heir requests delivery, the heir will be responsible for the full cost of the delivery; e.g., packing, shipping, insurance, labor, etc.
- 5.7 Deputy Public Administrators should complete an Authorization for Sale form, obtain the supervisor's approval, and forward the Authorization for Sale form to the Estate Property Technician. A copy of the Report of Sale, or a receipt transferring the weapon(s) to the Sheriff's Department for destruction will be placed in the case file.
- 5.8 Exceptions to this procedure should be discussed and approved by the Assistant Public Administrator or Bureau Commander. Generally, exceptions should be considered only when firearms represent a significant value in an otherwise insolvent estate, or when disposition disagreements occur among multiple heirs.

6.0 BB Guns

- 6.1 "BB device" means any instrument that expels a projectile, such as a BB or a pellet, through the force of air pressure, gas pressure, or spring action, or any spot marker gun.

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6.2	A BB gun is considered non-lethal. However, a BB gun has skin piercing capability and can fracture bone. The potential exists for killing someone; this potential increases with velocity, but also rapidly decreases with distance.	
6.3	BB guns will be transported and secured in the same manner as weapons described above starting at 1.0 through 1.4.2 Transportation / retention . They are to be unloaded and secured with a plastic tie, transported and stored in a gun box.	
6.4	The gun box will be marked indicating that it is a BB gun. The name of the estate shall be written on all sides of the box.	
6.5	Ammunition shall be placed in ammunition storage containers and transported separately from the weapon, and not placed in the firearm box, firearm barrel, cylinder, nor in any magazine.	
6.6	BB guns will not be stored in the gun safe but can be maintained in the warehouse along with miscellaneous property.	
6.7	BB guns will be sold through ordinary estate auctions.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Creditor's Claim	NUMBER: Policy # 800.18
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will handle all debts of the estate in accordance with statutory laws and local Superior Court rules.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 9000-9399, 11420-11429

1.0 Definitions:

1.1 Section 9000 of the California Probate Code defines a "Claim" as follows:

- (a) "Claim" means a demand for payment for any of the following, whether due, not due, accrued, or not accrued, or contingent, and whether liquidated or unliquidated.
 - (1) Liability of the decedent, whether arising in contract, tort, or otherwise.
 - (2) Liability for taxes incurred before the decedent's death, whether assessed before or after the decedent's death, other than property taxes and assessments secured by real property liens.
 - (3) Liability of the estate for funeral expenses of the decedent.
- (b) "Claim" does not include a dispute regarding title of a decedent to specific property alleged to be included in the decedent's name.

2.0 Procedure:

- 2.1 Creditor's Claims are subject to the statute of limitations set forth in Section 9051 of the Probate Code, which requires that they be submitted within four (4) months from the date Letters are first issued to a general personal representative.
- 2.2 Originals bills received on Public Administrator estates are held by the Deputy Public Administrator assigned to the case. Once appointed, the deputy causes a claim to be mailed to each creditor on file, and in formal probates, the attorney representing the Public Administrator causes a Notice of Administration of Estate to be sent to the creditor.
- 2.3 When a claim is received, the deputy reviews the claim for validity in terms of both the debt information presented and the estate circumstances. In a formal estate, the deputy will request the attorney to prepare an approval or rejection of claim. The deputy maintains summary and miscellaneous estate claims that are approved. Generally, criteria to be used in the evaluation of claims are outlined in Probate Code Section 9151. Any questions regarding the appropriateness of a claim should be addressed with a supervisor.

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TITLE:	Creditor's Claim	NUMBER: Policy # 800.18
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- 2.4 Claimants of wholly or partially rejected claims have ninety (90) days from the date of notification to file a court action contesting the decision (Probate Code Sections 9250 and 9353).

3.0 Claims Presented in Formal Estates

- 3.1 All Creditor's Claims must be submitted on a court approved Creditor's Claim form and filed directly with the court. Claims do not have to be mailed to estate representative to be valid.
- 3.2 Creditors sending original claims to the Public Administrator rather than filing them with the court should be notified by the deputy, within ten (10) working days of their receipt, that the original claim must be filed with the Probate Department of the Superior Court.
- 3.3 The deputy will forward bills to the attorney requesting that Notice to Creditors be prepared and forwarded to the creditor. The attorney should have information concerning creditors within 30 days from date of appointment, or within 10 working days after receipt of the bill if the 30-day time period has already expired.
- 3.4 Claims against the estate are paid in the order of priority according to Section 11420 of the Probate Code.
- 3.5 Claims in solvent estates may be paid at any time after the Notice to Creditors has expired. According to Probate Code Section 11421 priority claims (funeral, last illness, family allowance and wage claims) are to be paid as soon as sufficient funds, after reserving funds for cost of administration, are available.
- 3.6 General claims in insolvent estates are not paid until the court has approved the final accounting and the proration of the claims. However, funeral claims, last illness claims, family allowance claims, wage claims, should be paid as soon as sufficient funds to pay all priority claims are available, after reserving funds for cost of administration, if there is no question of their classification, and after approval of a supervisor. If there is a question as to whether a claim is a priority (as sometimes occurs with possible "last illness" claims), it should not be paid from an insolvent estate without court order.
- 3.7 Department of Health Services' claims may or may not be considered general creditors depending on the services the Department is seeking reimbursement for. If some of the services were for last illness then that portion would be treated as a priority claim.

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TITLE:	Creditor's Claim	NUMBER: Policy # 800.18
3.8	Claims of Franchise Tax Board are not <u>priority</u> creditors, do not come before federal taxes, funeral, and last illness, etc., but is a preferred creditor coming before general creditors of the estate.	
3.9	A representative proceeding under the Independent Administration of Estate Act (IAEA) has authority to: (a) allow, pay, reject, or contest any claims by or against the estate; (b) compromise or settle a claim action, or proceeding involving the decedent, personal representative, or the estate; or (c) release claims to the extent they are uncollectable. Court filed actions are subject to settlement by court approval or Notice of Proposed Action.	
3.10	If the estate is not administered under the IAEA the judge must also approve the claim for payment or rejection. Most cases are administered under the IAEA.	
3.11	Claims in estates of persons dying on or after January 1, 1993, are barred if not presented within one year after date of death.	
4.0	Claims Presented in Summary Estates	
4.1	Creditor's Claims in Summary Probates will be processed using the same procedures and forms as in Formals, except that they are not filed with the court.	
4.2	In Summary Estates the claims are requested to be directed to the Public Administrator's office and should be presented within four months from the date of appointment. However, until the Statement of Disposition is prepared claims can be considered.	
5.0	Determining Validity of Claims	
5.1	The Deputy Public Administrator determines if: (1) Claim is sufficient as to form and content to be approved; (2) Claim is submitted on appropriate form and necessary sections (boxes) are completed, signed, and supported by an affidavit or declaration, amount is justly due, and correct amount; (3) Claim was timely filed with the court and itemized statement is made on claim or attached thereto. If any questions or doubts arise as to the validity of a claim, consults with a supervisor concerning approval or rejection.	
5.2	Before approval, the deputy determines if claim has been filed with the court by cross checking with attorney, the court's website or filed copies of claims.	
5.3	If claim is determined to be valid, the deputy requests the attorney to prepare the Allowance or Rejection of Creditor's Claim form and the attorney directs it to the creditor.	

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- 5.4 If claim is determined to be insufficient as to information provided, within ten (10) working days of receipt of Claim the deputy will send a letter to claimant explaining the defect and requesting that it be remedied by a new claim or an amended claim filed with the court. Within thirty (30) days if defect is not corrected, deputy will request attorney to prepare and provide service of the Allowance or Rejection of Creditor's Claim form to the creditor. Under certain conditions Probate Code Section 9154 allows personal representative to waive formal defects in a claim.
- 5.5 Under certain conditions, Probate Code Section 9154 allows a personal representative to waive formal defects in a claim. To pay claims pursuant to that section, the deputy should promptly review all claims four months after letters of a general personal representative are issued. The deputy may pay an otherwise defective claim provided:
 - 5.5.1 the debt is justly due;
 - 5.5.2 the debt is paid in good faith;
 - 5.5.3 the amount paid is the true amount of the indebtedness over and above all payments and offsets;
 - 5.5.4 the estate is solvent; and
 - 5.5.5 the claim is paid within 30 days after the 4-month period has expired.

6.0 Payment of Claims

- 6.1 After determining sufficient funds are available to pay costs of administration, Deputy Public Administrator pays priority creditors: funeral expenses; expenses of last illness; family allowance; and wage claims.
- 6.2 Requests for payments are to be made through the estate "transaction" section of the Panoramic program. Supervision will either approve or deny the request, and forward the approvals to the Accounting department. Checks are cut on Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week. After Accounting has cut the check, it is delivered to the deputy for forwarding to the creditor with a receipt for payment. The deputy is responsible for entering the payment amount and status in the estate's "Creditor's Claim" section of the computer program.

7.1 Insolvent Estates

- 7.1 General Creditor's Claims are not paid until the court, in the final accounting, approves proration. However, the process for approving and paying the claims are the same as solvent estates.

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TITLE:	Filing Federal and California Estate Tax Returns	NUMBER: Policy # 800.19
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POLICY: Deadlines for the filing of all Federal and California Personal and Estate Tax Returns shall be met in order to avoid penalties.

REFERENCE:

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Tax Return - An income tax form on which a person or entity reports income, deductions, and exemptions, and on which tax liability is calculated.
- 1.2 Fiduciary – One who must exercise a high standard of care in managing another's money or property.

2.0 Procedure:

- 2.1 All Federal and California Estate Tax Returns, Forms 706 and ET-1, must be filed with the Internal Revenue Service or State Controller, or an extension in the filing deadline obtained and estimated payment of tax due made within (9) months of the date of death of the decedent. Failure to do so will result in substantial penalties and the accruing of interest on any tax due.
- 2.2 Upon appointment of the Public Administrator, the Deputy Public Administrator determines the deadline for filing Federal and California Estate Tax returns (Forms 706 and ET-1). The deputy will calendar the filing of tax returns sixty (60) days prior to the deadline. Thirty (30) days before the filing deadline, the deputy makes available to the Certified Public Accountant all information relating to Federal and California Estate taxes.
- 2.3 If the Deputy Public Administrator cannot obtain all the necessary tax information prior to the deadline, the deputy will notify the Certified Public Accountant in sufficient time to file an extension. The deputy will discuss with the Accountant the amount of any estimated tax due and file the extension and tax payment prior to the deadline.
- 2.3 If an extension is denied, the deputy will advise the Accountant and file the tax return using the information available.
- 2.4 If an extension is granted, the deputy will check back with the Accountant before the extension deadline to provide the additional information. If the deputy is unable to obtain the required information, the deputy will notify the Accountant and obtain a second extension or file an incomplete return.

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Estate Administration

TITLE:	Filing Federal and California Estate Tax Returns	NUMBER: Policy # 800.19
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- 2.5 As a rule, Miscellaneous Estates (valued at less than \$50,000) will not require tax returns. However, in some instances, returns could be required. When in doubt, the deputy should consult with a supervisor or Certified Public Accountant.
- 2.6 Summary Estates (valued between \$50,000 and \$166,250 DOD prior to 04/01/22; \$50,000 and \$184,500 DOD on or after 04/01/22) that generate \$600 or more in income may require tax returns. If stock or real property is liquidated, rents collected, or interest income generated, the deputy should consult with a Certified Public Accountant for advice as to the filing of returns.
- 2.7 Most Formal Estates (valued at \$166,250 DOD prior to 04/01/22; and \$184,500 DOD on or after 04/01/22; or greater) will require a tax return. The Deputy Public Administrator shall review these estates immediately upon appointment to determine the tax filing deadlines and provide a Certified Public Accountant with financial information in sufficient time for the meeting of those deadlines.
- 2.8 Gather information concerning any outstanding tax returns that might have been due prior to death and arrange for the filing of any estate tax returns:
 - 2.8.1 Arranging for outstanding tax returns due prior to death and for a final personal tax return.
 - 2.8.2 Paying the decedent's estimated tax.
 - 2.8.3 Applying for a tax identification number.
 - 2.8.4 Securing an accountant for the estate.
 - 2.8.5 With the guidance of an accountant, selecting the estate's tax year.
- 3.0 Estate Taxes (706). These are taxes paid on the value of an estate at date of death. Due to Congressional action, the necessary value is increasing and the past and current tax years rate is listed on the IRS website <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/estate-tax>, and are noted below for ease of reference:

<u>Tax Year</u>	<u>Value of Estate</u>
2002-04	\$ 1,000,000
2004-05	1,500,000
2006-08	2,000,000
2009	3,500,000
2010-2011	5,000,000
2012	5,120,000

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TITLE:	Filing Federal and California Estate Tax Returns	NUMBER: Policy # 800.19
	2013	5,250,000
	2014	5,340,000
	2015	5,430,000
	2016	5,450,000
	2017	5,490,000
	2018	11,180,000
	2019	11,400,000
	2020	11,580,000
	2021	11,700,000
	2022	12,060,000
	2023	12,920,000

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE: **Affidavit of Heirship**

NUMBER: Policy # 800.20

POLICY: In small, intestate estates, the Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will endeavor to identify those entitled to inherit, and will require such individuals to prove their relationships to the deceased.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Section 6400, et. seq.

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Heirs – Any person, including the surviving spouse, who is entitled to take property of the decedent by intestate succession under the code.
- 1.2 Intestate succession – The method used to distribute property owned by a person who dies without a valid Will.

2.0 Procedure:

- 2.1 In Formal Estates, without a Will, the court will require adequate proof of a person's relationship to the deceased prior to issuing its order to distribute. In those instances, the Deputy Public Administrator is not required to obtain an Affidavit of Heirship from family members.
- 2.2 In Summary Estates where an heir locator has discovered next of kin, and has advised the Deputy Public Administrator of their existence, the deputy will require the attorney to obtain an Order Determining Entitlement prior to distribution.
- 2.3 In Summary and Miscellaneous Estates managed by the Deputy Public Administrator, without the involvement of an heir locator, the deputy will require family members to complete an Affidavit of Heirship. If there are five family members, the deputy will require two or more members of the family to complete the Affidavit.
- 2.4 Affidavits of Heirship are not required for insolvent estates.
- 2.5 Summary and Miscellaneous Estates will not be closed and distributed without a completed Heirship Affidavit unless approved by a supervisor.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Full Cost Recovery Fees	NUMBER: Policy # 800.21
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will seek to make full cost recovery for investigation expenses, administrative costs, and estate administration fees.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 7604, 7621, 7622, 7666, 10800-10801

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Statutory Commissions – For ordinary services, the personal representative shall receive compensation based on the value of the estate.
- 1.2 Extraordinary Fees – For extraordinary services performed by the personal representative, the court may allow additional compensation in an amount the court deems just and reasonable.
- 1.3 Investigation Expenses – If the Public Administrator takes possession or control of property, but another person subsequently takes charge of the estate, the Public Administrator is entitled to reasonable costs incurred for the preservation of the estate, together with reasonable compensation for services.

2.0 Procedure:

- 2.1 The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will charge fees, costs and commissions.
- 2.2 Appropriate reimbursement for a specific cost not listed herein should be discussed with a supervisor.
- 2.3 Departmental personnel may review the appropriateness of full cost recovery in those situations where such charges may cause hardships or undesirable consequences. The supervisor must approve any reduction in the Bureau's stated fee.

2.1.1 Investigation Expenses

2.1.1.1	Estate Investigator Hourly Rate	\$130.00
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2.1.2 Statutory Commissions

The value of the estate accounted for by the Public Administrator's Bureau is the total amount of the appraised value of property in the inventory, plus gains over the appraised value on sales, plus receipts, less losses from the appraisal value on sales, without reference to encumbrances or other obligations on estate property, and calculated as follows:

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TITLE:	Full Cost Recovery Fees	NUMBER: Policy # 800.21
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- 2.1.2.1 Four percent of the first one hundred thousand dollars
- 2.1.2.2 Three percent on the next one hundred thousand dollars
- 2.1.2.3 Two percent on the next eight hundred thousand dollars
- 2.1.2.4 One percent on the next nine million dollars
- 2.1.2.5 One-half of one percent on the next fifteen million dollars
- 2.1.2.6 For all amounts above twenty-five million dollars, a reasonable amount to be determined by the court.

2.1.3 Extraordinary Commissions

The Deputy Public Administrator will keep record of time spent for performing services considered to be extraordinary. The Public Administrator's Bureau will request such commissions at the following rate: \$150.00 per hour. Examples of extraordinary services for which the Public Administrator may request compensation:

- 2.1.3.1 sale of real estate
- 2.1.3.2 sale of personal property including furniture and furnishings, jewelry, automobiles, etc.
- 2.1.3.3 sale of stocks
- 2.1.3.4 redemption of bonds
- 2.1.3.5 litigation

2.1.4 Accounting Storage Charges

- | | | |
|---------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 2.1.4.1 | guns/weapons | \$ 5.00 per month |
| 2.1.4.2 | small document envelope | \$ 3.00 per month |
| 2.1.4.3 | large document envelope | \$ 5.00 per month |
| 2.1.4.4 | jewelry | \$ 5.00 per month |

2.1.5 Warehouse and Vehicle Storage Charges

If the estate is solvent, the Deputy Public Administrator will reimburse the Bureau for the cost of storing personal property and vehicles at the following rates:

- | | | |
|---------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 2.1.5.1 | storage vault (7x6x7'10") | \$53.00 per month |
| 2.1.5.2 | storage vault (5x7x4'6") | \$32.00 per month |
| 2.1.5.3 | storage container | \$100.00 per month |
| 2.1.5.4 | vehicles | \$40.00 per month |
| 2.1.5.5 | motorcycles | \$20.00 per month |
| 2.1.5.6 | motor homes | \$50.00 per month |

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE: Full Cost Recovery Fees

NUMBER: Policy # 800.21

2.1.6 Bond Fee

Every estate administered shall be charged an annual bond fee in the amount of twenty-five dollars (\$25) plus one-fourth of one percent of the amount of an estate greater than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

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Estate Administration

TITLE:	Closing Cases	NUMBER: Policy # 800.22
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will ensure that all estates handled by the Bureau are monitored and completed in a timely fashion.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 7660-7666

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Escheat – A reversion of property to the State in consequence of a want of any individual competent to inherit.

2.0 Procedures:

- 2.1 The Deputy Public Administrator will monitor his/her cases on a regular basis. When all issues have been resolved (i.e., bank accounts collected, safe deposit boxes inventoried and closed, real and personal property sold, insurance proceeds collected, heirs determined, etc.) steps will be taken to conclude the estate.

3.0 Closing Miscellaneous Estates

- 3.1 If for any reason the bureau has possession of cremated remains, and the estate to which they belong can manage the cost of their disposition, such arrangements should be made as quickly as possible and before the closing of the estate. If the estate has no funds to manage the cost of disposition, the deputy will arrange for their interment through the indigent program prior to the closing of the case.
- 3.2 The deputy will arrange to forward photographs and personal papers to next of kin. These items will not be shipped until the payment for shipment has been made. In the event family has not been located, the deputy will instruct the Estate Property Technician to calendar its destruction for one year from date of closing.
- 3.3 The deputy will make all efforts to determine the appropriate estate distribution. When no relatives or beneficiaries have been identified, the estate proceeds will escheat to the Riverside County Treasurer. In the event that the next of kin has been identified, but the whereabouts of the individual is unknown, the proceeds will be directed to the Riverside County Treasurer for said heir, whereabouts unknown.

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Estate Administration

TITLE: Closing Cases

NUMBER: Policy # 800.22

- 3.4 When the relatives of the decedent have been located, the deputy will obtain an Affidavit of Heirship. One or more of the relatives must complete the Affidavit prior to distribution.
- 3.5 In the event the decedent prepared a Last Will and Testament, the deputy will do everything possible to follow the decedent's instructions.
- 3.6 On rare occasions, a Miscellaneous Probate could require a tax return. The deputy will review the Estate Transaction History to determine if a tax return is required. If there is a question and the deputy is uncertain, the deputy will contact a certified public accountant or tax preparer for advice. In the event a tax return is required, sufficient funds should be withheld in the account to pay any tax that may be due and the fee of the tax accountant.
- 3.7 The deputy will prepare a Miscellaneous Probate Distribution form indicating the administrative costs to be paid (statutory commissions, bond fee, storage charges, telephone and postage costs, etc.), any claims to be paid, and the distribution of the proceeds of the estate. The deputy will attach a copy of the Last Will and Testament, if applicable, the Affidavit of Heirship, if applicable, and an Estate Transaction History and completed Personal Property Inquiry form, along with the estate file, and forward to the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator and Assistant Public Administrator for review. The Distribution form will then be forwarded to Accounting for the issuance of checks.
- 3.8 Checks issued according to the Miscellaneous Probate Distribution form will be given to the deputy. The deputy will send checks and Receipts, as required, to each recipient.

4.0 Closing Summary Estates

- 4.1 Steps 3.0 through 3.5 (Closing Miscellaneous Estates) will be followed when closing a Summary Estate.
- 4.2 The deputy will review the file for any tax returns that may be required. Tax returns may be required if decedent earned interest or income, or if the estate sold stocks, bonds, or real estate. The deputy should consult with a certified public accountant or tax preparer when in doubt as to the necessity of a tax return.
- 4.3 If tax returns must be prepared, the deputy will withhold from distribution sufficient funds to pay any additional tax and the fee of the certified public accountant or tax

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Closing Cases	NUMBER: Policy # 800.22
	preparer. If the deputy is uncertain as to the amount of funds to be withheld to cover these costs, the deputy should discuss this with the supervisor or accountant.	
4.4	The deputy will prepare a Summary Probate Distribution form indicating the administrative costs to be paid (statutory commissions, extraordinary commissions, bond fee, storage charges, telephone and postage costs, and attorney's fees, if applicable), any claims to be paid, and the distribution of the proceeds of the estate.	
4.5	The deputy will attach a copy of the Last Will and Testament, if applicable, Affidavit of Heirship, if applicable, and an Estate Transaction History and completed Personal Property Inquiry form, along with the estate file, and forward to the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator and Assistant Public Administrator for review and approval. The Distribution form will then be forwarded to Accounting for issuance of checks.	
4.6	Checks issued according to the Summary Probate Distribution form will be given to the deputy. If there is no attorney assigned to the case, the deputy will forward the checks to the recipients with the proper receipts. If an attorney represents the bureau on the case, then the checks will be forwarded to the attorney for processing.	
4.7	A Statement of Disposition will be prepared by the estate counsel assigned or the deputy and reviewed by the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator or Assistant Public Administrator. The Statement will then be filed with the court and the case closed.	
5.0	Closing Formal Estates	
5.1	Steps 3.1 through 4.3 (Closing Miscellaneous Estates and Closing Summary Estates) will be followed by the Deputy Public Administrator.	
5.2	The deputy will send a request to the attorney for preparation of the final account and report of Public Administrator. The deputy will provide a copy of the Estate Transaction History or schedules of inventory and transactions, copies of filed and approved/rejected creditor's claims, along with instructions to withhold funds for any unpaid tax or tax preparer fees, and a request for Public Administrator's extraordinary commissions, if applicable.	
5.3	Should distribution from an estate be in excess of \$200,000, the deputy will advise Accounting of the hearing date, so that Accounting can have sufficient funds available to issue the distribution checks.	
5.4	Upon receipt of the Order Settling Final Accounting, the deputy will prepare a Formal Probate Distribution sheet. The deputy will attach the Distribution form, Order Settling Final Accounting, Personal Property Inquiry, and Estate Transaction History	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
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TITLE:	Closing Cases	NUMBER: Policy # 800.22
	to the file and forward them to the Supervising Deputy and Assistant Public Administrator for review.	
5.5	Accounting will issue checks pursuant to the Order and Distribution form and forward checks to the deputy who will forward them to the attorney for distribution to the recipients.	
5.6	Once distribution of the estate proceeds is made, and no later than sixty (60) days following distribution, the deputy will complete a Tax Information Memo for use by the certified public accountant or tax preparer. The deputy will provide all supporting documents: copy of Order Settling Final Account; estate transaction history; any 1099's; the names, addresses and Social Security Numbers of any distributee or beneficiary. Should the accountant call with additional questions or concerns, the deputy will respond to those questions in a timely fashion to insure that the tax returns are promptly prepared.	
5.7	Upon receipt of the prepared tax returns, the deputy will obtain the signature of the Bureau Commander, or his designee, and forward the returns to the Internal Revenue Service and Franchise Tax Board.	
5.8	Any residue of funds held in the estate account will not be distributed for at least a six (6) month period of time following the preliminary distribution. After six months has elapsed, the deputy should review the matter and determine if the estate is in a position to distribute the remaining cash on hand and request the attorney to prepare a Declaration for Final Discharge.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Release of Property	NUMBER: Policy # 800.23
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau may release assets to a private executor or administrator when it is determined that they will act to represent the estate, and to heirs and beneficiaries of estates managed by the Bureau.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 7604, 13100, 13114

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Releasing Property to a Private Executor or Administrator:

1.1 In the case of a deceased Riverside County resident, estate assets are normally not released until the private executor or administrator obtains letters of appointment.

1.1.1 Should an attorney make a written request for an earlier release from the executor or administrator, the Estate Investigator or Deputy Public Administrator is then authorized to release the residence and any personal property therein.

1.1.2 Personal property and cash assets in the Public Administrator's actual possession can be withheld pending appointment to defray any costs chargeable to the estate (Section 7604) if payment of the costs and fees have not first been made or if the Estate Investigator or Deputy Public Administrator determine that there is a likelihood that the executor or administrator is not willing to pay the costs (Section 13114).

1.1.3 If the deceased was not a resident of Riverside County and the Public Administrator took possession of the estate assets in this county to protect them from waste, loss or theft, such assets may not be released until the executor or administrator obtains Letters of Administration from the appropriate county or state.

1.1.4 The property is released to the private executor or administrator or his appointed agent upon signing a Receipt or is shipped C.O.D. or by Registered Mail.

1.1.5 The Estate Investigator or deputy may release non-valuables, such as paperwork, personal pictures, identification, etc., to the decedent's successor upon the appropriate identification of that successor. A signed receipt is also required prior to the release of this property.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE: Release of Property

NUMBER: Policy # 800.23

2.0 Releasing Property In Estates Managed By Public Administrator

- 2.1 In solvent estates the Deputy Public Administrator may release property in kind to heirs under certain circumstances.
- 2.2 Property in Formal Estates will not be released without a preliminary distribution from court, and will not be released until after the four-month creditor's claim period has expired, unless authorized by a supervisor.
- 2.3 Property in Summary and Miscellaneous Estates may be released after the expiration of the four-month creditor's claim period, and prior to the conclusion of the estate, with a supervisor's approval.
- 2.4 The Deputy Public Administrator may release non-valuables, such as paperwork, personal pictures, identification, etc., to the decedent's heirs or beneficiaries. A signed receipt is required prior to the release of this property.
- 2.5 When shipping, property will be sent UPS or by Registered Mail, and if estimated value exceeds \$100.00, property will be insured. A receipt and return envelope will be sent with the property.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE: **Release of Property**

NUMBER: Policy # 800.23

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Disposition Without Administration	NUMBER: Policy # 800.24
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will follow established guidelines when advising heirs or distributing property pursuant to Division Number 8 of the California Probate Code, "Disposition of Estate Without Administration".

REFERENCE: Probate Code Sections 330, 3400-3402, 890, 13006, 13050, 13100-13116

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Successor of the Decedent – Defined in Probate Code Section 13006.
- 1.2 Excluded Property (Valuation or Estate Determination) – Defined in Probate Code Section 13050.
- 1.3 Liability of Heir – Defined in Probate Code Section 13109.

2.0 Procedures:

- 2.1 An important area of decedent estate law is that portion of the code, which deals with the rights, and responsibilities of heirs of small estates who wish to handle the decedent's estate outside of formal administration. Section 13100 of the Probate Code reads in part:

Excluding the property described in Section 13050, if the gross value of the decedent's real and personal property does not exceed one hundred sixty-six thousand and fifty dollars (\$166,250) , or as adjusted periodically in accordance with Section 890, and if forty (40) days have elapsed since the death of the decedent, the successor of the decedent may, without procuring Letters of Administration or awaiting probate of the will, do any of the following with respect to one or more particular items of property:

- A. Collect any particular item of property that is money due the decedent.
 - B. Receive any particular item of property that is tangible personal property of the decedent.
 - C. Have any particular item of property that is evidence of a debt, obligation, interest, right, security, or chose in action belonging to the decedent transferred, whether or not secured by a lien on real property.
- 2.2 Public Administrators are exempt from the forty (40) day waiting period, referenced in 13100, when delivering property to a "decedent's surviving spouse, relative, or conservator or guardian of the estate acting in that capacity at the time of death" (Probate Code Section 330). Named executors or beneficiaries of Wills are not included under Section 330.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Disposition Without Administration	NUMBER: Policy # 800.24
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- 2.3 Upon determination of an appropriate release of assets under this section, the Estate Investigator or Deputy Public Administrator will secure a signed receipt listing all property being released and either a signed 330 Affidavit or a signed 13100 Affidavit, before turning over any valuables held by this office.
- 2.4 The Estate Investigator or deputy may release nonvaluables, such as paperwork, personal pictures, identification, etc., to the decedent's successor upon the appropriate identification of that successor. A signed receipt is also required prior to the release of this property.
- 2.5 Delivery of property to minors is covered under Probate Code Sections 3400-3402 and in Policy #800.03.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Identification of Decedents	NUMBER: Policy #800.25
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POLICY: Before disposition of the remains are made, the Public Administrator bureau will make every effort to verify the identity of all decedents. In the event identification cannot be made, the matter will be referred to the Coroner bureau to establish proper identification as soon as possible.

REFERENCE: None

1.0 Procedure:

- 1.1 Confirming the identity of the decedent is the responsibility and shall be a top priority for the assigned Estate Investigator. In any situation where the Estate Investigator questions the identity of a decedent, the Estate Investigator shall proceed to confirm and verify identity.
- 1.2 An investigator can be confident of the identity of the decedent when cases are referred from:
 - 1.2.1 Family
 - 1.2.2 Coroner bureau
 - 1.2.4 Law enforcement
 - 1.2.5 Superior Court
 - 1.2.6 Department of Health Care Services
- 1.2 Identification of a decedent may need to be verified when referrals are received from:
 - 1.2.1 Hospitals
 - 1.2.2 Skilled nursing facilities
 - 1.2.3 Mortuaries
 - 1.2.3.1 Unless the information was self-reported by the decedent to the facility or family is immediately located to confirm identify, contact a Coroner supervisor and request that they obtain fingerprints asap. Any delay in obtaining fingerprints could result in an inability to identify the decedent through this process.
 - 1.2.3.1 In those instances where a referral is made by a mortuary for the sole purpose of locating next of kin so that the mortuary can proceed with disposition previously arranged by the decedent or as arranged by an executor, the Estate Investigator is not required to verify decedent's identity.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Identification of Decedents	NUMBER: Policy #800.25
1.3	In any situation where the Estate Investigator or Deputy Public Administrator is uncertain that the decedent is, in fact, the person named on the referral, the staff person shall make further inquiry into identification. 1.3.1 When Social Security numbers and dates of birth, places of birth, or parent names cannot be verified additional investigation will be required.	
1.4	When identification cannot be verified by the Estate Investigator or Deputy Public Administrator, the matter shall be immediately referred to the Coroner bureau. The Coroner bureau will assist with establishing positive identification using one or more of the following methods: 1.4.1 Fingerprints shall be obtained and submitted to Cal-ID for processing ASAP. 1.4.2 Government issued photo identification (state driver license, state identification card, military identification, etc.). 1.4.3 Dental examination. 1.4.4 Skeletal x-rays. 1.4.5 On occasion, identification may have to be made based mostly on circumstances: 1.4.5.1 Circumstantial identification will be used only as a last resort and must be approved by Coroner administration.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE *LexisNexis / Accurint for Law Enforcement*

NUMBER: Policy # 800.26

POLICY: Printed information obtained through the *Accurint for Law Enforcement* account will be used exclusively within the Sheriff-Coroner/Public Administrator and will not be provided to any individual or agency.

REFERENCE:

1.0 Terms and Conditions of Use:

- 1.1 The account with *Accurint for Law Enforcement* comes with certain terms and conditions agreed to by each User as the account is accessed. In part, those terms and conditions include:
 - 1.1.1 Individual User codes will be used only for authorized investigative purposes and only in an official capacity.
 - 1.1.2 Individual User passwords will not be disclosed to any other person except as expressly authorized by User's employing agency management.
 - 1.1.3 Individual passwords will be changed if the User reasonably suspects that his or her password has been improperly disclosed or compromised.
 - 1.1.4 Information will only be accessed or printed out for authorized investigative purposes and only in an official capacity.

2.0 Procedures:

- 2.1 The *Accurint for Law Enforcement* account will not be used for personal business.
- 2.2 Printed copies of information obtained in the course of official business from *Accurint for Law Enforcement* will not be provided to individuals outside the Sheriff-Coroner/Public Administrator without subpoena and then only with approval of the Bureau Commander or Sheriff's Administration.
- 2.3 Information obtained from *Accurint for Law Enforcement* can be shared with interested parties – just not the actual printed copies. Interested parties might include the court, attorneys, C.P.A., law enforcement agencies, governmental agencies, etc.
- 2.4 Within ninety (90) days of initial receipt of information obtained through *Accurint for Law Enforcement* the information will be purged whether stored electronically or on hard copy.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE **LexisNexis / *Accurint for Law Enforcement***

NUMBER: Policy # 800.26

- 2.4.1 At the conclusion of the investigation with a recommendation that the Bureau not handle the estate, the supervisor closing the file and sending the Report of Investigation to the referring party, will purge the file of any information obtained from *Accurint for Law Enforcement*.

- 2.4.2 For those estates and trusts to be managed by the Bureau, the assigned Deputy Public Administrator will ensure any information contained in the case file obtained from *Accurint for Law Enforcement* is purged within 90 days of initial receipt.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Professional Services

TITLE	Estate Vehicles	NUMBER: Policy # 800.27
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator Bureau will follow all appropriate guidelines when managing vehicles owned by the estates.

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Investigation and Safe Guarding Estate Vehicles

- 1.1 The Estate Investigator will enter the decedent's information in the California Law Enforcement Telecommunication System (CLETS) to obtain information reference any vehicles owned and any corresponding lienholder information.
- 1.2 The Estate Investigator will endeavor to locate vehicles owned by the decedent.
- 1.3 If vehicles owned by the decedent are located in an unsafe area and there is concern about vandalism or theft, after consulting with a supervisor, arrangements may be made for vehicles to be towed to the Perris facility.
 - 1.3.1 On rare occasion, and only with supervisor approval, a vehicle known to be safe and in excellent running condition, can be driven by staff to the Perris facility.
- 1.4 If vehicles can be safely maintained at their current location the vehicles will not be towed or moved while the Estate Investigator continues the investigation.
- 1.5 If it is determined that the bureau will manage the estate, arrangements will be made for vehicles to be towed to the Perris facility. Prior to the tow of any vehicle, consider the following:
 - 1.5.1 Is there a lienholder? If there is a lienholder on title and the amount owed exceeds the value of the vehicle, arrangements will be made to return the vehicle to the lienholder.
 - 1.5.2 Is the current condition and value of the vehicle sufficient to cover the cost of the tow and the cost of sale?
 - 1.5.3 Consideration should be given to estimated values provided through the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) and/or Kelly Blue Book.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Professional Services

TITLE	Estate Vehicles	NUMBER: Policy # 800.27
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1.5.4 Vehicles will likely be sold through the auction process. When unsure of a vehicle's value, consult with the auction company contracted by the bureau.

1.6 If the bureau will manage the estate, and it is determined that the vehicle has nominal value, it can be abandoned on site. A Release of Liability will be prepared and forwarded to the Department of Motor Vehicles by the Deputy Public Administrator managing the case.

1.7 If it is suspected that the vehicle is in the possession of an unauthorized party, a vehicle license and title (VLT) courtesy stop will be filed with the Department of Motor Vehicles by the assigned Estate Investigator, or if concern about the vehicle is discovered during the management of the case, by the assigned Deputy Public Administrator.

2.0 Delivery, Clean Out and Inventory of Vehicle

2.1 If the vehicle has not been inventoried on an Inventory Sheet, the Estate Investigator or Estate Property Technician receiving the vehicle shall complete the Inventory Sheet as soon as the vehicle is received at the Perris facility, or no later than the following business day.

2.2 Within three (3) business days of receiving the vehicle, the Estate Property Technicians will photograph, search and clean out the entire vehicle (interior, glove compartment, trunk, etc.), and complete a **Vehicle Clean Out Checklist** form. Within three (3) business days of receiving the vehicle, the Estate Property Technicians will:

2.2.1 Take pictures of each vehicle exterior with license plate, interior, trunk, bed of truck.

2.2.2 Secure cash.

2.2.3 Remove all personal papers.

2.2.4 Remove all items of value (jewelry, tools, merchandise, etc.).

2.2.5 Secure weapons.

2.2.6 Remove trash (sorting through each bag, box, etc. for any unseen items of value).

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Professional Services

TITLE	Estate Vehicles	NUMBER: Policy # 800.27
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- 2.3 If only one Estate Property Technician is available (to photograph, search, clean out and inventory vehicles), and assistance is required, the Estate Property Technician will speak with supervision to ensure that these tasks are accomplished within three (3) business days of receiving a vehicle or vehicles.
- 2.4 If, for any reason, these tasks cannot be accomplished within three (3) business days of receiving a vehicle or vehicles, the Estate Property Technicians will immediately advise supervision.
- 2.5 All property, cash, and weapons removed from vehicles will be handled in accordance with Policy & Procedures #800.11 **Personal Property Intake and Disposition**, #800.11a **Personal Property – Cash**, and #800.17 **Firearms/Weapons/Ammunition**.
 - 2.5.1 The Estate Property Technicians will give a copy of the Inventory Sheet to the staff person currently assigned to the case.
 - 2.5.2 The Estate Property Technicians will give the Vehicle Clean Out Checklist form to the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator.
- 2.6 The Estate Property Technicians will enter all pertinent information concerning the vehicle on the vehicle log and save the information.
- 2.7 The vehicle keys will be placed on an Inventory Sheet and labeled, then the keys will be provided to the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator, in their absence to the Assistant Public Administrator, or in the absence of both the aforementioned to a Coroner Sergeant or Lieutenant, to be stored in the Vehicle Key Box located in the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator's office.
 - 2.7.1 Vehicle keys will also be logged in and out with the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator, in their absence with the Assistant Public Administrator, or in the absence of both the aforementioned, with a Coroner Sergeant or Lieutenant.

3.0 Maintenance and Security of Vehicles

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Professional Services

TITLE	Estate Vehicles	NUMBER: Policy # 800.27
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- 3.1 On a weekly basis, the Estate Property Technicians will start the engine of each vehicle and allow the engine to run for a brief period.
 - 3.1.1 Inoperable vehicles are exempt from this requirement. The Estate Property Technicians will advise supervision of their inability to start the engine of any vehicle.
- 3.2 The Estate Property Technicians will cover any broken windows or other damage in an effort to protect the vehicles from rain, dirt, or other harm.
- 3.3 The Estate Property Technicians will ensure that the vehicles remain locked and secured.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Depositing Wills/Providing Copies	NUMBER: Policy # 800.28
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POLICY: Unless a petition for probate of the will is earlier filed, the bureau shall deposit with the Clerk of the Superior Court all wills received, found or discovered for a decedent, and provide a copy to the executor or beneficiary.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Section 8200

1.0 Definition

- 1.1 Will – A document by which a person directs their estate to be distributed upon death.
- 1.2 Holographic Will – A will that is entirely handwritten by the testator.
- 1.3 Last Will – The most recent will of a deceased; the instrument ultimately fixing the disposition of real and personal property at the testator's death.
- 1.4 Custodian – A person or institution that has charge or custody of property, papers, or other valuables.

There are a variety of types of wills an individual can make. When in doubt as to whether the writing is a will, always consult with supervision.

A writing that appears to be a will, but has been marked upon, altered, or changed may still be a valid will. Always consult with supervision.

Wills can be formally prepared, form-filled, or handwritten on note pads, envelopes or bits of paper. Always be vigilant when searching a decedent's property.

2.0 Procedure

- 2.1 When a will is discovered (either during the course of an investigation or during the administration of the estate) the staff person assigned to the case shall cause the will to be deposited with the Clerk of the Superior Court as soon as possible, but no later than three (3) business days following the discovery of the will.
- 2.2 If a will is determined to be "bio-hazard", meaning it contains animal or human feces bodily fluids, blood, urine, etc., the original will shall not be filed with the court. The original will be sealed in a bio-hazard bag, labeled and marked. A copy of the will shall be made and the copy of the will along with a Declaration to the court explaining why the copy of the will is being provided and noting the original is retained with a law

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Depositing Wills/Providing Copies	NUMBER: Policy # 800.28
	<p>enforcement agency and will be produced when requested by the court. The original will shall be stored and maintained by either the Coroner or the Public Administrator respective of the controlling case assignment. This process is similar to the process in Penal Code Section 1417.3 concerning handling exhibits or evidence that are bio-hazard contaminated.</p> <p>2.3 The staff person that discovered the will shall give the document to the Office Assistant for filing with the Clerk of the Superior Court. In the absence of the Office Assistant, the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator will arrange for the document to be delivered to the Court.</p> <p>2.4 Within three (3) business days, the staff person assigned to the case shall provide a copy of the will to the person(s) named in the will as executor, if the person's whereabouts is known, or if not, to the person(s) named in the will as a beneficiary, if the person's whereabouts is known.</p> <p>2.5 A custodian of a will who fails to comply with the requirements of Probate Code Section 8200 shall be liable for all damages sustained by any person injured by the failure.</p>	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Personal Property / Warehouse Operations	NUMBER: Policy # 800.29
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator Bureau will follow all appropriate departmental guidelines regarding the receipt, verification, inventory, storage, maintenance and liquidation of personal property.

REFERENCE:

1.0 Property Managed by Warehouse Operations

Estate Vehicles

Including, but not limited to, passenger cars, trucks, vans, motor cycles, vintage automobiles, recreational vehicles, motor homes, and boats.

Weapons/Firearms/Ammunition

Including, but not limited to, pistols, revolvers, rifles, shotguns, holsters, and ammunition.

Personal Property

Including, but not limited to, furniture, furnishings, appliances, tools, computer components, jewelry, antiques, collectable coins, and collectable stamps.

2.0 Procedures:

2.1 Estate Vehicles

Delivery, cleanout, inventory, maintenance and security of vehicles will be managed as set out in **Estate Vehicles, Policy #800.27.**

2.2 Weapons/Firearms/Ammunition

The safe handling, retention, disposal and release of weapons will be managed as set out in **Firearms/Weapons, Policy #800.17.**

2.3 Cash and Coin

Cash and coin found by Estate Property Technicians will be handled in accordance with **Estate Property-Cash, Policy #800.11a.** The following is re-stated for emphasis:

2.3.1 All cash shall be counted and inventoried on an Inventory Sheet by the staff person that found it the same day it is found or delivered to the warehouse.

2.3.2 If overtime is required to accomplish the counting and inventorying of the cash, the staff person will seek supervisor approval. If a supervisor is not available, contact a supervisor by phone or ask for approval from a Coroner supervisor.

2.3.3 The counting of cash must be done in the presence of a witness.

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Estate Administration

TITLE:	Personal Property / Warehouse Operations	NUMBER: Policy # 800.29
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2.3.4 Cash is to be bagged separately and inventoried separately from other personal property or paperwork.

2.3.5 A copy of the Inventory Sheet will be given to the assigned Estate Investigator or Deputy Public Administrator as soon as it is completed and witnessed.

2.4 Personal Property/Packing Instructions For All Staff

Estate Property Technicians are responsible for delivering and receiving an assortment of property items into the warehouse. The receipt and inventory of property will be handled with the same care as described in **Personal Property Intake and Disposition, Policy 800.11** with the following additional requirements:

2.4.1 The bureau is responsible for an array of property items that are sometimes fragile, delicate, and easily broken, damaged or destroyed. The greatest of care and concern must be shown by all staff when handling these items. The bureau has a fiduciary duty, a trust placed in it by the court and next of kin to safely manage property in our care.

2.4.2 Staff will endeavor to handle property items with the utmost care and concern. When packing items for delivery to the Perris warehouse or other locations, proper packing materials (cartons, tape, bubble wrap, anti-static packing peanuts, wrapping blankets, tissue, and newspaper) will be used.

2.4.3 Wrap each individual item properly with enough layers of wrapping sheets, bubble wrap, or newspaper. Place items inside a box with extreme care in the best position possible to avoid damage. Heavier items should be placed on the bottom and lighter items should be placed on the top inside the boxes.

2.4.4 Pack heavy items such as books, toys, etc. in small boxes. Be conscious of not over packing boxes until they are bulky and may break.

2.4.5 Pack fragile or breakable items with extra care and attention. If required, use more layers of wrapping sheets or bubble wrap to wrap each item.

2.4.6 Pack similar items in boxes.

2.4.7 Use wadded newspapers, crushed papers, or anti-static packing peanuts to fill empty spaces of boxes or cartons.

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Estate Administration

TITLE:	Personal Property / Warehouse Operations	NUMBER: Policy # 800.29
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2.4.8 Label boxes according to contents (glassware, fragile, china, kitchen items, books, etc.) then securely close or tape them.

2.4.9 Use caution and care when stacking boxes. Place heavier boxes (books, pots and pans, etc.) on the bottom, and lighter, more fragile boxes on top.

2.5 Personal Property/Sorting

2.5.1 All property received will be photographed pursuant to **Personal Property Intake and Disposition, Policy 800.11.**

2.5.2 Property received into the warehouse will be thoroughly sorted and re-boxed by the Estate Property Technicians.

2.5.2.1 All property will be thoroughly searched prior to release to the auction company or to next of kin.

2.5.2.2 The contents of each box will be emptied, sorted and re-boxed by category (books, dishes, tools, etc.).

2.5.2.3 Drawers will be emptied.

2.5.2.4 Locked containers or items, including but not limited to, drawers or chests will be opened and the contents searched, sorted and re-boxed. Before attempting to open the locked item, consult with supervision or the assigned Estate Investigator or Deputy Public Administrator.

2.5.2.5 Pockets will be searched and emptied.

2.5.2.6 Under no circumstances will property be made available to the auction company until it has been thoroughly searched and inventoried on an Inventory Sheet.

2.6 Inventory of Property Received in Warehouse

2.6.1 All property received will be photographed pursuant to **Personal Property Intake and Disposition, Policy 800.11.**

2.6.2 If the property has been inventoried on an Inventory Sheet, the Estate Property Technicians will verify that all items listed have been received by placing a check mark next to the item.

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Estate Administration

TITLE:	Personal Property / Warehouse Operations	NUMBER: Policy # 800.29
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- 2.6.3** If additional items are found not previously indicated on the Inventory Sheet, the Estate Property Technicians will create an additional Inventory Sheet and inventory those items.
- 2.6.4** If the property has not been previously inventoried, the Estate Property Technicians will inventory the property on an Inventory Sheet.
- 2.6.5** Copies of all Inventory Sheets written by the Estate Property Technicians will be provided to the assigned Estate Investigator or Deputy Public Administrator.

2.7 Storage of Property Received in Warehouse

- 2.7.1** Once all property has been thoroughly sorted, re-boxed and inventoried, the Estate Property Technicians will store property as follows:
 - 2.7.1.1** Personal papers, photos and personal effects will be placed in boxes and properly marked with the decedent's name. The assigned Estate Investigator or Deputy Public Administrator will be advised that these items are available for their review. The boxes will be placed on the Investigator's Shelf or Deputy's Square, as appropriate. Saleable items (not considered family heirlooms) will not be kept with the personal papers, photos and personal effects.
 - 2.7.1.2** Personal property described as including, but not limited to, furniture, furnishings, appliances, tools, computer components, and antiques, shall be stored as follows:
 - 2.7.1.2.1.1** Each item will be marked with the decedent's name and stored in close proximity with other property owned by the same decedent either on pallets, on the warehouse floor, or in a storage container.
 - 2.7.1.2.1.2** Boxes and smaller items will be marked with the decedent's name and carefully placed on pallets, with heavier items on the bottom and lighter items on top. The property on the pallet will be wrapped with plastic wrap and marked with the decedent's name.
 - 2.7.1.3** Personal property described as including, but not limited to, jewelry, collectable coins and collectable stamps, shall be verified on an existing Inventory Sheet by placing a check mark next to the item, and then delivering the item to Accounting.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Estate Administration

TITLE:	Personal Property / Warehouse Operations	NUMBER: Policy # 800.29
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- 2.7.1.4 If the property has not been inventoried, the Estate Property Technicians will inventory those items and deliver them to Accounting.
- 2.7.1.5 Copies of Inventory Sheets will be given to the assigned Estate Investigator or Deputy Public Administrator by the Estate Property Technicians.
- 2.7.1.6 Property belonging to an estate is never to be co-mingled with another estate or estates.
- 2.7.1.7 The white board located in the office area of the warehouse will include the name of the estate and type of property currently stored in the warehouse. The Estate Property Technicians will keep information on the board updated on a day-to-day basis.

2.8 Reports and Electronic Logs

2.8.1 As property is received in the warehouse, or discarded, or released, or liquidated, the following logs or reports are to be updated by the Estate Property Technicians:

- 2.8.1.1 Cage List Contents Log
- 2.8.1.2 Cremains in Warehouse Log
- 2.8.1.3 Floor-Container Log
- 2.8.1.4 General Auction Log
- 2.8.1.5 Personal Property-Weapons Log
- 2.8.1.6 Vehicle Auction Log
- 2.8.1.7 Warehouse Operations Report

2.8.2 The following log will be updated by the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator or Assistant Public Administrator:

- 2.8.2.1 Residence, Vehicle and Miscellaneous Keys Log

2.8.3 The Estate Property Technicians will provide copies of the above-mentioned reports to the Assistant Public Administrator, Supervising Deputy Public

Administrator, Deputy Public Administrators, Estate Investigators, and Accounting supervisor, via email on a weekly basis.

2.9 Warehouse, Containers, and Estate Vehicle Inspections and Audits

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Estate Administration

TITLE:	Personal Property / Warehouse Operations	NUMBER: Policy # 800.29
	2.9.1 The warehouse, storage containers and estate vehicles will be inspected routinely and audited on a quarterly basis by supervision and management, and/or their designee.	

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR BUREAU
Warehouse Operations

TITLE: **Personal Property / Auctions**

NUMBER: Policy # 800.30

POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator Bureau will follow all appropriate departmental guidelines regarding the liquidation of property.

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Authorization to Liquidate Real or Personal Property

- 1.1 Estate property will never be placed in an auction for sale, or released to the contract auction company, without a completed *Authorization to Liquidate Real or Personal Property* signed by supervision.
- 1.2 Estate Property Technicians will review each *Authorization to Liquidate Real or Personal Property* for specific instructions as to property that is not to be sold, and provide for the safe storage and control of those items until further instructions are received.
- 1.3 Estate Property Technicians will review and follow any additional written instructions from Deputy Public Administrators or supervision as to items that are not to be sold.
- 1.4 Property that is to be held and not sold, will be clearly marked that it is *HOLD FOR FAMILY* and will be moved to a separate area for safe keeping.
- 1.5 Estate Property Technicians will release to the auction company only those items allowed for sale per the *Authorization to Liquidate Real or Personal Property*.

2.0 Prior to Release of Property to Auction Company

- 2.1 All property will have been searched, sorted, and re-boxed pursuant to **Personal Property/Warehouse Operations, Policy #800.29.**
- 2.2 All locked containers or items will have been brought to the attention of the assigned staff person or supervision pursuant to **Personal Property/Warehouse Operations, Policy #800.29.**
- 2.3 All pockets of estate clothing will have been searched and emptied pursuant to **Personal Property/Warehouse Operations, Policy #800.29.**
- 2.4 Estate Property Technicians will have reviewed each of the estates to ensure that property belonging to an estate is not co-mingled with another estate.
- 2.5 Estate Property Technicians will, again, review all *Authorizations to Liquidate Real or Personal Property* and any other written instructions to ensure that only items approved for sale have been released to the auction company.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR BUREAU
Warehouse Operations

TITLE: Personal Property / Auctions

NUMBER: Policy # 800.30

3.0 Auction Set-Up

- 3.1 An Estate Property Technician will be present and available whenever members of the contract auction company are in the warehouse or on the grounds.
- 3.2 Estate Property Technicians will be aware of the activities of the auction company and be available to assist with any questions or problems.
- 3.3 Estate Property Technicians will, throughout the auction set-up process, observe how property is arranged and displayed and bring concerns to the auction staff. (Is property safely displayed to avoid it being broken? Is there sufficient passage between isles? Is property stacked too high? Are there leaning items that might fall? Is property placed in a way that might cause someone to trip or fall? Are small valuables displayed in a way to protect them from theft?)
- 3.4 Estate Property Technicians will review the names on the property to ensure that the auction company has not confused one estate's property with another estate's property.
- 3.5 Once the auction company has catalogued all of the property, the Estate Property Technicians will review the information to ensure that property has not been misnamed or co-mingled with another estate.

4.0 Auction Preview

- 4.1 Prior to auction preview, Estate Property Technicians will perform a walk-through of the entire warehouse and parking lot area to ensure that:
 - 4.1.1 Property designated *HOLD FOR FAMILY* has been placed in a separate area for safe keeping.
 - 4.1.2 Property is safely displayed to avoid breakage.
 - 4.1.3 There is sufficient passage between isles.
 - 4.1.4 Property is not stacked too high.
 - 4.1.5 Property is not subject to falling.
 - 4.1.6 Small valuables are displayed in a way to protect them from theft.
 - 4.1.7 The warehouse and parking lot are free from debris.
 - 4.1.8 All areas are closed off to unauthorized personnel.
 - 4.1.9 All estate names are covered from public view.
- 4.2 During the auction preview, remain visible in the warehouse and parking lot area to answer questions and to provide security.
- 4.3 At the conclusion of the preview, make sure the public has exited the premises, and secure the gate.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR BUREAU
Warehouse Operations

TITLE: Personal Property / Auctions

NUMBER: Policy # 800.30

5.0 Day of Auction

- 5.1 Arrive prior to the auction to open the warehouse, ensuring the public has access to the restrooms but not to the office area. Make sure there are sufficient paper products in both restrooms.
- 5.2 Relocate any county vehicles that may be in the path of the public or food cart.
- 5.3 Provide the estate vehicle keys to the auction company.
- 5.4 Be available to assist the auction company.
- 5.5 Except for timed breaks (one Technician at a time) be a constant presence, providing security inside the warehouse and in the parking lot area, answering questions and providing direction where it is needed. Do not remain stationary, but move throughout the facility and parking lot so as to be aware of activities of private citizens on the property.
- 5.6 Supervise and limit the number of private vehicles allowed in the parking lot as buyers are receiving property.
- 5.7 In the event of an incident or accident, (injury, complaint, disturbance, altercation) provide immediate aid or assistance and contact a Coroner supervisor, or Public Administrator supervisor.
- 5.8 At the conclusion of the auction, make sure the public has exited the premises, and secure the gate.

6.0 Property Remaining After Auction Day

- 6.1 Vehicles and property sold on auction day will be released on the day of auction by the contract auction company.
- 6.2 Property sold but not released on auction day will be managed by the auction company.
- 6.3 Property requiring shipping to buyers will be managed by the auction company.
- 6.4 Any property sold at auction but remaining on hand after 14 days will be brought to the attention of the Supervising Deputy Public Administrator or Assistant Public Administrator by the Estate Property Technicians. The auction company will be contacted by the Assistant Public Administrator and direction will be provided as to the property's disposition. Remaining property is not to be used for department or personal use under any circumstances.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S BUREAU
Administrative

TITLE:	Updating Case Information	NUMBER: Policy # 800.31
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator utilizes a central database for case information. This database contains information such as decedent's background, asset information and next of kin. It is imperative that this information is not only accurate, but timely, in order to answer questions on a daily basis. This database shall be updated as soon as new case information is received and situations occur involving the decedent, family, or property.

REFERENCE: None

PROCEDURE:

1.0 Cases Referred to Public Administrator:

- 1.1 Upon the initial report of a case, the Office Assistant or Deputy Public Administrator shall enter all available information in Case Management. Critical information will be entered into **Case Note** or **Events**.
- 1.2 The Deputy Public Administrator or Office Assistant will enter the following information, if available, into the database: Decedent's name; Social Security number; date of birth; date and place of death; any vital statistics; contact information for next of kin, interested parties, and referring party; and asset information.

2.0 Updating Case Information:

- 2.1 The updating of case information is an on-going process that is shared by several people. The assigned Estate Investigator or Deputy Public Administrator are responsible for updating the database as new information becomes available.
 - 2.1.1 The assigned Estate Investigator shall enter investigation activities as they occur, including, but not limited to: next of kin searches; conversations with next of kin; interviews; residence searches; banking activity; and inventory items.
 - 2.1.2 The assigned Deputy Public Administrator shall enter estate management activities as they occur, including, but not limited to: disposition of remains; conversations with attorneys, accountants, realtors, next of kin, interested parties; court activity; creditor claims and tax return issues; and activities concerning real property.
 - 2.1.3 In the absence of the assigned Deputy or Estate Investigator, the staff person handling calls or front-desk inquiries, will update **Events** as to the information obtained. The assigned Deputy or Estate Investigator will be notified by the staff person of the call or inquiry.
- 2.2 The staff person responsible for the entry of the information into the database shall enter the information without delay, but no later than the last working day of the week that the event occurred.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	Investigations – Real Property and Mobile Homes	NUMBER: Policy # 800.32
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator bureau will endeavor to take great care in the preservation of real estate and mobile homes and make every effort to identify and safeguard these properties.

REFERENCE:

PROCEDURE:

- 1.0 Estate Investigators are charged with the duty of performing complete and comprehensive searches for a decedent's next of kin. These searches are more successful when the Social Security Administration (SSA) has responded to an inquiry concerning names of parents and place of birth. The next of kin search is required to be made within five days after have received the SSA response.
- 2.0 Within twelve working days of the assignment of an investigation, the Estate Investigator will perform a search for real estate and/or mobile homes owned by the decedent in the County of residence.
 - 2.1 If the decedent resided in other Counties, a search for real estate and/or mobile homes will be made in those areas.
- 3.0 Properties identified as owned by the decedent will be further investigated:
 - 3.1 How is title held?
 - 3.1.1 Joint tenancy
 - 3.1.2 Tenants in common
 - 3.1.3 Sole ownership
 - 3.1.4 Community property
 - 3.2
- 4.0 **Collection and Inventory of Cash**
 - 4.1 The receipt and inventory of cash will be handled with the same care as described in **Personal Property Intake and Disposition (Policy #800.11)** with the following requirements:
 - 4.1.1 All cash shall be counted and inventoried by the staff person that collected it the same day it is brought in.
 - 4.1.1.1 If overtime is required to accomplish the counting and inventorying of the cash, the staff person will seek supervisor approval. If a supervisor is not available, contact a supervisor by

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Investigations

TITLE:	Investigations – Real Property and Mobile Homes	NUMBER: Policy # 800.32
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phone or ask for approval from a Coroner supervisor. Overtime will be approved for this purpose.

4.1.1.2 If the person that brought in the cash cannot stay beyond end of shift, the task will be delegated to available personnel.

4.1.2 All cash is to be counted and inventoried in the presence of another staff person.

4.1.3 The cash will be counted and verified and placed on an Inventory Sheet, and witnessed by the staff person assisting with the count.

4.1.4 Cash is to be bagged separately and inventoried separately from other personal property or paperwork.

4.1.5 The cash and Inventory Sheet will be given to Accounting. If they are unavailable, the cash and Inventory Sheet will be placed in the drop safe. The Inventory Sheet will be stapled or attached to the bag.

4.1.6 An email will be sent to Accounting advising that the funds are in the safe.

5.0 Coins

5.1 If the cash also consists of a few coins, the coins will be counted and inventoried along with the cash as explained above.

5.2 If the coins are too many to easily count in a few moments, the coins will be placed, uncounted, in an evidence bag or suitable container, and given to supervision for safe keeping. No later than the following business day, the coins will be retrieved and taken to a local business with a coin counter by the staff person that collected the coins.

5.2.1 A second staff person will assist with taking the coins to a local business for counting and will sign the Inventory Sheet as a witness.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Professional Services

TITLE:	Accountant Services	NUMBER: Policy # 801.01
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will retain, as needed, certified public accountants or tax preparers for the preparation of personal and estate tax returns. The Bureau Commander, or his designee, will select accountants on a rotating basis.

REFERENCE:

1.0 Procedures:

1.1 The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau must file personal and estate tax returns in those decedent's estates meeting federal and state requirements for such returns.

1.1.1 Once a determination has been made by the Deputy Public Administrator that a federal or state tax return may be required, the Bureau Commander or his designee will select a certified public accountant or tax preparer to be contacted for assistance.

1.1.2 The Assistant Public Administrator will maintain a list of qualified accountants accepting cases from the Bureau.

1.1.2.1 The list will consist of accountants who have applied to the Public Administrator's Bureau and have been screened and interviewed by the Assistant Public Administrator and/or the Bureau Commander.

1.1.2.2 As the need arises, accountants may be added to the list after meeting with the Assistant Public Administrator or Bureau Commander.

1.1.2.3 In the event an accountant had been previously retained by the decedent, the accountant may prepare returns for the decedent's estate.

1.1.2.4 Should the services of an accountant prove unsatisfactory, in the opinion of the Assistant Public Administrator or Bureau Commander, their name may be removed from the list of qualified accountants at the discretion of the Bureau Commander.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Professional Services

TITLE:	Brokerage Services	NUMBER: Policy # 801.02
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will require, from time to time, the services of a broker-dealer to negotiate the sale or distribution of securities.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Section 10150(2)

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Registered broker – A broker registered or required to be registered under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.
- 1.2 Security – Includes any note, stock, treasury stock, bond, debenture, land trust certificates, certificates of beneficial trust in trusts, investment trust certificates, mortgage participation certificates, or certificates of deposit.

2.0 Procedures:

- 2.1 The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will, during the course of estate administration, liquidate or distribute securities, and will require the services of a registered broker-dealer.
 - 2.1.1 Once it is determined that it is appropriate to liquidate or transfer ownership of securities owned by a decedent, the Bureau Commander or his designee will select a registered broker-dealer to be contacted for assistance.
 - 2.1.2 The Assistant Public Administrator will maintain a list of qualified broker-dealers accepting accounts from the Bureau.
 - 2.1.3 The Assistant Public Administrator may add to the list those registered broker-dealers with an interest in managing securities for the Bureau, with the approval of the Bureau Commander.
 - 2.1.4 Should the services of a broker-dealer prove unsatisfactory, in the opinion of the Bureau Commander, future accounts will not be opened with this firm.
- 2.2 In those instances where the securities are on account with a registered broker-dealer, as previously arranged by the owner, the Bureau will maintain the account and work with the broker-dealer to meet the needs of the estate.
- 2.3 In those instances where the securities are in a limited number and easily managed by the Deputy Public Administrator, the deputy may make direct contact with shareholder services and arrange for the liquidation or distribution of the securities.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Professional Services

TITLE:	Real Estate Services	NUMBER: Policy # 801.03
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will require the services of real estate brokers and agents to liquidate properties belonging to the estates.

REFERENCE:

1.0 Procedures:

- 1.1 The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau sells a considerable amount of real estate, both improved and unimproved, and mobile homes. Real estate agents and brokers assist with the majority of these transactions.
 - 1.1.1 Once it has been determined that it is appropriate to liquidate a decedent's real estate or mobile home, the Bureau Commander or his designee will select a real estate broker or agent to be contacted for assistance.
 - 1.1.2 The Assistant Public Administrator will maintain a list of qualified real estate brokers or agents accepting properties from the Bureau.
 - 1.1.2.1 The list will consist of those broker/agents who have adequately handled sales for the Bureau.
 - 1.1.2.2 The Bureau Commander or Assistant Public Administrator may add real estate agents to the list as the need arises.
 - 1.1.2.3 Should the services of a broker/agent prove unsatisfactory, the name may be removed from the list at the discretion of the Bureau Commander.
- 1.2 Real estate brokers/agents will be selected on a rotating basis, with consideration given to location of property to be sold, and the specific needs of the property.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Professional Services

TITLE:	Heir Locators	NUMBER: Policy # 801.04
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau may require the services of private investigators to assist in locating heirs if the estate will escheat to the County or State.

REFERENCE: Probate Code Section 7660(a)(e), 9650(b)

1.0 Definitions:

- 1.1 Escheats - Reversion of property to the county or state upon the death of an owner who has neither a will nor any legal heirs.

2.0 Procedure:

- 2.1 Private investigative firms may be retained to locate heirs if the assets are to escheat.
- 2.2 A list of investigative firms will be established and maintained by the Assistant Public Administrator, and the Deputy Public Administrators will rotate among these firms.
- 2.3 The assigned deputy will request the name of an investigative firm from the rotation list maintained by the Assistant Public Administrator and enter into the contract for investigative services in miscellaneous and summary probate matters, with approval of the Bureau Commander or his designee.
- 2.4 A flat fee or hourly rate with a cap, rather than a percentage of an heir's share, shall be agreed upon when retaining a private investigator to locate heirs. A conference with the Assistant Public Administrator and/or Bureau Commander will occur before the agreement is finalized.
- 2.5 In formal and summary estates, it may be necessary to seek court approval before engaging the services of an heir locator. This decision will be made by supervision.
- 2.6 The Deputy Public Administrator will take the following action:
 - 2.6.1 The deputy will conduct an independent search for next of kin, including but not limited to, an internet search, examining the decedent's personal papers, and speaking with friends and interested parties.
 - 2.6.2 Request from the Assistant Public Administrator the investigative firm from the rotation list.
 - 2.6.3 Contact investigative firm to negotiate a contract. Discuss terms with supervision and the attorney representing the Public Administrator.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Professional Services

TITLE:	Heir Locators	NUMBER: Policy # 801.04
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2.6.4 Once court approval has been obtained or a decision has been made to enter into a contract, the contract will be signed by the Bureau Commander or his designee. At that time, personal information concerning the decedent can be provided to the contracted heir locator.

3.0 Contacts Initiated by Investigators:

3.1 In those instances where the estate is intestate or there are no known heirs, it is not unusual for a number of heir locators to contact the Public Administrator's Bureau at the time of the filing of the Public Administrator's petition for appointment. The Deputy Public Administrator may share with them information concerning the estate, as long as the same information is shared with each investigator that contacts the office. Under no circumstances is a member of the Bureau allowed to initiate contact with an investigator from an heir locator firm prior to the filing of the Public Administrator's petition for appointment.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Professional Services

TITLE	Attorney Selection/Agreement for Professional Services	NUMBER: Policy # 801.05
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will, as required, retain private counsel for the purpose of representing the Bureau in matters of estate administration. The Bureau Commander, or his designee, will select attorneys on a rotating basis.

REFERENCE: Government code Section 27643

1.0 Procedures:

- 1.1 The Sheriff-Public Administrator petitions the court for appointment in those cases valued in excess of \$50,000, and requires the services of an attorney in these and other estate matters.
- 1.2 Once it is determined that the estate falls under the jurisdiction of the Public Administrator, the Bureau Commander or his designee will select an attorney to represent the Public Administrator.
- 1.3 The Assistant Public Administrator will maintain a list of qualified attorneys accepting cases from the Bureau, and familiar with probate laws and procedures.
 - 1.3.1 The list will consist of those attorneys who have adequately handled estates for the Bureau and those attorneys who have shown an interest in representing the department.
 - 1.3.2 Attorneys will be added to the list (should the department require the services of additional attorneys), after meeting with the Assistant Public Administrator and/or Bureau Commander, and must be approved for hire by the Bureau Commander.
 - 1.3.2.1 Should the services of an attorney prove unsatisfactory in the opinion of the Assistant Public Administrator or Bureau Commander, the name will be removed from the list. In addition, if the situation warrants it, the attorney may be substituted out of active cases with the approval of the Bureau Commander.
- 1.4 Attorneys will be selected on a rotating basis, with consideration to location of decedent's residence and attorney's practice, and the particular and specific needs of the estate.
- 1.5 The assigned Deputy Public Administrator will ensure the **Agreement for Professional Services** (Form #10-100) is executed by the attorney and the Bureau Commander or his designee within 30 days of the selection of the attorney.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Professional Services

TITLE **Referrals to Private Attorneys**

NUMBER: Policy # 801.6

POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will not make referrals to private attorneys.

REFERENCE:

1.0 Procedures:

- 1.1 Frequently, the Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau receives referrals where it is subsequently determined that a private citizen will act on behalf of the estate rather than this Bureau. When this occurs, the person will often ask staff for the name of an attorney to assist in the accomplishment of the estate administration.
- 1.2 All requests for the name of an attorney to assist in the accomplishment of the estate administration or any other legal matters shall be answered by either referring the requestor to the Lawyer Referral and Information Service or to the Attorney Guide Section of the telephone directory.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Professional Services

TITLE	Attorney Fee Division or Referral Fee/Acknowledgement	NUMBER: Policy # 801.07
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POLICY: The Sheriff-Public Administrator's Bureau will not consent to a request by an attorney to divide a fee or pay a referral fee for legal services.

REFERENCE: California Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 2-200

1.0 Procedures:

- 1.1 Under certain circumstances, attorneys sometimes agree to split or share compensation between one another. When this agreement is made the attorney must have approval from his or her client. If an attorney representing the Sheriff-Public Administrator makes such a request, the request will be brought to the attention of supervision and in every instance ***shall be denied***.

It is the policy of the Sheriff-Public Administrator Bureau that consent (as required by California Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 2-200) ***will not be given by an employee of this bureau*** for any attorney fee division, fee split, or referral fee that is subject to the provisions of Rule 2-200.

California Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 2-200

(A) A member shall not divide a fee for legal services with a lawyer who is not a partner of, associate of, or shareholder with the member unless:

- (1) The client has consented in writing thereto after a full disclosure has been made in writing that a division of fees will be made and the terms of such division; and
(2) The total fee charged by all lawyers is not increased solely by reason of the provision of division of fees and is not unconscionable as that term is defined in rule 4-200.

B) Except as permitted in paragraph (A) of this rule or rule 2-300, a member shall not compensate, give, or promise anything of value to any lawyer for the purpose of recommending or securing employment of the member or the member's law firm by a client, or as a reward for having made a recommendation resulting in the employment of the member or the member's law firm by a client. A member's offering of or giving a gift or gratuity to any lawyer who has made a recommendation resulting in the employment of the member or the member's law firm shall not of itself violate this rule, provided that the gift or gratuity was not offered in consideration of any promise, agreement, or understanding that such a gift or gratuity would be forthcoming or that referrals would be made or encouraged in the future.

- 1.2 The assigned Deputy Public Administrator will ensure that a copy of Policy #801.07 is provided to the attorney selected by the Bureau Commander or his designee by obtaining the attorney's signature on Form #12-100, **Attorney Acknowledgement**, within 30 days of the assignment of said attorney.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR'S BUREAU
Professional Services

TITLE	Attorney Fee Division or Referral Fee/Acknowledgement	NUMBER: Policy # 801.07
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