

Lincoln County Sheriff's Office

GENERAL ORDER

SUBJECT: DEATH INVESTIGATIONS

Number: 2-33

EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/01/2010

REVIEW DATE: 06/01/2011

AMENDS/SUPERSEDES: 09/15/2006

APPROVED:  SHERIFF TODD B. BRACKETT

I. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office to recognize the importance of death scene control and that all death investigation procedures must at a minimum comply with the Office of the Attorney General's "Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths" and the statutes governing the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner entitled the "Medical Examiners Act." It is also the policy of this agency that its members assist the appropriate death investigation agency as outlined in the protocol. (See Appendix 1 and Appendix 2).

II. PURPOSE:

It is the purpose of this policy to provide guidelines for this agency's law enforcement officers regarding the protocols of the Office of the Attorney General on death investigations and the Medical Examiners Act.

III. PROCEDURES FOR DEATH INVESTIGATIONS:

A. Cases Involving Violent Unnatural, Unexplained, Suspicious, or Suspected Deaths and Responsibility:

1. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to follow the procedures outlined in Section III of the AG's Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths.
2. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to assist the appropriate investigating agency as designated by the protocol and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner with respect to death and drug overdose investigations.

Minimum Standard 2 and 3

B. Cases Involving Fire and Explosion Deaths and Responsibility:

1. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to follow the procedures outlined in Section IV-A of the AG's Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths.
2. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to assist the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in these investigations.

Minimum Standard 2 and 4

C. Cases Involving Hunting Deaths and Responsibility:

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1. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to follow the procedures outlined in Section IV-B of the AG's Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths.
2. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to assist the Maine Warden Service, the designated Criminal Investigation Division, and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in these investigations.

Minimum Standard 2 and 5

D. Cases Involving Deaths while In-custody or Confinement and Responsibility:

1. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to follow the procedures outlined in Section IV-C of the AG's Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths.
2. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to assist the designated Criminal Investigation Division, the Department of Corrections, and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in these investigations.

Minimum Standard 2 and 6

E. Cases Involving Police-involved Deaths and Responsibility:

1. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to follow the procedures outlined in Section IV-D of the AG's Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths, as well as the separate protocol for the Reporting and Investigation of the Use of Deadly Force. (See Appendix 1 in Policy 2-1 on Situational Use of Force) Unless otherwise directed by the Sheriff or his designee.
2. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to assist Office of the Attorney General and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in these investigations.

Minimum Standard 2 and 7

F. Cases Involving Workplace Deaths and Responsibility:

1. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to follow the procedures outlined in Section IV-E of the AG's Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths.
2. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to assist the designated Criminal Investigation Division Office, the federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), the Maine Bureau of Labor Standards (BLS), and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, in these investigations.

Minimum Standard 2 and 8

G. Cases Involving Child Deaths and Responsibility:

1. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to follow the procedures outlined in Section II, III and IV-F of the AG's Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths.
2. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to assist the designated Criminal Investigation Division and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in these investigations.

Minimum Standard 2 and 9

H. Cases Involving Drug Overdose Deaths (or Serious Bodily Injury) and Responsibility:

2-33-

1. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to follow the procedures outlined in Section IV-G of the AG's Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths.
2. The responding law enforcement agency is primarily responsible for all aspects of these investigations to include proper crime scene processing and coordination with the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner and the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency.
3. Law enforcement officers of this agency are required to conduct a proper inventory of the items to include the name of the drug, the dosage, the date of prescription, the number of pills prescribed, the number of pills remaining, the physician's name, and the pharmacy name. If there is reason to believe that medications in the household prescribed to someone else were ingested by the victim, those medications should likewise be inventoried. (See Appendix #3)

Minimum Standard 10

**IV. PROCEDURES FOR THE RELEASE OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS:**

1. Employees of this agency are required to follow the procedures outlined in Section V of the AG's Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths, unless otherwise authorized by the Sheriff.
2. Employees of this agency are not authorized to release public statements. These public statements are only to be released under the authority of the Office of the Attorney General, as outlined in Section V of the AG's Protocol, unless otherwise authorized by the Sheriff.
3. The designated Criminal Investigation Division may release information in these cases after consultation with the Office of the Attorney General and, if applicable, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

Minimum Standard 11

**\*CHANGE ALL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS TO DEPUTIES, WHERE APPLICABLE\***

AARON M. FREY  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

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TTY USERS CALL MAINE RELAY 711



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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
6 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0006

REGIONAL OFFICES  
84 HARLOW ST. 2ND FLOOR  
BANGOR, MAINE 04401  
TEL: (207) 941-3070  
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125 PRESUMPCOT ST., SUITE 26  
PORTLAND, MAINE 04103  
TEL: (207) 822-0260  
FAX: (207) 822-0259

14 ACCESS HIGHWAY, STE. 1  
CARIBOU, MAINE 04736  
TEL: (207) 496-3792  
FAX: (207) 496-3291

April 15, 2021

Dear Colleague:

The *Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths, Probable Deaths, and Missing Persons* has been updated. A copy is enclosed. We have collaborated closely with the criminal justice and forensic communities to assure proper notification to those agencies necessary for a complete and thorough investigation. All law enforcement officers responding to a situation involving a death, a suspected or anticipated death, or a missing person are required to follow the Protocol. The protocol is especially designed for first responders.

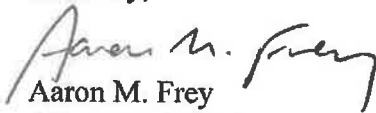
The major changes in the updated Protocol emphasize the importance of notifying the appropriate agencies in situations where death is imminent, reasonably anticipated or suspected, and certain cases of missing persons. Even in those situations where death has not yet occurred, timely implementation of these procedures and notifications is critical to preserving important evidence.

The updated Protocol eliminates the requirement to notify the State Police Major Crimes Unit of suicides (unless a victim is under 18 years of age) and drug overdoses, while the requirement to notify MDEA of an overdose remains. In all situations requiring notification to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner, the OCME will guide callers to notify any other agencies necessary, depending on the nature and circumstances of an event. There is also a change in the required notifications in the case of a missing person that, in addition to the timely issuance of a File 6 and inclusion in NCIC, requires notification of MCU when there are suspicious or unusual circumstances, and the Office of Chief Medical examiner in certain cases.

An addition to the Deadly Force Reporting Protocol is a requirement to report the use of a chokehold, stranglehold, carotid hold, or any other technique that physically compromises the airway or blood flow to the head, regardless of whether death or injury results. This additional requirement is consistent with a mandate of the MCJA Board of Trustees that such techniques are permitted only when the use of deadly force is authorized.

Thank you for your diligence and professionalism in providing the high level of services that Maine citizens deserve and to which they have become accustomed.

Sincerely,

  
Aaron M. Frey  
Attorney General

Enclosure



Maine Office of the  
**Attorney General**

**PROTOCOL FOR THE  
INVESTIGATION OF  
DEATHS,  
PROBABLE DEATHS,  
AND  
MISSING PERSONS**

**AARON M. FREY  
Attorney General**

**April 15, 2021**



**INVESTIGATION OF DEATHS, PROBABLE DEATHS, AND MISSING PERSONS**

<b>Augusta RCC</b>	<b>624-7076</b>	<b>800-452-4664</b>
<b>Bangor RCC</b>	<b>973-3700</b>	<b>800-432-7381</b>
<b>Houlton RCC</b>	<b>532-5400</b>	<b>800-924-2261</b>
<b>Bangor PD</b>	<b>947-7382</b>	<b>947-7382 x1 (CID)</b>
<b>Portland PD</b>	<b>874-8575</b>	<b>874-8526 (CID)</b>

**Criminal Division – Office of the Attorney General**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Office</i>	<i>Home</i>	<i>Work Cell</i>	<i>Personal Cell</i>
Lisa Marchese, Deputy AG	626-8508	829-4432	557-5688	831-9145
Lisa Bogue, Assistant AG	626-8567		557-5655	798-9791
Meg Elam, Assistant AG Summer	626-8580	797-2710 293-4461	441-6149	317-6840
Bud Ellis, Assistant AG	626-8833		441-1024	239-0155
Leane Zainea, Assistant AG	626-8514	338-2611	446-2330	491-7875

**In all cases, contact Office of Chief Medical Examiner – 1-800-870-8744  
(Toll free number is for law enforcement use only.)**

***FIRE AND EXPLOSION DEATH***  
Contact Office of the State Fire Marshal through RCC

***HUNTING DEATH***  
Contact Maine Warden Service through RCC

***DEATH WHILE IN CUSTODY OR CONFINEMENT***  
(Jail, Holding Facility, Correctional Institution)  
Contact appropriate Major Crimes Unit through RCC  
Contact Department of Corrections:  
Gary LaPlante: Office 287-4392–Cell 310-1619 or  
Ryan Andersen: Cell 620-4805

***USE OF DEADLY FORCE BY LAW ENFORCEMENT or  
DEATH WHILE INERACTING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT***  
Contact Investigation Division of Attorney General’s Office through RCC

***WORKPLACE DEATH***  
Contact Office of Chief Medical Examiner

***MISSING PERSON***  
*Under appropriate circumstances explained in the Protocol,*  
Contact appropriate Major Crimes Unit through RCC and Office of Chief Medical Examiner

***DEATH OF CHILD LESS THAN 3 YEARS OF AGE***  
Contact appropriate Major Crimes Unit through RCC and Office of Chief Medical Examiner

***DRUG OVERDOSE***  
Contact MDEA District Supervisor through RCC

***SUICIDE OF PERSON LESS THAN 18 YEARS OF AGE***  
Contact appropriate Major Crimes Unit through RCC and Office of Chief Medical Examiner



Maine Office of the  
**Attorney General**

## **Protocol for the Investigation of Deaths, Probable Deaths, and Missing Persons**

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### **I. BACKGROUND**

A. The purpose of this protocol is to establish procedures for law enforcement agencies in cases involving deaths, situations where death appears imminent, situations where death is reasonably suspected, and missing persons. Timely implementation of these procedures and notifications is often critical. Accordingly, this protocol and its required notifications apply to cases of death, cases when it is reasonably anticipated that death may result, cases where death is reasonably suspected, or a missing person under suspicious or unusual circumstances.

B. Technical assistance and expertise are indispensable to the successful investigation of these cases. The Office of the Attorney General and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner will continue to rely upon the State Police Major Crimes Unit as its primary death investigative arm, except in the City of Portland and the City of Bangor where the respective police department is the primary death investigative arm.<sup>1</sup>

### **II. IMPORTANCE OF DEATH SCENE CONTROL**

Control and security of the death scene is a primary focus of these procedures. Often, the medical examiner and medico-legal death investigator can gain valuable insight into the cause, manner, and circumstances of death, as well as the time of death, from viewing the scene and viewing the body at the scene. Moreover, the scene is sometimes replete with subtle clues that could aid in the identification or discovery of a perpetrator. All, or a significant part, of this evidence could be lost through inadvertent disturbance of the scene by persons lacking the required expertise.

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<sup>1</sup> References to "MCU" in this Protocol mean the State Police Major Crimes Unit and the respective criminal investigation divisions of the Portland Police Department, and the Bangor Police Department.

### III. PROCEDURES IN ALL CASES

A. Initial Procedures. The first law enforcement officer at the scene of a death, a situation involving a probable death, or a missing person under suspicious or unusual circumstances should, without disturbing the body or scene:<sup>2</sup>

1. Conduct a cursory search of the premises for the limited purpose of determining if there are perpetrators or other victims present.
2. Determine that death has in fact occurred. If there is any evidence of life, initiate all necessary life-sustaining measures.
3. Make a cursory examination of the scene to determine if the circumstances are at all suspicious. (All deaths or injuries resulting from gunshot wounds are suspicious until a thorough investigation has determined otherwise.) If the circumstances are suspicious (or there is no body, but there is a possibility that a death or foul play may have occurred), the following procedures will be followed:
  - (a) Secure and protect the scene. Do not move or otherwise disturb a body unless it is in immediate danger of destruction or further damage.
  - (b) Notify supervisors, the Office of Chief Medical Examiner, and MCU. The Office of Chief Medical Examiner will notify the Office of the Attorney General. If you wish, you may obtain the name and telephone number of the Attorney General Duty Officer from the Office of Chief Medical Examiner or the Regional Communications Center (RCC), enabling you to be in direct contact with the Duty Officer.
  - (c) Record names, addresses, telephone numbers, and other pertinent information of all persons present or assign another person to this task.
  - (d) Maintain a timetable of all persons arriving and leaving the scene.
  - (e) Unless circumstances require it, do not arrest, detain, or question a suspect without prior authorization of the MCU detective in charge or the Attorney General Duty Officer.
  - (f) If the circumstances require arresting or detaining a suspect, do not undertake questioning of the suspect without first discussing this procedure with the MCU detective in charge or the Attorney General Duty Officer. Electronically record any statements volunteered or spontaneously made by a suspect.

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<sup>2</sup> See the attached Death Investigation guide.

(g) Determine if a child has lost both parents as a result of homicide or has lost one parent and the other parent has been arrested, detained, or committed to a correctional facility or mental health facility for an offense related to a homicide, and advise MCU, which is then responsible for notifying the Maine Bureau of Child and Family Services at 800-452-1999.<sup>3</sup>

B. In a case of an accidental death, including a motor vehicle crash, contact the Office of the District Attorney and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner.

C. Deaths NOT reportable, i.e., "attended death." A death from natural causes that is has been or will be certified by a physician and is not suspicious need not be reported to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner.

D. Attendance at Examination or Autopsy. The Office of Chief Medical Examiner may arrange for a local medical examiner or medico-legal investigator to conduct an examination of a body at a local funeral home, or an autopsy may be conducted at the Office of Chief Medical Examiner in Augusta. In either situation, the investigating officer or a representative of the investigating agency should be available for the examination or autopsy so that the medical examiner or investigator is fully aware of all the known facts and circumstances regarding the scene and the investigation.<sup>4</sup>

#### IV. PROCEDURES FOR CASES WITH SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

##### ***A. Fire or Explosion Death***

The State Fire Marshal is the official representative of the Attorney General in the investigation of fires or explosions resulting in a fatality. The law enforcement officer or firefighter discovering a body in a fire or following an explosion shall notify the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner. The scene is not to be disturbed or the body moved unless the body is in immediate danger of destruction or further damage. If the case is one of suspected arson or an otherwise suspicious death, it is to be managed as any other suspicious death, which includes notifying the appropriate MCU.

##### ***B. Hunting Death***

The State Warden Service is the official representative of the Attorney General in the investigation of a hunting fatality. The law enforcement officer encountering an apparent hunting fatality shall notify the State Warden Service by calling the appropriate RCC and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner. The State Warden Service will in turn notify the appropriate MCU for assistance in conducting the investigation. The scene is not to be

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<sup>3</sup> 17-A M.R.S. § 4023

<sup>4</sup> When death has not occurred, but is probable or reasonably anticipated, the Office of Chief Medical Examiner needs the admission bloods from the first hospital where the patient was treated. Hospitals usually discard blood after seven days unless requested to preserve it. Accordingly, law enforcement must notify the OCME in such cases so that bloods are preserved in possible delayed deaths.

disturbed or the body moved unless the body is in immediate danger of destruction or further damage.

***C. Death while in custody or confinement***

1. Jail, Holding Facility, Correctional Institution. The death or probable death of an individual while in custody or confinement in a jail, holding facility, or correctional institution, regardless of the likely cause, manner, and circumstances, is to be reported immediately to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner, the appropriate MCU, and the Operations Division of the Department of Corrections. The Attorney General's Office will thereafter review all investigative results.

2. Mental Health Facility. The death or probable death of an individual while in custody or confinement as a result of an order to undergo a mental health examination<sup>5</sup>, being involuntarily committed to a mental institution following acceptance of a negotiated insanity plea or following a verdict or finding of insanity<sup>6</sup>, or having been taken into protective custody<sup>7</sup>, regardless of the likely cause, manner and circumstances, is to be reported immediately to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner and the appropriate MCU. The Attorney General's Office will thereafter review all investigative results.

***D. Deadly Force by Law Enforcement***

When a law enforcement officer uses deadly force in the performance of the officer's duties, regardless of the outcome, immediate reporting to the Investigation Division of the Attorney General's Office is required. If death was the outcome, the Attorney General's Office will contact the Office of Chief Medical Examiner.<sup>8</sup>

***E. Death While Interacting with Law Enforcement***

The death or probable death of an individual while interacting with law enforcement, regardless of the likely cause, manner, and circumstances, requires an immediate report to the Investigation Division of the Office of the Attorney General and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner.

***F. Workplace death***

The "workplace manslaughter" statute may be applicable to a situation where an employee dies in the workplace. The investigation of a workplace death is the responsibility of the responding law enforcement agency but requires an immediate report to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner. The Office of Chief Medical Examiner will notify the Office of the Attorney General and, if necessary, the appropriate MCU. It is also likely that investigators from the Occupational Health and Safety Administration

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<sup>5</sup> 15 M.R.S.A. § 101-B

<sup>6</sup> 15 M.R.S.A. § 103

<sup>7</sup> 34-B M.R.S.A. § 3862

<sup>8</sup> See the attached *Attorney General's Protocol for the Reporting of the Use of Deadly Force by a Law Enforcement Officer*.

(OSHA) or the Maine Bureau of Labor Standards (BLS) will be assigned to assist in the investigation. In the initial scene investigation, law enforcement officers should treat the situation as they would a vehicular manslaughter, securing photographs, measurements, and other evidence.

***G. Death of Child less than 3 years of age***

Sections II and III are applicable when responding to a child death. In addition to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner, MCU is to be contacted in any case of the death of a child under the age of three years. Singling out deaths of young children for special investigation is necessary because of the different technical approach and types of inquiry required in pursuing the investigations.

***H. Suicide***

1. When circumstances suggest a suicide, the Office of Chief Medical Examiner must be notified.
2. Victim less than 18 years. In addition to the COME, MCU must be notified if the victim is less than 18 years of age, or if the victim is in custody or confinement.
3. Immediately send suicide notes to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner.<sup>9</sup> If not convenient, fax a copy or email a picture while the originals take their time through the mail or other transport. Do not send such material with the body.

***I. Suspected Drug Overdose***

Cases of a suspected drug overdose resulting in death or serious bodily injury require special attention. The purpose of the investigation in each case is to determine, to the extent possible, the cause, manner, and circumstances surrounding the drug overdose, the identity of the drug involved, and the source of the drug. Furnishing scheduled drugs that result in the death or serious bodily injury of a person is a serious crime. In all cases of suspected drug overdose, the following procedures are required:

1. Notification of the Office of Chief Medical Examiner (if death has occurred or is reasonably anticipated) and the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency (MDEA).
2. The MDEA supervisor will determine if sufficient information exists to initiate an investigation into the source of the drug(s) suspected of causing the overdose. The responding agency is primarily responsible for all aspects of the investigation, to include proper crime scene processing and coordination with the Office of Chief Medical Examiner and MDEA. The MDEA supervisor will immediately notify the appropriate prosecutor of the suspected overdose and the ensuing investigation.

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<sup>9</sup> State law provides that original written or recorded material, including text messages or other electronic media, which may express suicidal intent, e.g., "suicide note," must be provided to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner. 22 M.R.S. § 3028(5). The law also declares such material to be confidential, i.e., not subject to public access.

3. A thorough scene investigation is necessary to determine the cause, manner, and circumstances surrounding the overdose. This includes witness statements, inventory of any drugs or drug paraphernalia, cell phone information, information about the victim's medical or mental health history, and identification of all known treating physicians. One aspect of an investigation is to determine if the victim possessed any drugs other than those legally prescribed.
4. Medications, illicit drugs, or substances thought to be illicit drugs at the scene are to be secured as evidence. Do not leave such evidence with the body for transport or at a funeral home. Inventory and record the evidence and fax a copy of the inventory or evidence receipt to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner at 624-7178. A proper inventory of the items includes the name of the drug, the dosage, the date of prescription, the number of pills prescribed, the number of pills remaining, the name of the prescribing physician, and the name of the dispensing pharmacy. If there is reason to believe that the victim ingested medications prescribed to someone else, those medications should likewise be inventoried. (A form for documenting this inventory is attached.)
5. The actual cause of death in suspected drug overdoses may not be readily apparent and may not be determined for several weeks pending the results of toxicology. These cases are to be investigated until the investigating agency, MDEA, and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner have determined no further investigation is necessary and/or the cause and manner of death are determined.

***J. In-water Death***

Deaths of persons found in water require notification to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner and may be specially investigated because of the different technical approach and types of inquiry needed in pursuing such investigations. There are three types of categories for water-related deaths: accidental, suicidal, and homicidal. When law enforcement officers respond to the scene of an aquatic/marine related death and foul play is either obvious or suspected, the responding officer should follow this protocol as stated in Section II and III above. The decision to specially investigate will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Office of Chief Medical Examiner, usually in collaboration with an appropriate police authority and the Attorney General's Office. Even when not specially investigated, an investigation is still necessary as in any medical examiner case.

***K. Missing Person***

1. In addition to the requirements set out in state law in the Missing Children Act,<sup>10</sup> the report of a missing person – child or otherwise – requires within two hours of the report the issuance of a File 6 and inclusion in the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). Notification of MCU is required if there are suspicious or unusual circumstances. An example of “unusual circumstances” is a reported absence under circumstances inconsistent with established patterns of behavior.

2. State law also requires that the Office of Chief Medical Examiner maintain information on missing persons.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, if a person reported as missing is not located within 24 hours of the report, notification to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner is required.

***L. Line-of-duty death of a firefighter.***

It is imperative to notify the Office of the State Fire Marshal as soon as possible in the event of the death of a firefighter in the line of duty. The federal Public Safety Officers Benefits (PSOB) Program provides death and education benefits to survivors of fallen firefighters, and the State Fire Marshal is the entity that carries out the provisions of a Line-of-Duty Death Response Plan that will assure compliance with the requirements of the PSOB Program.

**V. PUBLIC STATEMENTS**

Only the Office of the Attorney General is authorized to disseminate information or public statements in homicide or suspected homicide cases. The appropriate MCU may disseminate information in these cases only after consultation with and approval of the Office of the Attorney General.

A. Examples of information that may be released in investigations covered by this Protocol, other than homicide or suspected homicide cases:

1. Unless confidential pursuant to law, the identity of a victim, if confirmed and not in question, after notification of family or next of kin. If there is any question as to the identity, the information remains confidential.
2. Information regarding the cause, manner, and circumstances of a death, but only with authorization of and after consultation with the Office of Chief Medical Examiner and the Office of the Attorney General.
3. A brief description, e.g., hunting fatality, suspicious death, accident, time, and place, whether the investigation is in progress, and the identity of the investigating agency.

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<sup>10</sup> 25 M.R.S. chapter 257.

<sup>11</sup> 22 M.R.S. § 3034.

4. A warning to the public of any dangers.
5. A request for assistance in apprehending a suspect or assistance in other matters if the information released is limited to accomplishing that purpose.
6. The name of a person charged (except a juvenile), age, residence, employment, and marital status.
7. The circumstances immediately surrounding an arrest or charge, including the time and place of the arrest, resistance, pursuit, and possession and use of weapons.
8. The substance or text of the charge, such as a complaint or formal accusation.
9. Information contained in a public record, stated so as to attribute the information to a public record.
10. The scheduling or result of any step or action in the judicial proceeding.

B. The following types of information should not be released:

1. Information as to the character, reputation, or prior criminal record or mental health history of an accused person or a prospective witness.
2. Admissions, confessions, or a statement or alibi attributable to any accused person, except as otherwise contained in a public record.
3. The performance or results of tests or the desire, agreement, or refusal of the accused or any potential witness to take or perform a test, including a polygraph examination.
4. Statements or information concerning the credibility or anticipated testimony of prospective witnesses.
5. The possibility of a plea to the offense charged or to a lesser offense, or other disposition.
6. Opinions concerning evidence or arguments in the case, whether or not it is anticipated that such evidence or arguments will be used at trial.
7. Opinions as to the guilt of the accused, the evidence, or the merits of the case.
8. General Rule: DO NOT COMMENT ON THE EVIDENCE.

Dated: April 15, 2021

AARON M. FREY  
Attorney General

**OFFICE OF CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER  
DRUG/MEDICATION INVENTORY**

Officer: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Case #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rec'd from: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Victim: \_\_\_\_\_

OCME Case Number: \_\_\_\_\_

	NAME OF DRUG* AND DOSAGE	DIRECTIONS FOR USAGE	DATE ISSUED	NUMBER ISSUED	NUMBER PRESENT	PHYSICIAN	PHARMACY
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							

\* Please indicate if the drug is prescribed for a person other than the victim.



# MAINE STATE POLICE

## INVESTIGATION FORM

### ATTORNEY GENERAL PROTOCOL

CASE INFORMATION			
Case #:		Date:	Time of Incident:
ADDRESS OF INCIDENT –TO INCLUDE STREET NAME, HOUSE #, APT # & TOWN			
REPORTING AGENCY INFORMATION			
REPORTING AGENCY:			
DATE REPORTED:			
TIME REPORTED:			
OFFICER NAME:			
INITIAL INFORMATION REC'D BY CALLER:			
VICTIM INFORMATION			
NAME:			
DOB:			
ADDRESS:			
PHONE NUMBER(S):			
IS THE VICTIM DECEASED:	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	SUSPECTED CAUSE:	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
DID THE VICTIM RECOVER:	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
WAS NARCAN USED:	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
SCENE INFORMATION			
ADDRESS:			
HOW/WHERE SUBJECT FOUND:			
WHO FOUND SUBJECT:			
RELATIONSHIP:			
WITNESSES:			
SUMMARY OF SCENE OBSERVATIONS:			
ITEMS TOUCHED OR MOVED:			
CONDITION OF BODY: (TRAUMA/LIVIDITY/RIGOR)			
MEDICAL HISTORY:			
DEPARTMENT HISTORY:			
WEAPON:			
VICTIM CELL PHONE:	EXAMINED YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	SEIZED YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
POTENTIAL EVIDENCE: (CELL, DRUGS, SUICIDE NOTE)			
IF RESPONSE IS REQUIRED, IS SCENE SECURE:	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		



# MAINE STATE POLICE INVESTIGATION FORM

## ATTORNEY GENERAL PROTOCOL

MEDICAL EXAMINER NOTIFIED:			
FILE 14D SENT:	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		
MDEA NOTIFIED:	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		
DISTRICT ATTORNEY NOTIFIED:	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		
PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN:	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		
PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY WHOM:			
<b>DRUG INFORMATION</b>			
SUSPECTED DRUG(S) USED:			
METHOD OF USE:	INJECTED <input type="checkbox"/> INHALED <input type="checkbox"/> SMOKED <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:		
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE THEY OD'D IN THE PAST:			
WHERE DID THE DRUGS COME FROM:			
WHAT SIZE DOSE DID THEY TAKE THAT IS "NORMAL" FOR THEM:			
<b>RESCUE INFORMATION</b>			
RESCUE DEPARTMENT NAME:			
TRANSPORTED:	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		
IF TRANSPORTED, WHERE:	HOSPITAL <input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>PROPERTY OF OCCURRENCE</b>			
IS THE VICTIM THE OWNER OR RENTER OF PROPERTY WHERE THE OVERDOSE OCCURRED?	OWNER <input type="checkbox"/> RENTER <input type="checkbox"/>		
PHONE NUMBER:			
<b>WITNESSES / OTHERS PRESENT AT SCENE</b>			
NAME:	DOB:	PHONE:	
NAME:	DOB:	PHONE:	
NAME:	DOB:	PHONE:	
NAME:	DOB:	PHONE:	
NAME:	DOB:	PHONE:	
NAME:	DOB:	PHONE:	
NAME:	DOB:	PHONE:	
NAME:	DOB:	PHONE:	
NAME:	DOB:	PHONE:	
<b>MISSING PERSONS</b>			
NAME:			
DOB:			
ADDRESS:			



# MESSENGER – UNATTENDED DEATH

Send to **File-14D**

Attention: **Chief Medical Examiner**

<b>1 &amp; 2. VICTIM INFORMATION</b>			
Name:		Date of Birth:	
Route/Street:		City/Town:	
<b>3 &amp; 4. COMPLAINANT INFORMATION</b>			
Name or Department Name		Telephone Number:	
Route/Street:		City/Town:	State: Zip Code
<b>5. DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF OCCURRENCE:</b>			
Date:	Time:	Street & City:	
<b>6 7 &amp; 8. ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION</b>			
Medical Examiner's Name:			
Investigating Officer:		OCA:	
Department/Agency:		Telephone Number:	
District Attorney:			
<b>9 &amp; 10. OFFICIAL CAUSE &amp; CLASSIFICATION</b>			
Cause of Death:		Classification:	
<b>11. AUTOPSY INFORMATION &amp; RELEASE OF BODY</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Location/Place of Autopsy:	Body Released to:	
<b>13. SYNOPSIS:</b>			
<b>14: Firearm involved:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NA	Name of Owner:	Relationship to deceased:	
<b>15: MDEA Notification – required for all overdose deaths:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NA	Name of MDE Supervisor		



Maine Office of the  
**Attorney General**

**PROTOCOL FOR THE  
REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION  
OF THE USE OF DEADLY FORCE**

**Authority.** The Attorney General has exclusive jurisdiction for the direction and control of any criminal investigation of a law enforcement officer who, while acting in the performance of that officer's duties, uses deadly force.<sup>1</sup> Such use of deadly force will be the subject of an investigation or review and legal analysis by the Office of the Attorney General to determine if its use complied with the applicable provisions of law. Detectives from the Office of the Attorney General will conduct or supervise the investigation, with the assistance of the State Police or other agencies as circumstances require.

**Definitions.** For purposes of this protocol, "deadly force" has the same meaning as in 17-A M.R.S. § 2(8). "Deadly force" means physical force that a person uses with the intent of causing, or that a person knows to create a substantial risk of causing, death or serious bodily injury.<sup>2</sup> Except as provided in section 101, subsection 5,<sup>3</sup> intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly discharging a firearm in the direction of another person or at a moving vehicle constitutes deadly force.

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<sup>1</sup> 5 M.R.S.A. § 200-A

<sup>2</sup> As used in subsection 8, "serious bodily injury" means a bodily injury – i.e. physical pain, physical illness or any impairment of physical condition – that creates a substantial risk of death or which causes serious, permanent disfigurement or loss or substantial impairment of the function of any bodily member or organ, or extended convalescence necessary for receiving of physical health. 17-A M.R.S.A. § 2 (5) and (23).

<sup>3</sup> For purposes of this chapter, use by a law enforcement officer, a corrections officer or a corrections supervisor of the following is use of nondeadly force:

A. Chemical mace or any similar substance composed of a mixture of gas and chemicals that has or is designed to have a disabling effect upon human beings; or

B. A less-than-lethal munition that has or is designed to have a disabling effect upon human beings. For purposes of this paragraph, "less-than-lethal munition" means a low-kinetic energy projectile designed to be discharged from a firearm that is approved by the Board of Trustees of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy.

**Requirement.** A law enforcement agency whose officer uses deadly force while acting in the performance of that officer's duties shall make notification of the event, as soon as practicable, to the Investigation Division of the Office of the Attorney General. The following circumstances in which physical force is used requires reporting by the agency whose officer uses such physical force while acting in the performance of that officer's duties:

1. Physical force that in fact causes death or serious bodily injury.
2. Physical force under circumstances that in fact create a substantial risk of causing death or serious bodily injury, regardless of whether death or injury results.
3. Physical force when it is the officer's intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, regardless of whether death or injury results.
4. Discharge of a firearm in the general direction of another person or at a moving vehicle, regardless of whether the projectile strikes the person or vehicle. (It is not necessary to report the discharge of a firearm if the discharge is that of a "less-than-lethal munition," as defined in law. See Footnote 3 above. Also, it is not necessary to report the pointing of a firearm at another person.)
5. A chokehold, stranglehold, carotid hold, or any other technique that physically compromises the airway or blood flow to the head, regardless of whether death or injury results.
6. Ramming or striking an occupied vehicle, except when the Precision Immobilization Technique (PIT maneuver) is used in the manner trained and under the circumstances intended for its use and no serious bodily injury or death results.
7. A roadblock set up to terminate a vehicular pursuit when the roadblock in fact creates a substantial risk of causing death or serious bodily injury to the occupants of the fleeing vehicle or other persons and that results in serious bodily injury or death.

**Procedure for reporting.** The use of physical force identified above must be reported as soon as practicable by the officer's agency to the Investigation Division of the Office of the Attorney General.

**Contact Investigation Division of the Attorney General's Office through RCC**

**Preservation of the scene, electronic media, and witnesses.** The scene shall be preserved and cordoned, and involved officers separated by available law enforcement officials until the arrival of a detective from the Office of the Attorney General or a designee whose responsibility is to coordinate the investigation and/or to process the scene. Preserve as soon as possible any electronic media, such as cruiser or body camera video recordings. Other than what is necessary to identify and preserve such recordings, no involved officers may view such recordings prior to the officers giving a statement. Do not disturb the scene. In the case of a death, the body of the deceased is not to be moved or disturbed in any way until authorized by the Attorney General's Office or the Office of Chief Medical Examiner, unless the body is in immediate danger of destruction or further damage. Other personnel authorized to access the scene are evidence technicians of the State Police or other agencies or other personnel designated and dispatched under the authority of the Attorney General.

**Interviews of officers.** During the Attorney General's investigation, no member or representative of an involved law enforcement officer's agency may be present during interviews of the officer, unless previously authorized by the Attorney General's Director of Investigations or the Director's designee. No agent of an involved law enforcement officer's agency may issue any order or instruction of any type concerning whether the officer should or should not speak with a detective from the Office of the Attorney General.<sup>4</sup>

**Public Statements.** No media statements or other public comments regarding a determination of an involved officer's legal justification or criminal culpability may be made or given except by the Office of the Attorney General. Other public comments, particularly as they relate to the facts of a particular event, may not be made or given without prior authorization and coordination with the Office of the Attorney General. Release of the name of an involved officer will be postponed until the officer and the head of the officer's employing agency are notified that the information will be released.<sup>5</sup> The name of a decedent or injured person may be released after the notification of next of kin.

The following guidelines govern the public release of information during the pendency of the investigation.

**Examples of information that *may* be released:**

1. The fact that an incident involving the use of deadly force occurred and, pursuant to statutory requirements, is being investigated by the Office of the Attorney General.
2. The fact that the investigation is focused upon a determination of whether deadly force was in fact used and whether the use complied with the applicable provisions of law.
3. Whether person(s) were injured or killed.
4. The identity of person(s) injured or killed to include name, age, residence, occupation, and family status, but only after notification of next of kin.
5. The time and place of the incident under investigation.
6. The identity of an involved law enforcement officer, to include name, age, and agency affiliation.
7. A brief description of the circumstances of the particular incident, e.g., the nature of a call for service, an arrest, a vehicle stop, etc.

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<sup>4</sup> This section is necessary to maintain the appropriate legal distinction between the Attorney General's criminal investigation and an administrative or internal affairs investigation.

<sup>5</sup> The name of the subject officer in matters involving the use of deadly force is a matter of public information. 5 MRS § 7070-A, 30-A MRS § 503(1-A) and § 2702(1-A).

Examples of information that *may not* be released:

1. The details of investigative procedures or speculation upon any matters, legal or otherwise.
2. The character or reputation of any person(s) involved in the incident.
3. The existence or contents of any statement given by any persons involved in the incident, or the failure of any persons to provide statements.
4. The identity of witnesses and any information provided by witnesses.

Dated: April 15, 2021

AARON M. FREY  
Attorney General

## Medical Examiners Act

### 22 §3021. TITLE

This chapter shall be referred to as the Medical Examiner Act.

### 22 §3022. OFFICE OF CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER

**1. Appointment and qualifications of the Chief Medical Examiner.** There is created, in the Department of the Attorney General, the Office of Chief Medical Examiner for the State. The Chief Medical Examiner is appointed by the Governor for a term of 7 years and until the Chief Medical Examiner's successor is appointed and qualified. The Chief Medical Examiner must possess a degree of doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy, be licensed to practice in the State and be expert in the specialty of forensic pathology. Expertise in the specialty of forensic pathology may be established either by certification in forensic pathology by the American Board of Pathology or the American Osteopathic Board of Pathology or by successful completion of an examination to test expertise in forensic pathology designed for the State by acknowledged experts in the field selected by the Governor. Any vacancy in the Office of Chief Medical Examiner must be filled by appointment by the Governor for a full term of 7 years. The Chief Medical Examiner may hire, subject to the Civil Service Law, necessary office and laboratory personnel to carry out the proper functioning of the Chief Medical Examiner's office.

**2. Appointment and qualifications of the Deputy Chief Medical Examiner.** The Chief Medical Examiner may select one or more of the medical examiners to serve as deputy chief medical examiners. The Deputy Chief Medical Examiner serves at the pleasure of the Chief Medical Examiner and, if salaried, is unclassified. The salary of the Deputy Chief Medical Examiner must be set in salary range 56 of the Standard Salary Schedule for Medical Personnel as published by the Bureau of Human Resources. In the event of the Deputy Chief Medical Examiner's temporary absence, the Chief Medical Examiner or, if the Chief Medical Examiner is unavailable, the Attorney General may designate one of the deputy chief medical examiners to serve as acting Chief Medical Examiner. The acting Chief Medical Examiner has all of the powers and responsibilities of the Chief Medical Examiner.

**2-A. Appointment of office administrator.** The Chief Medical Examiner may appoint one office administrator who shall serve at the pleasure of the Chief Medical Examiner. The office administrator shall perform such duties as may be delegated by the Chief Medical Examiner. Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, the compensation of the Chief Medical Examiner's office administrator must be fixed by the Chief Medical Examiner.

**3. Certification and completion of reports of deaths.** The Office of Chief Medical Examiner shall be responsible for certification and completion of reports of deaths identified as medical examiner cases by section 3025. This shall be accomplished by examination of bodies and useful objects and by investigation and inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the deaths. The Office of Chief Medical Examiner may compile and preserve records and data relating to criminal prosecution, public health, public safety and vital statistics, as these relate to his responsibilities.

**4. Judgments of the medical examiners.** Judgments of the medical examiners as to the identity of the deceased and the cause, manner, date, time and place of death shall be made

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with reasonable care based on a preponderance of the evidence.

**5. Custodian of records.** The Chief Medical Examiner shall be the custodian of the records of the Office of Chief Medical Examiner. Copies of those records not declared confidential in subsection 8 shall be available upon written request.

**6. Certificate as evidence.** Notwithstanding any other provision of law or rule of evidence, the certificate of the Chief Medical Examiner, under seal of the State, shall be received in any court as prima facie evidence of any fact stated in the certificate or documents attached to the certificate. The certificate under the seal shall be presumed to be that of the Chief Medical Examiner. A facsimile of the signature of the Chief Medical Examiner imprinted on any certificate described in this subsection shall have the same validity as his written signature and shall be admissible in court.

**7. Medical records provided.** In any medical examiner case, upon oral or written request of the medical examiner, any individual, partnership, association, corporation, institution or governmental entity that has rendered treatment pertaining to the medical examiner case shall as soon as practicable provide the medical examiner with all medical records pertaining to the person and the treatment provided. No individual, partnership, association, corporation, institution, governmental entity or employee or agent of a governmental entity may be criminally or civilly responsible for furnishing any medical records in compliance with this subsection.

**8. Certain information confidential.** The following records in the possession or custody of a medical examiner or the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner are not public records within the meaning of Title 1, section 402, subsection 3 and are confidential:

- A. Medical records relating to a medical examiner case;
- B. Law enforcement agency reports or records relating to a medical examiner case;
- C. Communications with the Department of the Attorney General relating to a medical examiner case;
- D. Communications with the office of a district attorney relating to a medical examiner case;
- E. Death certificates and amendments made to the certificates, except for the information for which the medical examiner is responsible, as listed in section 2842, subsection 3, and not ordered withheld by the Attorney General relating to a medical examiner case or missing person;
- F. Photographs and transparencies, histological slides, videotapes and other like items relating to a medical examiner case; and
- G. Written or otherwise recorded communications that express or are evidence of suicidal intent obtained under section 3028, subsections 4 and 5.

**9. Release of medical examiner's reports.** [ 2001, c. 221, §2 (RP) .]

**10. Cooperation with research requests.** The Office of Chief Medical Examiner shall

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cooperate with research requests by supplying abstracted data to interested persons consistent with the available resources of the office.

**11. Written or recorded material expressing suicidal intent.** [ 2001, c. 221, §4 (RP) .]

**12. Access to or dissemination of confidential records.** Except as specified in subsections 10 and 13, access to or dissemination of records made confidential under subsection 8 is limited to:

- A. A criminal justice agency for the purpose of the administration of criminal or juvenile justice;
- B. A person for whom the Chief Medical Examiner determines access is necessary or desirable to carry out a duty under this Act;
- C. A person for whom the Chief Medical Examiner determines access is necessary or desirable to allow for the harvesting of a decedent's organs and other tissues;
- D. A person when authorized or required under any state or federal law, rule or regulation; and
- E. A person pursuant to a court order.

Access to or dissemination of records as provided under paragraphs A to C can be done as a matter of course by the Chief Medical Examiner unless the Attorney General directs otherwise.

**13. Access to certain information by certain persons.** Unless a medical examiner case is under investigation by the Department of the Attorney General or the office of a district attorney and the Attorney General or the district attorney determines that there is a reasonable possibility that release or inspection interferes with a criminal investigation or prosecution by the disclosure:

A. Items identified in subsection 8, paragraphs F and G may be inspected and copies obtained, upon payment of any required fee under section 3035, by:

- (1) A next of kin of the deceased, as defined under section 2843-A. The Chief Medical Examiner may provide the original of the items described in subsection 8, paragraph G to the next of kin or other person to whom that item is addressed or directed;
- (2) An insurer that may be responsible for payment of benefits as a result of a death if relevant to the payment obligation;
- (3) An attorney representing the estate of the decedent or the decedent's property if relevant to the representation; and
- (4) An attorney representing a person or a person's estate and exploring a possible civil action against the estate of the decedent if relevant to the representation; and

B. A person may inspect and obtain a copy of communications identified in subsection 8, paragraphs C and D, except work product as defined in Rule 16(b)(3) of the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure, as long as the communications would otherwise be open to inspection and release if in the possession or custody of the Department of the Attorney General or the office of a district attorney.

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**14. Access to report documents.** Report documents, as defined in section 3035, subsection 2, in the possession or custody of a medical examiner or the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner constitute investigative information. Release and inspection are governed by Title 16, section 614. Release and inspection are also contingent upon the person's request specifying a specific decedent or decedents and the payment of any required fee under section 3035.

**15. Testing for HIV.** Notwithstanding Title 5, chapter 501, the Chief Medical Examiner in a medical examiner case may test for the human immunodeficiency virus and may disclose the test result as authorized under subsection 12.

As used in subsections 10, 12, 13 and 14, "person" means a natural person, including a public servant, or a corporation, partnership, unincorporated association or other legal entity, including a governmental unit.

## **22 §3023. MEDICAL EXAMINERS; APPOINTMENT; JURISDICTION**

The Chief Medical Examiner shall appoint medical examiners, who have statewide jurisdiction and serve at the pleasure of the Chief Medical Examiner, subject to the Chief Medical Examiner's control and the rules adopted by the Chief Medical Examiner. The medical examiners must be learned in the science of medicine and anatomy, licensed as physicians in this State and bona fide residents of this State. Each medical examiner before entering upon the duties of the office must be duly sworn to the faithful performance of the medical examiner's duty.

The Chief Medical Examiner may make temporary appointments when the Chief Medical Examiner determines it is in the public interest. Temporary medical examiners shall serve on a case-by-case basis and must be licensed as physicians by the State but do not need to be residents of the State or take an oath of office.

The Chief Medical Examiner may retain official consultants to serve the various needs of the office. These consultants must possess a high degree of integrity and be learned in their fields. They need not reside within the State or take an oath of office. They serve at the pleasure of the Chief Medical Examiner.

## **22 §3024. SALARIES; FEES; EXPENSES**

The salary of the Chief Medical Examiner of the State must be set by the Governor. Other nonsalaried medical examiners, upon the submission of their completed report to the Chief Medical Examiner, must be paid a fee of \$70 for an inspection and view and are entitled to receive travel expenses to be calculated at the mileage rate currently paid to state employees pursuant to Title 5, section 8. An additional fee of \$50 may be authorized by the Chief Medical Examiner for payment to other nonsalaried medical examiners for visits to death scenes other than hospitals.

The fees for autopsies performed by pathologists, at the request of a medical examiner or the Chief Medical Examiner, must be set by the Chief Medical Examiner at a level that provides

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reasonable payment for necessary costs and a reasonable fee in light of prevailing rates for the services of a pathologist in the State.

The Chief Medical Examiner may, in an unusual circumstance as determined by the Chief Medical Examiner, prescribe a special fee for the service of a medical examiner or for any consultant service the Chief Medical Examiner determines necessary.

The Chief Medical Examiner may authorize any other expenses necessary to carry out the Chief Medical Examiner's duties.

All compensation and expenses authorized by this chapter must be paid from the funds of the State appropriated by the Legislature for this purpose.

If the Chief Medical Examiner or employees of that office provide expert opinion or testimony relating to Maine medical examiner cases on behalf of private litigants, the Chief Medical Examiner may set a reasonable fee for these services, preparation leading to them and expenses incurred in providing them. All fees, charges or other receipts must be credited to the General Fund. Medical examiners and consultants who serve the State on a fee per case basis are excluded from this paragraph and may make private arrangements for these services.

## **22 §3025. MEDICAL EXAMINER CASE**

**1. Circumstances of death that must be reported.** A medical examiner case may exist and must be reported as provided in section 3026 when remains are found that may be human and raise suspicion that death has occurred under any of the following circumstances:

- A. Death is suspected of having been caused by any type of physical injury, including poisoning, regardless of whether the suspected manner of death is homicide, suicide or accident. This circumstance must be reported irrespective of whether the deceased had been attended by a physician, was a patient in a hospital, survived for a considerable time following the physical injury or died from terminal natural causes consequent to and following the physical injury;
- B. Suddenly when the person is in apparent good health and has no specific natural disease sufficient to explain death;
- C. During diagnostic or therapeutic procedures under circumstances indicating gross negligence or when clearly due to trauma or poisoning unrelated to the ordinary risks of those procedures;
- D. Death when the person is in custody pursuant to an arrest, confined in a state correctional facility, county institution, facility or local lockup, unless clearly certifiable by an attending physician as due to specific natural causes;
- E. Death while the person is a patient or resident of a facility of the Department of Health and Human Services or residential care facility maintained or licensed by the Department of Health and Human Services, unless clearly certifiable by an attending physician as due to specific natural causes;
- F. Death suspected of being due to a threat to the public health when the authority of the medical examiner is needed to adequately study the case for the protection of the public health;

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- G. Death suspected of not having been certified, including, but not limited to, bodies brought into the State and any buried remains uncovered other than by legal exhumation;
- H. Deaths suspected of being medical examiner cases which may have been improperly certified or inadequately examined, including, but not limited to, bodies brought into the State under those circumstances;
- I. Sudden infant death syndrome deaths and all other deaths of children under the age of 18 unless clearly certifiable by an attending physician as due to specific natural causes unrelated to abuse or neglect;
- J. Whenever human or possibly human remains are discovered not properly interred or disposed of, for which the responsibility to do so cannot be readily determined; or
- K. Any cause when there is no attending physician capable of certifying the death as due to natural causes. When a person dies who is under the care of a religious practitioner who uses prayer and spiritual means of healing, the fact that the deceased has been under such religious care does not warrant suspicion of foul play or investigation beyond that warranted by the other facts of the case.

In any case in which the necessity of a report is questionable, a report must be made.

**1-A. Medical examiner case determination.** Notwithstanding that a case must be reported under subsection 1, the acceptance of any reported death as a medical examiner case is to be determined by the Chief Medical Examiner unless acceptance is specifically ordered by the Attorney General or district attorney having jurisdiction.

The following deaths that must be reported need not be accepted by the Chief Medical Examiner as a medical examiner case:

- A. Deaths due to the consequences of long-term alcohol use, long-term exposure to environmental or occupational toxins or long-term exposure to carcinogens;
- B. Deaths in the elderly who have sustained limb or axial fractures, excluding the head, for which they are or have been hospitalized; or
- C. Sudden natural deaths in the elderly who have not had previous specific symptoms or who were not under treatment by a physician for the specific natural cause that is considered to be the cause of death.

These reportable deaths may be referred back to the attending physician by the Chief Medical Examiner for certification of the death, even though the attending physician has not treated the patient for the specific natural disease that the attending physician will enter as the physician's diagnosis.

**2. Attendance by physician.** [ 2003, c. 433, §5 (RP) .]

**3. Transplant operations.** No operation for the transplant of an organ or a portion of any organ may take place, when the donor's death occurs under circumstances indicating a medical examiner case, without approval of the medical examiner. Any doctor performing a transplant operation when the donor has died under these circumstances shall note the condition of the vital organs in the region of surgery and shall include this notation in a written report of the operation and manner in which death was pronounced, with the report to be given to the

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medical examiner upon his request. The medical examiner may choose to be present during the removal of the donated organ.

**4. Questionable cases and cases that may constitute exceptions.** [ 2003, c. 433, §6 (RP) .]

**5. Delayed reports.** When a death has occurred that falls under this law as a medical examiner case and the body has already been released for final disposition, the case may be accepted and the body ordered held for examination by a medical examiner, but no exhumation may take place when the body has been finally interred, except pursuant to section 3029.

## **22 §3026. REPORTS OF DEATH**

**1. Persons suspecting medical examiner case.** Any person who becomes aware of a suspected medical examiner case shall immediately notify a law enforcement officer or the Office of Chief Medical Examiner. As used in this subsection, "person" means a natural person, including a public servant, and a corporation, partnership, unincorporated association or any other nonhuman legal entity, including any governmental unit.

**2. Law enforcement officers suspecting medical examiner case.** Any law enforcement officer who becomes aware of a suspected medical examiner case shall immediately notify the Office of Chief Medical Examiner.

**3. Medical examiners suspecting medical examiner case.** Any medical examiner who becomes aware of a death caused by physical injury, or in which physical injury is the suspected cause, shall immediately notify the Office of Chief Medical Examiner and the appropriate law enforcement agency. The agency shall notify the district attorney for the district in which the body is located.

**4. Cases involving or suspected of involving physical injury attributable to criminal conduct.** Any law enforcement officer or medical examiner who becomes aware of a death involving physical injury attributable to criminal conduct, or in which physical injury attributable to criminal conduct is suspected, other than vehicular manslaughter, in addition to complying with the notification requirements in subsection 3, shall immediately notify the Attorney General.

## **22 § 3027. PROCEDURE AT SCENE OF DEATH**

**1. Movement or alteration of body prohibited.** Except as otherwise provided in this section:

A. In any medical examiner case a person may not move or alter the body or any objects at the scene of death prior to the arrival, or without the express authorization, of the medical examiner or Office of Chief Medical Examiner;

B. In any medical examiner case in which physical injury attributable to noncriminal conduct is suspected or in which any physical injury by motor vehicle, including vehicular manslaughter, is suspected, a person may not move or alter the body or any objects at the scene of death prior to the arrival, or without the express authorization, of the district attorney for the district in which the body is located or the district attorney's authorized

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representative; and

C. In any medical examiner case in which physical injury attributable to criminal conduct other than vehicular manslaughter is suspected, a person may not move or alter the body or any objects at the scene of death prior to the arrival, or without the express authorization, of the Attorney General or the Attorney General's authorized representative.

**2. Preservation or removal of body.** In any medical examiner case in which the body is in danger of being destroyed or lost or the location of the body renders it a serious threat to the safety or health of others, a person may take whatever steps are reasonably necessary for the retention or preservation of the body prior to the arrival or authorization of the medical examiner or the Office of Chief Medical Examiner. The person shall first, if practicable, exactly mark the location and position of the body.

In any medical examiner case in which physical injury attributable to criminal conduct other than vehicular manslaughter is not suspected and the presence of the body is likely to cause hardship or outrage, and a medical examiner or the Office of Chief Medical Examiner can not be reached in a reasonable period of time, the district attorney for the district in which the body is located or the district attorney's authorized representative may authorize removal of the body by the law enforcement officer in charge of the scene. The officer shall first, if practicable, exactly mark the location and position of the body.

A. When death occurs in a medical facility such as a hospital or an ambulance, the body may be removed to a mortuary under the following conditions:

- (1) The incident causing the death did not occur in the medical facility;
- (2) The body is transported to a secure place in the same condition as when death occurred; and
- (3) The only alterations are the disconnecting of fixed medical equipment.

**3. Procedures.** Before removal of the body as provided in subsection 2, the law enforcement officer shall whenever possible arrange for photographs, measurements and a record of the location and position of the body.

When the death is suspected of involving physical injury attributable to criminal conduct other than vehicular manslaughter, the procedure in this subsection must be undertaken with the supervision of an authorized representative of the Attorney General.

In all medical examiner cases in which physical injury attributable to criminal conduct other than vehicular manslaughter is suspected, the procedure in this subsection may be waived concurrently by the Chief Medical Examiner and the Attorney General or the Attorney General's authorized representative.

In all other medical examiner cases the procedure in this subsection may be waived concurrently by the medical examiner and the district attorney for the district in which the body is located or the district attorney's authorized representative.

## **22 §3028. INVESTIGATION; AUTOPSY**

**1. Authority to conduct investigation.** The medical examiner or the person expressly authorized by the Chief Medical Examiner has authority to conduct an investigation and inquiry

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into the cause, manner and circumstances of death in a medical examiner case. The medical examiner or authorized person shall, if it is determined necessary, immediately proceed to the scene and, subject to the authority of the Attorney General, assume custody of the body for the purposes of the investigation, and shall retain custody until the investigation has been completed or until the Chief Medical Examiner has assumed charge of the case.

**2. Investigation by law enforcement officer.** When death is not suspected to be the result of physical injury attributable to criminal conduct, the medical examiner may elect not to proceed to the scene, or the Chief Medical Examiner may elect not to dispatch a medical examiner or the person expressly authorized by the Chief Medical Examiner under subsection 1 to the scene. If the medical examiner elects not to proceed to the scene, or the Chief Medical Examiner elects not to dispatch a medical examiner or authorized person to the scene, the law enforcement officer in charge of the scene shall:

- A. Investigate, take photographs and take possession of useful objects as directed by the medical examiner, authorized person or the Office of Chief Medical Examiner pursuant to subsection 4;
- B. [2001, c. 291, §2 (RP).]
- C. Remove the body in accordance with the instructions of the medical examiner, authorized person or the Office of Chief Medical Examiner; and
- D. Make a report of the investigation available to the medical examiner, authorized person or the Office of Chief Medical Examiner.

**3. Assistance of law enforcement agency.** The medical examiner, the person expressly authorized by the Chief Medical Examiner or the pathologist as described in subsection 8, may request the assistance and use of the facilities of the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the case for the purposes of photographing, fingerprinting or otherwise identifying the body. That agency shall provide the medical examiner, authorized person or pathologist with a written report of the steps taken in providing the assistance.

**4. Possession of useful objects.** Except as otherwise directed by the Attorney General, the Attorney General's deputies or assistants, the medical examiner, the person expressly authorized by the Chief Medical Examiner or the Office of Chief Medical Examiner may direct that a law enforcement officer at the scene make measurements, take photographs and take possession of all objects that in the opinion of the medical examiner, authorized person or the Office of Chief Medical Examiner may be useful in establishing the cause, manner and circumstances of death. For these same purposes, the medical examiner, authorized person or the Office of Chief Medical Examiner may direct that a law enforcement officer take possession of any objects or specimens that have been removed from the victim at the scene or elsewhere while under medical care.

**5. Requests for objects.** Any person having possession of any object or objects, as described in subsection 4, shall at the request of the medical examiner or the person expressly

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authorized by the Chief Medical Examiner give that object or objects to a law enforcement officer, to the medical examiner, to the authorized person or to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner. Medical personnel and institutions turning over any objects or specimens that have been removed from the victim while under medical care are immune from civil or criminal liability when complying with this subsection. Original written or recorded material that might express suicidal intent must be sent to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. The Chief Medical Examiner may elect to accept copies in place of originals.

**6. Examination of body.** In all cases except those requiring a report on a body already disposed of and not to be exhumed for examination, the medical examiner or the person expressly authorized by the Chief Medical Examiner shall conduct a thorough examination of the body.

**7. Written report.** Upon completing an investigation, the medical examiner or the person expressly authorized by the Chief Medical Examiner shall submit a written report of the investigator's findings to the Chief Medical Examiner on forms provided for that purpose. The investigator shall retain one copy of the report.

If an investigator reports suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation to the Chief Medical Examiner, the Chief Medical Examiner, by reporting that information to the department on behalf of the investigator, fulfills the medical examiner's mandatory reporting requirement under section 3477 or 4011-A.

**8. Autopsy.** If, in any medical examiner case, in the opinion of the medical examiner, the Chief Medical Examiner, the district attorney for the district in which the death has occurred or the Attorney General, it is advisable and in the public interest that an autopsy be made, the autopsy must be conducted by the Chief Medical Examiner or by a physician that the medical examiner, with the approval of the Chief Medical Examiner, may designate. The medical examiner, with the approval of the Chief Medical Examiner, may elect to perform the autopsy. The person who performs the autopsy shall make a complete report of the findings of the autopsy and shall transmit the report to the medical examiner and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner, retaining one copy of the report.

**9. Autopsy of child.** In the case of a child under the age of 3 years, when death occurs without medical attendance or, if attended, without a specific natural cause, the medical examiner shall order an autopsy. The autopsy may be waived by the Chief Medical Examiner, as long as the Chief Medical Examiner includes the reason for the waiver in the record.

**10. Chief Medical Examiner; jurisdiction.** The Chief Medical Examiner may assume jurisdiction over a medical examiner case and may recertify the death when the Chief Medical Examiner finds that it is in the public interest to do so. The Chief Medical Examiner shall include the reasons for so doing in the record.

**11. Final release of body.** In any medical examiner case the body shall not be finally released for embalming or burial except by order of the medical examiner in charge of the case, or by the Chief Medical Examiner. No medical examiner may release a body without first ensuring that the case has been reported to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner.

**12. Report to domestic abuse panel.** If the Chief Medical Examiner determines that a death resulted from criminal conduct and that the victim was pregnant at the time of death, the Chief Medical Examiner shall send a copy of any report prepared under this section to the Domestic Abuse Homicide Review Panel created pursuant to Title 19-A, section 4013.

## **22 §3028-A. DISPOSAL OF UNIDENTIFIED REMAINS**

Whenever unidentified human skeletal remains are recovered, the Chief Medical Examiner may store the remains, release them to an educational institution, inter them in an appropriate resting place or have them cremated. Ashes of remains cremated may be disposed of in any appropriate manner. Human skeletal remains uncovered in a cared-for cemetery or known to be Indian remains are excluded from the operation of this section.

## **22 §3028-B. RETENTION OF BODY FRAGMENTS AND BODY FLUIDS**

A medical examiner or his designated pathologist may retain body fragments or body fluids for evidence, further study or documentation.

## **22 §3028-C. DISPOSAL OF NONSUBSTANTIAL FRAGMENTS AND FLUIDS; DISPOSAL OF SUBSTANTIAL FRAGMENTS**

**1. Disposal of nonsubstantial body fragments and body fluids.** Body fragments or body fluids retained for evidence, further study or documentation, or those which have been recovered after the body has been released from the custody of the medical examiner, may be disposed of according to the practices of the laboratory responsible for analysis, by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, or by the medical examiner or pathologist retaining those fragments or fluids, unless claimed in writing by the person responsible for burial.

**2. Disposal of substantial body fragments.** The Chief Medical Examiner may dispose of substantial fragments of bodies that have been retained for evidence, further study or documentation or that have been recovered after the rest of the body has been finally released, in accordance with section 3028-A, unless claimed by the person responsible for burial.

## **22 §3028-D. DISPOSAL OF IDENTIFIED HUMAN REMAINS WITHOUT CONNECTION TO STATE AND UNIDENTIFIED HUMAN REMAINS**

**1. Assumption of responsibility.** The Chief Medical Examiner may assume responsibility for proper disposition of the identified human remains of a deceased nonresident of this State or unidentified human remains that are the subject of a medical examiner case if the Chief Medical Examiner has made reasonable inquiry and is unable to locate:

- A. Next of kin or a person or governmental unit legally responsible for the human remains;  
or
- B. A person or governmental unit otherwise willing to assume responsibility for the human remains.

**2. Necessary expenses.** The expenses incurred by the Chief Medical Examiner must be

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paid as follows.

A. The department shall pay any necessary expenses incurred by the Chief Medical Examiner as to:

- (1) Unidentified human remains that, after reasonable inquiry, the Chief Medical Examiner has determined not to be the human remains of an illegal alien; and
- (2) A deceased nonresident other than an illegal alien.

B. The Department of the Attorney General shall pay any necessary expenses incurred by the Chief Medical Examiner as to:

- (1) A deceased nonresident who is an illegal alien; and
- (2) Unidentified human remains that, after reasonable inquiry, the Chief Medical Examiner has determined to be the human remains of an illegal alien.

## **22 §3029. BODY BURIED WITHOUT INQUIRY**

**1. Notification of district attorney or Attorney General.** If in any medical examiner case:

A. The body is buried:

- (1) Without inquiry or examination by the medical examiner;
- (2) Before the inquiry or examination has been completed to the satisfaction of the medical examiner; or
- (3) Without an autopsy if such was advisable pursuant to section 3028; and

B. The body is required for that inquiry, examination, completion or autopsy, the medical examiner shall notify the district attorney, for the district in which the body was found, or the Attorney General.

**2. Petition for order of exhumation.** The district attorney or Attorney General may, under the circumstances enumerated in subsection 1 and if the district attorney or Attorney General finds it to be in the public interest, petition a justice of the Superior Court for an order of exhumation.

**3. Report of findings.** The medical examiner, Chief Medical Examiner or pathologist who completes the inquiry, examination or autopsy shall report the findings to the justice and to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner.

## **22 §3030. VICTIMS OF CRIME (REPEALED)**

## **22 §3031. FACILITIES AND SERVICES AVAILABLE TO MEDICAL EXAMINERS**

The facilities of all laboratories, under the control of any state agency or department and the services of the professional staffs thereof, shall be made available to the Chief Medical Examiner with the cooperation of the head of the agency involved.

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**22 §3032. RULES**

The Chief Medical Examiner is authorized and empowered to carry into effect this chapter and, in pursuance thereof, to make and enforce such reasonable rules consistent with this chapter as the Chief Medical Examiner determines necessary. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter II-A.

**22 §3033. LIMITATION ON LIABILITY OF CERTAIN PERSONS APPOINTED OR RETAINED**

**1. Additional immunities.** In addition to all existing tort immunities enumerated in the Maine Tort Claims Act:

A. A medical examiner may not be held liable for damages for any injury or damage that results from the exercise and discharge of any of the medical examiner's official duties, unless it can be shown that the injury or damage resulted from gross negligence on the part of the medical examiner;

B. A pathologist performing an autopsy at the request of a medical examiner or the Chief Medical Examiner may not be held liable for damages for any injury or damage that results from the performance of the autopsy unless it can be shown that the injury or damage resulted from the gross negligence of the pathologist; and

C. A professional consultant, who at the request of a medical examiner or the Chief Medical Examiner conducts an examination and renders a report, may not be held liable for damages for any injury or damage that results from the performance of the examination unless it can be shown that the injury or damage resulted from the gross negligence of the consultant.

**22 §3034. MISSING PERSONS**

**1. Files; information.** The Office of Chief Medical Examiner shall maintain files on missing persons sufficient for the purpose of identification when there is reason to suspect that those persons may not be found alive. These files may include such material as medical and dental records and specimens, details of personal property and physical appearance, samples of hair, fingerprints and specimens that may be useful for identification. The Chief Medical Examiner may require hospitals, physicians, dentists and other medical institutions and practitioners to provide information, samples and specimens. A person participating in good faith in the provision of the information, samples or specimens under this section is immune from any civil or criminal liability for that act or for otherwise cooperating with the Chief Medical Examiner.

**2. Confidentiality; disclosure.** All information and materials gathered and retained pursuant to this section must be used solely for the purposes of identification of deceased persons and persons found alive who are unable to identify themselves because of mental or physical impairment. The files and materials are confidential, except that compiled data that does not identify specific individuals may be disclosed to the public. Upon the identification of a deceased person, those records and materials used for the identification may become part of the records of the Office of Chief Medical Examiner and may then be subject to public

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disclosure as pertinent law provides.

**3. Reporting of missing persons.** Missing persons may be reported directly to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner by interested parties. Law enforcement agencies or other public agencies that receive reports of missing persons, or that gain knowledge of missing persons, shall report that information to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner. Law enforcement agencies shall report all attempts to locate missing persons to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner. All absences without leave by individuals from state institutions must also be reported to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner when there exists a reasonable possibility of harm to that individual.

**4. Cooperation.** All state and law enforcement agencies and public and private custodial institutions shall cooperate with the Office of Chief Medical Examiner in reporting, investigating, clearing and gathering further information and materials on missing persons.

## **22 §3035. FEES**

**1. Fees.** Except as provided in subsections 3 and 4, the Office of Chief Medical Examiner shall charge a fee for providing report documents, histological slides and other items or additional services sought by a person entitled to obtain that item or service relating to a medical examiner case. Fees are to be paid in advance and according to the following fee schedule:

A. For report documents, the fees are as follows:

- (1) Report documents when no autopsy has been performed, \$10;
- (2) Report documents when an autopsy has been performed, \$25; and
- (3) Report documents under subparagraphs (1) and (2) accompanied by a certificate under section 3022, subsection 6, an additional fee of \$35, \$25 of which accrues to the Secretary of State; ]

B. For histological slides, the fees are as follows:

- (1) For each slide, \$10;
- (2) A handling fee per case, \$20; and
- (3) For 21 slides or more, an additional handling fee, \$20; and

C. For other items and services such as photographs and transparencies, additional tests relating to toxicology or specimens and videotaping:

- (1) A handling fee per case, \$20; and
- (2) Anticipated costs of providing the item or service, including shipping charges.

**2. Report documents.** For purposes of this section, "report documents" in a medical examiner case include the written report under section 3028, subsection 7; the written report of the findings of the autopsy under section 3028, subsection 8; and associated reports, including, but not limited to, toxicological reports, reports of forensic experts, reports of consultants and reports relating to harvested organs.

**3. Exemptions.** Exemptions from paying the fees established in subsection 1 are as

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follows.

- A. A governmental agency is exempt from all fees in subsection 1.
- B. A health care provider who has rendered service to the deceased is exempt from fees for the copy of report documents under subsection 1, paragraph A, subparagraphs (1) and (2).
- C. A next of kin of the deceased, as defined under section 2843-A, is exempt from the fee for one copy per family of report documents under subsection 1, paragraph A, subparagraphs (1) and (2).

**4. Waiver.** Notwithstanding the fee schedule under subsection 1, paragraph A, fees for report documents relating to a medical examiner case may be waived at the discretion of the Chief Medical Examiner.

**5. Deposit of fees.** All fees collected must be deposited in a dedicated account within the Office of Chief Medical Examiner. At the end of each fiscal year, the State Controller shall transfer all unencumbered balances in excess of \$500 to the General Fund as undedicated revenue.



Maine Office of the  
**Attorney General**

**INVESTIGATION OF DEATHS, PROBABLE DEATHS, AND MISSING PERSONS**

<b>Augusta RCC</b>	<b>624-7076</b>	<b>800-452-4664</b>
<b>Bangor RCC</b>	<b>973-3700</b>	<b>800-432-7381</b>
<b>Houlton RCC</b>	<b>532-5400</b>	<b>800-924-2261</b>
<b>Bangor PD</b>	<b>947-7382</b>	<b>947-7382 x1 (CID)</b>
<b>Portland PD</b>	<b>874-8575</b>	<b>874-8526 (CID)</b>

**Criminal Division – Office of the Attorney General**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Office</i>	<i>Work Cell</i>	<i>Personal Cell</i>
Lisa Marchese, Deputy AG	626-8508	557-5688	831-9145
Lisa Bogue, Assistant AG	626-8567	557-5655	798-9791
Jen Ackerman, Assistant AG	626-8580	441-6149	228-5612
Bud Ellis, Assistant AG	626-8833	441-1024	239-0155
Kate Bozeman, Assistant AG	626-8514	446-2330	485-4367

**In all cases, contact the Office of Chief Medical Examiner – 1-800-870-8744  
(The toll-free number is for law enforcement use only.)**

***FIRE AND EXPLOSION DEATH***  
Contact the Office of the State Fire Marshal through RCC

***HUNTING DEATH***  
Contact the Maine Warden Service through RCC

***DEATH WHILE IN CUSTODY OR CONFINEMENT***  
(Jail, Holding Facility, Correctional Institution)  
Contact the appropriate Major Crimes Unit through RCC  
Contact Department of Corrections:  
James Hancox 530-1540 or Steven French 530-0116 or Cheryl Preble 816-1687

***USE OF DEADLY FORCE BY LAW ENFORCEMENT or  
DEATH WHILE INTERACTING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT***  
Contact the Investigation Division of the Attorney General’s Office through RCC

***WORKPLACE DEATH***  
Contact the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

***MISSING PERSON***  
*Under appropriate circumstances explained in the Protocol*  
Contact the appropriate Major Crimes Unit through RCC and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner

***DEATH OF CHILD LESS THAN 3 YEARS OF AGE***  
Contact the appropriate Major Crimes Unit through RCC and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner

***DRUG OVERDOSE***  
Contact the MDEA District Supervisor through RCC

***SUICIDE OF PERSON LESS THAN 18 YEARS OF AGE***  
Contact the appropriate Major Crimes Unit through RCC and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner