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Dennis Kidd, General Manager

**COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS
LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

Policy No. 4611 Date Issued: February 11, 2008
4600-Notification and Call-Out
Section: Procedures Date Revised: November 17, 2014
Accreditation Standards:

SUBJECT: CORONER JURISDICTION AND NOTIFICATION

APPROVED:

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Chairperson, Law Enforcement Users Subcommittee

APPROVED:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Kidd", is written over a horizontal line.

Dennis Kidd, General Manager

1.0 Policy

To provide broad guidelines relative to the uniform reporting of deaths and notification of the Coroner by all law enforcement jurisdictions.

2.0 Procedure

The Coroner has jurisdiction for all reported deaths where the death occurred outside of an acute care medical facility or the death occurred within 24 hours of the decedent entering the medical facility. In general, the following protocols apply:

A Coroner's Investigation is required for all sudden or traumatic deaths, including any accident (including overdose or poisoning), suicide, homicide, or unknown trauma. Additionally, an investigation is required for all natural deaths where there is no known medical history or the decedent was in custody at the time of death.

A Coroner's Release is required for all natural deaths where a physician has not attended the decedent for 20 days preceding the death; the decedent suffered from a communicable disease; a fetal death of 20 or more weeks of gestation.

3.0 Notification

Reports of deaths may originate from physicians, public safety (field) personnel, mortuary/funeral home staff, or the public. Dispatchers should always ensure that a medical emergency is ruled out (following Policy 7445; Deceased Persons Calls) and a death is confirmed before attempting contact with a Deputy Coroner. Additionally, a local law enforcement patrol unit should be dispatched to all initial reports of death outside of an acute care medical facility (hospital). When requested, dispatchers should then use the following guidelines when contacting an on-duty or on-call Deputy Coroner:

- 3.1 **Santa Cruz County**
Santa Cruz County has an on-call rotation for Deputy Coroner, refer to MN.43 to see who has the on-call.
 - 3.1.1 Dispatchers will directly notify the on-duty or on-call Deputy Coroner Reports via telephone or pager of any report of a death due to trauma during ALL hours.
 - 3.1.2 Dispatchers will directly notify the on-duty or on-call Deputy Coroner via telephone or pager of any report of a confirmed death due to natural causes between the hours of 0600 and 2200 (every day).
 - 3.1.3 Reports of confirmed deaths by natural causes between the hours of 2200 and 0600 (every day) will be referred to the appropriate on-duty patrol unit of jurisdiction. The patrol unit will then make a determination whether an on-call Coroner's Deputy should be directly notified or not.

- 3.2 **San Benito County**
San Benito County uses patrol staff as the Deputy Coroner; therefore, any reportable death is handled by patrol.

4.0 Non-Public Safety Requests for the Deputy Coroner

Dispatchers may receive follow-up requests for contact with the on-call Deputy Coroner from medical staff, mortuary staff, relatives of decedents and the media. These requests should be honored and the on-call or on-duty Deputy Coroner immediately notified.