

Evidence

Policy:

Every effort should be made to comply with the collection of specific items requested by law enforcement personnel investigating the case.

Law enforcement representatives may request that specific items be collected as evidence during examination.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

- Tissue and Fluid Specimens
- Ligature
- Clothing
- Fibers
- Swabs
- Fingernail Clippings
- Hair Samples
- Projectiles
- Drug paraphernalia
- Fingerprints
- DNA

All collection methods should be practiced with minimal cross contamination and by using pre-packaged sterile instruments and equipment or sterilizing instruments using a bleach and water solution, or alcohol burner.

The proper personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be worn by the Forensic Pathologist, Coroner staff assisting, and any law enforcement attending while performing procedures in the autopsy room during evidence collection.

The following PPE shall be worn:

- N95 Respirator
- Hair bonnet
- Face shields/safety goggles
- Aprons/gowns
- Gloves
- Shoe covers
- Sleeves

Evidence cont.

Documentation of Evidence

A photograph should be taken of the deceased as is before collection of specimens or evidence.

All evidence will be collected by the Forensic Pathologist or coroner staff assisting with the autopsy and placed in "properly labeled" paper envelopes or paper bags provided by law enforcement present or supplied by the Coroner's Office.

To document chain of custody, all evidence collected by the Forensic Pathologist or coroner staff assisting is packaged and labeled with a case number, is released, and a form bearing signatures of the Coroner's Office and receiving law enforcement representative is generated specifying the date and time of release in MDI log under evidence/property. A copy of this document will be printed and be retained in the paper case file.

Evidence items retained after the examination shall be transferred to evidence storage lockers by the Coroner staff attending the examination

Specimens and tissue evidence retained following examination shall be transferred to the Specimen Freezer in the Autopsy Suite. A list and quantity of the retained samples shall be added to the logbook with the Coroner staff's initials and date.

POLICE