

## SECTION 11-HOSPICE DEATHS

### I. HOSPICE DEATHS-GENERAL

A nonviolent death after hospice admission is usually not a Coroner's case. (See **Reporting Criteria** below.) If the probable cause of death can be derived from clinical examination, and if the cause of death is clearly natural, a Coroner's Investigation is unnecessary. However, all deaths following injury or where death apparently occurred as the result of an accident, error or where equipment, medication or other supplies were faulty must be reported.

If a person dies in a hospice setting and no next of kin can be identified or located by the hospice staff, the Shelby County Coroner's Office will assume jurisdiction and attempt to locate next of kin. In the event that next of kin cannot be located, the SCCO will handle the disposition of the body and property of the deceased.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** If a hospice agent calls to report a death, but the death does not meet any of the reporting criteria noted above, the C/DC shall treat the death as reportable, perform the necessary investigation and submit the usual ROD report with supporting documents (medical history, etc.). The C/DC shall inform the hospice agent that this death did not meet the criteria as a reportable death and deaths similar to the one reported do not need to be reported in the future.

When a death occurs that meets any of the above criteria, an agent of the hospice agency shall immediately notify the Shelby County Coroner's Office and report the death. The C/DC shall determine if an on-scene investigation is warranted or whether the decedent can be released or whether the decedent can be released with only a phone-in report.

## MOST HOSPICE CASES ARE REPORTED DIRECTLY TO OFFICE VIA WEB PAGE REPORTING

### IF UNCERTAIN IF A DEATH IS A CORONER'S CASE

*In the event that the hospice agent is not certain whether a death is reportable, a telephonic consultation shall be made with the C/DC.*

### HOSPICE DEATH WHERE 9-1-1 WAS CALLED INSTEAD OF THE APPROPRIATE HOSPICE AGENCY

Hospice agencies who have patients in bona fide **HOSPICE CARE** are to advise their patients and families that, in the event of death, families or other caregivers are NOT to call 9-1-1, but rather that agency. In the event the family inadvertently calls 9-1-1, the case will be investigated as a standard Coroner's Case. Hospice personnel who may ultimately be contacted and who may respond to the scene and arrive prior to the C/DC are not to disturb the scene in any way. Once the C/DC has completed the investigation and agrees to release the decedent, jurisdiction will be transferred to the hospice agency.