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| **POLICY: BODY TRANSPORTATION AND HANDLING** | **Union County Coroner Office** |

Body Transportation and Handling

1. In situations in which the body is to be transported to the morgue for postmortem examination or storage the body shall be removed and transported from the death scene by approved personnel authorized by the Union County Coroner Office.
2. Approved removal and transportation personnel/agencies currently include:
   1. Storer Transportation
   2. Last Responders
   3. Funeral Homes
      1. Underwood
      2. Wilson
      3. Ingram
      4. Any licensed funeral homes
3. The body removal and transportation agency will respond to the scene in a timely fashion (no more than 1 hour from the time of their notification, unless unforeseen or unusual circumstances). They must have and maintain vehicles that allow for safe, dignified, private, and secure transportation of the body, have and maintain stretchers/carts that are sturdy and in good repair, and ensure that all vehicles and equipment are regularly cleaned, disinfected, and mechanically sound.
4. The body removal and transportation agency will be contacted by the Union County Coroner Office or the Union County Sheriff Office.
5. The Union County Coroner Office will attach an identification tag with the individual’s name, date of birth, date of death, time of death and SSN to the body before the body is removed from the scene and will record the same information on the investigator’s report.
   1. If the name of the decedent is unknown or the body requires positive identification then the body shall be designated as “john doe unidentified, male, “jane doe unidentified, female”, or “unidentified, human remains” as is appropriate.
   2. If there is more than one unidentified body at the scene of the same sex the bodies shall be designated by numbering (for example “unidentified, female #1”, “unidentified, female #2”, etc)
   3. If the presumed identity of the unidentified individual is known (based on circumstantial evidence from the scene) also list this name as “presumptive or possible \_\_\_\_\_\_\_” in addition to the above unidentified designation
6. The Union County Coroner Office shall remain on scene until the body removal personnel arrive on scene and remove the body. If for unavoidable reasons the investigator can not remain on scene with the body, the investigator will ensure the body is supervised by an appropriate law enforcement agency (police agency, etc.) until the time of removal and chain of custody will be documented.
7. Clean, unused paper bags should be secured around the hands and/or feet of the decedent for homicide cases and other incidents as determined appropriate by the circumstances.
8. In homicide cases, hit and run pedestrian fatalities or cases in which the preservation of trace evidence may be relevant, the body should be wrapped in a clean white sheet before being placed in the body bag.
9. The body and any associated personal effects on/with the body shall be placed inside a zippered body bag and the zipper of the body bag secured closed with a plastic numbered tag. This number shall be recorded on the investigator’s report. An identification tag (bearing the same information as the tag placed on the body) should be attached to the zipper of the body bag.
10. The investigator should document in his/her report information regarding personal effects. The personal effects will again be inventoried at the morgue, after the body bag is opened.
11. At all times the body removal personnel shall conduct themselves in a professional and dignified manner in regard to handling the body and in interactions with family members, investigators, and other persons at the scene. They will not speak to the media but refer them to the Union County Coroner Office.
12. At all times the body removal personnel shall follow “universal precautions” when handling the body.
13. Transportation of body to Autopsy facility
    1. Bodies transported from Union County shall be transported directly from the scene to the Autopsy facility.
    2. Bodies may be transported to the Memorial Hospital holding facility(local morgue) for external examination or identification purposes before final transport to the Autopsy facility if circumstances dictate.