



DEPARTMENTAL
GENERAL
ORDER

Rev.
18 Jun 99

H-2

Index as:

Ref: CALEA
Standards 42.2.2;
61.2.3

Deceased Persons, Property of
Property of Deceased Persons

PROPERTY OF DECEASED PERSONS

The purpose of this order is to set forth procedures for securing the body and possessions of deceased persons during death investigations.

I. PROTECTING THE BODY OF THE DECEASED

- A. The assigned member shall remain with the body, always keeping it in view, unless the body can be secured, to prevent unauthorized persons from approaching or disturbing the deceased and his/her possessions.
- B. If suspicious circumstances are involved, the member shall cause the Homicide Section to be notified.
- C. When the coroner arrives, the member shall release the body and property to him/her and obtain a receipt for the property.
- D. If suspicious circumstances are involved and the coroner arrives at the scene before a Departmental investigator, the assigned member shall ask the coroner not to disturb the scene or remove the body until the investigator arrives.

II. SEARCHING THE DECEASED

- A. Normally, the coroner will search the deceased upon assuming custody of the body. The coroner will prepare a receipt for the person's belongings and give the assigned member a copy, which shall be attached to the Departmental report.

- B. If the coroner requests the assigned member to sign the receipt as a party or witness to the search, the member shall not do so unless both of the following conditions are met:
 - 1. The member was present and observed the search, and
 - 2. The member is satisfied that the search was thorough (pockets turned inside out, all cash counted, jewelry described) and that the receipt lists everything found or removed.

- C. In the event that a deceased person must be identified before the coroner's arrival, the assigned member shall contact the coroner's office and request permission to search the deceased.
 - 1. If the coroner grants permission, the assigned member shall conduct the search in the presence of a disinterested witness or another member.
 - 2. The member shall make a thorough search and a complete list of everything found on or removed from the deceased.
 - 3. The member shall include in his/her report the name of the coroner who gave permission to search.
 - 4. After the coroner arrives and takes custody of the deceased, the member shall obtain a copy of the coroner's property receipt to submit with the Departmental report.

III. MOVING THE DECEASED

- A. In the event that a deceased person must be moved before the coroner's arrival, the member shall obtain permission from the Coroner's Office, and inform his/her supervisor, prior to moving the deceased.

- B. The assigned member shall ensure photographs of the deceased are taken prior to the movement.

- C. The member shall include the reason for the movement, the name of the photographer, and if applicable, the name of the coroner who gave permission to move the body, in his/her report.

By order of

Joseph Samuels, Jr.
Chief of Police

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