

Jurisdiction

Policy:

All deaths reported to the Skagit County Coroner's Office shall be thoroughly investigated to determine jurisdiction, and for those that fall under the jurisdiction of the Skagit County Coroner, to aid in the certification of the cause and manner of death. Death investigation in the Skagit County Coroner's Office is modeled on the National Institute of Justice Guidelines for Death Investigators.

Every report of death completed will demonstrate the involvement of the Coroner's Office.

- This will be noted in the case brief in MDI log.

The case brief will include the reporting agency, age of decedent, reported medical and social history, date and time last known alive, date and time found or pronounced, and by whom. Other information required will include, if any, falls, fractures, trauma, toxicological concerns, abuse, or neglect. In brief, explain why the coroner's office has accepted or declined the case.

- This initial information may not be completely accurate but it needs to be reported in the summary. Any new information will be added to the investigators narrative as an addendum to the report.

Cases that require investigation:

1. Violent or traumatic deaths, whether apparently homicidal, suicidal, or accidental regardless of the time elapsing between the time of injury and death. This includes but is not limited to motor vehicle collisions, firearm injuries, smoke inhalation and burns, sharp and blunt trauma, industrial accidents, falls, choking, drowning, climate-related, deaths due to criminal abortion whether self-induced or not, and sports injuries;
2. Sudden, unexpected or unexplained deaths, when the deceased has been in apparent good health, not caused by readily recognizable disease or where the cause of death cannot be properly certified by a physician on the basis of his/her prior contact with the decedent. Sudden, unexplained deaths for infants one year of age and younger require investigation by the Skagit County Coroner's Office.
3. Deaths under suspicious circumstances including but not limited to those where alcohol, drugs, or other toxic substances may have a direct bearing on the death.
4. Deaths of persons who die outside of a medical facility, i.e., private residence, group home, retirement home
5. All cases of decomposed bodies

Refer to RCW 68.50.010; Coroner's Jurisdiction over Remains.