

Infant and Child Death Investigations

Policy:

When an infant dies suddenly and unexpectedly, a complete death investigation is required to determine the cause and manner of death.

The Coroner will be notified of these deaths and depending on the circumstances, respond with the assigned investigator.

Deaths of infants require scene investigation. This includes:

- Examination of infant at the place of death
- Response to the incident location where the infant was initially found if not the place of death (i.e. hospital).

The investigation shall be documented using the SUIDI (Sudden Unexplained Infant Death Investigation) form.

A doll re-enactment of the infant's *placed* and *found* position will be done by the responding investigator.

- The goal of the doll re-enactment is to establish the chain of events that led to the discovery of the infant, as it was placed and then found.
- The responding investigator will explain to the participating family member or caregiver how the re-enactment process works and its importance.
 - Interviewing of the placed and finder of the infant is to be done separately if more than one individual is involved.

The responding investigator will

- Always explain the investigation process to the family prior to leaving the scene.
- Photographically document the infant at the hospital and/or the incident location.
- Photographically document the *placed* position using the *placed* placards.
- Photographically document the *found* position using the *found* placards.
- Photograph and take measurements of the layers of the bedding without the doll in the image.
- Photograph and collect the last bottle used to feed the infant. Do not empty the contents.
- If diaper or clothing was removed by EMS or hospital staff, photograph these items and collect them for the pathologist to examine at autopsy.
- Handle the infant and family in a gentle and respectful manner.
- If the family would like to hold the infant prior to transport, the investigator will allow the family to touch and hold the infant (unless otherwise advised)
- The investigator will not rush the family to turn the infant's body over to the investigator. A chaplain will be requested to assist with this.

The investigator will contact Child Protective Services to report the death and verify there is no CPS history for the family.

Child/Infant deaths are investigated in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Sudden Unexplained Infant Death Investigation Guidelines.