

Autopsy Protocol

Set up for case:

- Formalin containers, 1 of each
 - -Clear container for stock tissue
 - -NW pathology container for histology (if doctor would like to have slides made)
- 2 cassettes (for histology)
- 2 grey top tubes (blood)
- 1 non-expired red top tube (vitreous humor)
- If needed, 1 red top tube for urine (cases with toxicology concerns)
- DNA envelope and filter paper
- (1) 20 mL syringe with needle for blood draw and urine
- (1) 3 or 5mL syringe with needle for vitreous
- Necessary tools including scalpel holder and blades, forceps, scissors, bone saw, dura strippers, T-bar, hemostats, rulers with case number labels, all necessary specimen labels.
- Bucket with red biohazard bag inside
- Specimen bag for coroner retained specimens
- 4 print tabs and ink pad for fingerprints

Prior to Autopsy (Body Prep)

- Take body out of cooler and place on table
- Verify the bag identification markers
- Take any requested x-rays (Coroner or Forensic Pathologist request)
- Take height of the decedent
 - Document in MDI log (*postmortem/autopsy section*)

Required photos:

- Case placard
- Bag with name on it
- Seal number (if used)
- Entire body as is (straight down view)
- Ankle band
- Unclothe the body and photograph all clothing separately using a grey board (both sides)
 - Take close ups of any defects in clothing
 - Document all clothing in MDI (property/evidence tab)
- Take unclean photos of important wounds prior to cleaning
- Clean the body
- Three photos unclothed (face/head, torso, and lower half) both anterior and posterior
- Right and left lateral sides of entire body
- Face (straight on) with blue towels
- Eyes open and palpebral conjunctivae. Document petechial hemorrhages or lack of
- Up the nares and in the mouth
- Hands (dorsal and ventral surfaces) using grey board

Autopsy Protocol cont.

- Areas of interest (refer to pathologist) with and without measuring device
 - Trauma
 - Blood staining/spatter
 - Purge or foam
 - Puncture marks
- Photograph all tattoos and identifying scars (use grey board or blue towel for background)
- Photograph and document any property left on the body
 - Enter property in the property tab in MDI log
 - Place property in property bag with case # and name.
 - Put property in secured caged locker
 - Affix green or yellow tag labeled "property in lock box" to body pouch.

Specimen collection:

- Obtain 2 grey top tubes of blood (femoral preferred)
- If requested by Coroner or Forensic Pathologist, obtain urine and run urine drug test using T-cup
 - Document T-cup results with photos and enter positive results or lack of in MDI log in pathology-autopsy tab under preliminary finding notes.
- DO NOT DRAW VITREOUS UNTIL PATHOLOGIST HAS SEEN THE EYES OR OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED

Autopsy

- Write case number, name, date, start time, names of attending the examination/assisting, and pathologist name on white board
- Take decedent from cooler and place on autopsy table
- Photograph when instructed by pathologist
- Document and collect any evidence provided by pathologist
 - Follow evidence policy
 - If Law enforcement is present, release to law enforcement following autopsy.
 - Enter evidence into MDI log and have law enforcement representative electronically sign to receive evidence.
 - Print off evidence release form and provide a copy to law enforcement.
- Collect samples and place in appropriate tubes/containers.
 - Make sure each sample is labeled correctly
- Write all organ weights and additional findings onto white board
- Suture and clean up decedent.
- Place in body shroud and into cooler for release
- Take picture of the white board after autopsy is finished
 - Make sure case number, name, start date/ time and finish date/time are written on the board along with the names of those attending the examination/assisting.

Autopsy Protocol

After Autopsy

- Update Coroner with examination findings and cause and manner of death
- Verify all samples are labeled and individually heat sealed. Select the samples needed to be sent out for testing and place in designated bin.
- Put remaining samples into clear specimen bag (labeled) into freezer
- Complete the *Samples Collected Inventory List* in toxicology prep area
- Clean up autopsy station including floor and any other equipment used
- Set up autopsy station for standard autopsy
- Download all photos from autopsy to the Coroner Shared folder (label: case#_autopsy).
- Transfer photos into MDI log (under *autopsy*)
- Add weights, samples collected, UDS results, findings, and cause and manner of death in the *Autopsy* section in MDI log
- Complete date and time ready for release in *Case Administration* section
- Contact family and inform them of findings, cause and manner of death, and confirm funeral home selection
 - Make note in case notes of phone call
- Contact funeral home for release
 - Make note in case notes
- If needed- prepare and complete requisition forms for Avero (histology cassettes), UW (vitreous testing), PHL or UW (respiratory swabs) and Metabolic Screening Card. **All samples should go out same day when possible.**
- Verify case number is on toxicology tracking white board with asterisk
- Scan in any documents including prints, toxicology requisition form, various laboratory requisition forms, body diagram, etc.
- Make sure all forms and case report are printed off and in case file.
- Place case file in follow-up bin