

POLICY & PROCEDURES

CHAPTER:	3	Institutional Operations	3.2.16
SECTION:	2	Safety and Emergency Procedures	EFFECTIVE DATE: 7 / 21 / 2020
SUBJECT:	16	Inmate Death	
STANDARDS: ACA – 4 – ALDF: 4D-23			
APPROVED: _____ Dale Glass COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTIONS			REVIEW DATE: 7 / 21 / 20
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Rescind: 3.2.16 dated 1/14/0-8 Cancel:			

I. POLICY

In the event of an inmate death while in custody of the Division of Corrections, the death scene will not be disturbed more than is necessary to establish that death has occurred. Investigating authorities will be promptly notified. Any disturbance of the scene will be reported to investigating personnel. The body and any material evidence in and near the death scene will not be removed until authorization has been received from the appropriate authority.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

All Division of Corrections staff members assigned to the Medium Security Institution and the St. Louis City Justice Center are responsible for adhering to the following procedures.

III. DEFINITIONS

Correctional Staff Members: Refers to all custody and administrative staff, medical staff, contractors, and institutional volunteers.

Code 3: The universal emergency medical code alert used to summons Medical staff for emergency medical assistance.

First Responder: Any correctional staff member trained and qualified to administer CPR.

IV. PROCEDURES

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A. General Information

1. In case of inmate death, the Division will immediately notify the appropriate authority having jurisdiction over such matters. The Division will develop and update as necessary, a protocol that describes actions to be taken by Correctional staff members in the event of the death of an inmate.
2. The Division will provide inmate's contact information listed in the inmate's record, to the appropriate agency or authority, for contacts with the inmate's next-of kin or family relatives. (See Policy #4.2.6: Designated Individual Notification).
3. If inmate's death or suspected death occurs at an outside facility such as the hospital, the death procedures of that outside facility shall be followed in conjunction with this policy.
4. All effort shall be made to preserve the scene of death by the staff. Staff will not disturb or remove from the scene, any instruments or materials which may have been used to cause death, without authorization.
5. A deceased inmate's personal property will be released to any person designated by the inmate in the inmate's property release form, or as authorized by the Commissioner of Corrections or designee. (See Policy #3.5.3: Inmate Property).

B. Discovery of Possible Inmate Death

1. If a Correctional staff member discovers what appears to be an inmate death and a medical staff person is not present, the employee will immediately notify the floor Supervisor or immediately notify the Master Control /Control Center Officer via radio or telephone to announce a code 3 alert to summon medical assistance. The Staff member placing the call to Master Control/Control Center will give the Master Control/Control Center Officer the location where the medical emergency assistance is needed.
2. The Master Control/Control Center Officer will immediately announce a Code 3 and the location over the intercom system and radio, and follow-up the announcement with a telephone call to the Medical Officer and the Shift Commander's office.
3. The Correctional staff member proceeds immediately to secure the location of the medical emergency area.

C: Securing the Location of Medical Emergency Area

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1. If the suspected death is discovered in an area where inmates are not located (i.e. lobby, business office, etc.), the Custody staff clears the area of bystanders if any, to allow room for the responding medical staff.
2. If the discovery is made in an area outside of the inmate housing unit or dormitory where inmates are located (gymnasium, kitchen, laundry, etc.), the Custody staff directs other inmates away from the area, to a secure location.
3. If the discovery is made inside a housing unit at CJC, or the Pods at MSI, and other inmates in the Unit are not readily secured in their respective cells, the custody staff immediately orders those inmates to lockdown.
4. If the discovery is made inside the living area of a dormitory Housing Unit at MSI, the Housing Unit Officer, secures other inmates in the day room. If the incident occurs in the day room, the Housing Unit Officer directs the inmates to the living area away from the medical emergency scene and if necessary, orders them to press their bunks. Once the inmates are secured, the Correctional staff member enters the dormitory housing unit to assist the victim.

D. Assisting the Inmate Victim

1. Life saving measures shall be started by the first responder and continue until the medical personnel arrive on site to direct the code response
2. If the inmate victim is in a one man cell, the Correctional staff member does the following:
 - a. Enter the cell unit,
 - b. Check for breathing and pulse,
 - c. Apply basic first aid and/or CPR techniques; and
 - d. Stay with the victim until medical staff arrives.
3. If the inmate victim is in a two-man cell, the custody staff will do the following:
 - a. Order the non-inmate victim to come out of the cell,
 - b. Secure this inmate away from the scene,
 - c. Apply instrument of restraint on the inmate if belligerent or uncooperative,
 - d. Check for breathing and pulse on the inmate victim,
 - e. Apply basic first aid and/or CPR techniques; and

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- f. Stay with the victim until medical staff arrives.
4. If the inmate is in a dormitory Housing Unit, the Correctional staff member implements step #4 in sec. B, and proceeds with the steps outlined in item #2b-d above.
5. If the inmate victim is hanging, the Correctional staff member utilizes the sharp string cutter or scissors to free the inmate and proceed to implement the procedures outlined in item #2b-d above.
6. Emergency Medical Service (EMS) shall be contacted in accordance with policy # 3.2.14: Emergency Medical Response.
7. If a Divisional contractual physician is available on-site at the time of suspected inmate death, the physician may be summoned to the scene to render medical care.
8. The Shift Commander or the highest ranking custody staff will identify and isolate witnesses/suspects to be interviewed by the St. Louis Metro Police Dept.

E. Notifying the Appropriate Authority

1. Upon the death or suspected death of an inmate, the following notification process shall occur:
 - a. During business hours, Monday thru Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, excluding Holidays, the Shift Commander of the facility where the inmate is housed shall notify the Chief of Security of that facility. The Chief of Security initiates the following notifications:
 - (1) The Deputy Superintendent of the facility where the death occurred,
 - (2) The Commissioner of Corrections/designee,
 - (3) The St. Louis Metro Police Department Command Center,
 - (4) The Division Investigators.
 - b. During non-regular business hours and/or holidays, the Shift Commander of the facility where the inmate is housed shall initiate the following notifications:
 - (1) The Duty Officer,

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- (2) The St. Louis Metro Police Dept. Command Center, and
 - (3) The on-call Division Investigators.
 - c. Once notified, the Duty Officer shall initiate the following notifications:
 - (1) The Commissioner of Corrections,
 - (2) The Deputy Superintendent of the facility where the death occurred, and
 - (3) The Chief of Security of the facility where the death occurred.
 - d. The Correctional medical staff will notify the Divisional Health Services Administrator as soon as possible but not later than two hours from the time death or suspected death is learned.
2. The St. Louis Metro Police Dept. will notify the City's Medical Examiner's Office. The person making the notification to the Medical Examiner shall request that the Medical Examiner view the body.
 3. The Commissioner of Corrections or designee will notify the Sheriff Dept. /City Marshall of the inmate's death via telephone or written memorandum.
 4. The Commissioner of Corrections will notify the Director of Public Safety.

F: Notifying the next-of kin

1. The Division of Corrections will notify an inmate's family directly in the event of an inmate's death. The notification will be made by the Commissioner of Corrections upon the official determination of death. If unable to personally make the notification, the Commissioner will direct a designee to notify the inmate next-of kin.
2. The St. Louis Metro Police Department or the Medical Examiner's Office can also notify the inmate's family. Although these two agencies are often the first to officially make such notification, this will not preclude the Division from contacting known inmate's next -of kin as stipulated in item #1 of this section.

G: Disposition of the body:

1. If the Inmate Died within St. Louis City
 - a. As soon as the removal of the inmate's body is authorized, the Medical Examiner shall take the remains to Medical Examiner's facility and performs autopsy.

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- b. The Commissioner of Corrections or designee shall request the postmortem examination report from the Medical Examiner's Office verifying the death of the inmate.
 - c. The Medical Examiner releases the inmate's remains to the next-of kin. If no one claims the body, the body reverts to the City of St. Louis and arrangement is made by the Medical Examiner's Office and the City's Public Administrator's Office to bury the inmate. The Medical Examiner's Office bills the Division for the burial expenses.
 - d. The Commissioner of Corrections authorizes the release of fund to cover the cost of burial. The cost shall be compensated from the Division's Inmate Funds.
2. If the Inmate Died in a St. Louis County Hospital or Facility
- a. If a Division's inmate dies in a St. Louis County hospital or facility, the County Coroner assumes responsibility of the body.
 - b. The Commissioner of Corrections or designee shall request or obtains written documentation by the Health Authority or Agency verifying death of the inmate.
 - c. As soon as the removal of the inmate's body is authorized, the County Medical Examiner takes the remains to the Medical Examiner's facility and performs autopsy and forwards a copy of the postmortem examination report to the St. Louis City Commissioner of Corrections.
 - d. The Medical Examiner holds the inmate's body until the Division Investigators of the St. Louis City Division of Corrections conducts exhaustive record search of inmate's next-of kin. If no one is found to claim the body, the St. Louis City Commissioner of Corrections or designee so advises the County Coroner.
 - e. The County Coroner makes arrangements for cremation of the inmate's body according to county Ordinance, and bills the Division. The St. Louis City Division of Corrections compensates the County accordingly. The payment shall be made from Inmate Fund.

H: Reports and Documentation

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1. The Housing Unit Officer, the Shift Commander, and the Master Control/Control Center Officer will record the date and time of the initial report of possible inmate death and other information as necessary.
2. The Health Services Administrator, upon the request of the Medical Examiner's Office made through the Commissioner of Corrections Office, shall deliver a copy of the deceased inmate's medical record to the Commissioner's Office or designee.
3. The Health Services Administrator shall also request and maintain a copy of the postmortem examination report from the Medical Examiner's Office, in accordance with policies and procedures of the Chief Medical Examiner.
4. The Commissioner of Corrections or designee shall complete a United States Department of Justice Death in Custody Report and send it to the appropriate government officials.
5. All observers of the death/emergency and responders shall complete facility incident reports and submits them to the Shift Commander before the end of the shift. (See Policy #3.1.10: Incident Report Form).
6. If life-saving measures were attempted by the Divisional medical staff, a Divisional medical staff member shall document a chronology of the treatment given. All treatment procedures and an objective description of the incident shall be documented appropriately in the inmate's medical record by medical staff before leaving the facility at the end of the shift.