**Release of Unidentified Remains**

**Policy**

This Policy will discuss the process pertaining to unidentified decedents.

**Procedure**

Some of the deceased individuals who come under the jurisdiction of the Coroner's Office are unidentified and remain unidentified either permanently or for a period of time. In such cases, when the Coroner’s Office has completed their investigation, the body will be released for cremation at county expense.

A) Prior to release of the body to the rotation on-call funeral home, all pertinent data concerning an unidentified body will be obtained in the event that in the future, the data can be used to make a positive identification. All radiographs, photographs, DNA and other material will be of a quality required to make a positive identification and will be retained indefinitely.

B) Prior to release to the rotation funeral home for cremation, all unidentified bodies may have the following studies performed to aid in future identification:

1. Radiographs taken.

2. Dental charting or dental photography of maxilla and mandible intact or removed

3. Fingerprints taken.

4. Anthropometric Data (sex, race, approximate age and height, etc.) recorded.

5. Fluids and/or tissue samples taken for DNA processing.

6. Documentation and/or photographs of distinguishing characteristics such as scars, tattoos, medical treatment, deformities, marks, etc.

C) When an unidentified body is released from the Coroner's Office to the rotation funeral home and submitted to the county for cremation, all photographs, radiographs, autopsy reports, descriptions and other materials required to make identification at a future date will remain on file, in the form of both a physical file and an electronic file (MDILog) in the coroner's office.

D) After the cremation is completed, the cremains are returned to the ACCO for storage and all information is entered into NAMUS and any other pertinent data bases that can be used to assist in identification and location of next of kin. The cremains are retained indefinitely, or unless the decedent is identified and released to NOK.