



## **Sudden Unexplained Infant Death Investigation (SUIDI) Policy**

**Policy#** 13-0627-1 SUIDI **Total pages=** 2 **Revised Date** 06/27/14

**Purpose:** To have a standardized policy in investigating all sudden unexplained infant deaths that follow nationally recommended guidelines.

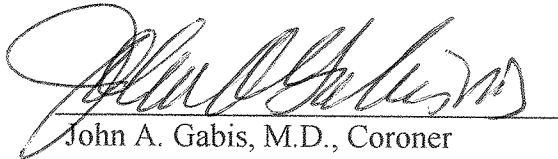
**Justification:** The investigation of SUIDI deaths is very complex and highly emotional, especially for the parents and/or caretakers but also to the investigators. Having guidelines to follow in this circumstance that allows objectivity, agency coordination and thoroughness will result in a standardized method of investigation. It is vital to have a coordinated cooperative multi-agency investigation to have the greatest chance of determining the cause and manner of death.

### **Policy:**

1. Upon receiving notification of a death involving an infant, the investigator will immediately respond to the location of the body.
2. If the body is not located at the death scene, the investigator will request the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction to secure but not enter the death location. The only exception is if the law enforcement has their detective/investigator on scene and it is agreed upon to allow scene investigation performed by LE but no scene altering or evidence collection at that time.
3. The preferred method of scene examination is done jointly between our office and law enforcement.
4. The body will be photographed and processed at the location of pronouncement of death.
5. Parents will be allowed to hold their infant at the discretion of the investigator but in the presence of the investigator, law enforcement, hospital staff or clergy. (If sexual assault is suspected, no contact will be allowed. This falls under criminal investigation.)
6. At the discretion of the investigator but in the presence of the investigator, the investigator may allow the parent and/or legal guardian to receive a memorial keepsake.

7. The body will be properly marked with identification and tamper evident sealed body bag which is also properly marked with identification.
8. The body will be removed for forensic examination as soon as possible. The body should not remain at the scene longer than necessary.
9. The Sudden Unexplained Infant Death Investigation Reporting Form (SUIDI form) will be completed with all involved/necessary parties interviewed.
10. A scene-of-discovery examination will be completed, if not already completed by LE. The placer/finder will be asked to participate in a scene recreation. If agreed, the recreation will be completed and documented using the actual bedding materials.
11. All evidence will be collected after the death scene examination, scene of discovery, and/or scene recreation has been completed.
12. The office contracted to complete the forensic examination will be contacted and will be given all available information. Any and all documentation, including scene photos and SUIDI Form, that may assist the forensic pathologist will be forwarded, if possible prior to the autopsy.
13. The above items are listed not necessarily in order needed to be completed.

*This policy has been approved and is in effect until further notice:*

  
John A. Gabis, M.D., Coroner

July 9, 2014  
Date