

6.03
CRAIG POLICE DEPARTMENT
Office of Chief of Police
General Order

Date Issued: July 25, 1997
Subject: Death Investigations
To: All Officers

Revision Date: April 1, 2009
Reference: None

I. POLICY:

Officers assigned a death call shall take all necessary measures to conduct a thorough investigation. When circumstances indicate the death may be a homicide, suicide, or occurred under suspicious circumstances; the Investigations Division shall be assigned the investigation.

II. PROCEDURE:

A. The on-duty supervisor will respond to all death investigations if requested by the responding officer. A command officer will respond to all homicide calls. A command officer may respond to any death or attempted suicide calls at his discretion or at the supervisor's request.

B. Homicides and/or suicide, or attempted suicide where death is imminent, accidental or non-hospice unattended deaths, are the responsibility of the Investigations Division. When an officer arrives at the scene, he/she will:

1. Aid victims, arrest suspects and detain witnesses
2. Protect the crime scene
3. Notify Communications
4. Notify the on-duty Supervisor who will
 - a. Notify the Investigations Division
 - b. Notify the Chief of Police and Operations Division Commander
 - c. Notify the on-call MCVAP advocate and the on-call Chaplain
5. Remain at the scene to work with members of the Investigations Division as required.

C. Other Death Calls

1. Hospice Death - When a diagnosed, terminally ill person who is under Hospice care dies at home.
 - a. An officer does not need to respond to the scene unless requested by a family member or the Coroner.

b. If the Coroner determines it does not appear to be a normal Hospice death, they will contact dispatch and the Investigations Division will be notified to respond.

2. Motor Vehicle Fatalities and attended natural deaths investigations shall be conducted by the officer responsible for the area where the death occurred. A supervisor will be notified and respond to the scene if necessary.

3. In addition to the aforementioned instances, the Investigations Division may be requested to assist in the investigation of, serious assaults or attempted suicides where death is not imminent.

E. The officer or investigator in charge of the call will contact the Coroner's Office on all death calls. The District Attorney's Office will be notified immediately on all homicides, and as soon as practical on all suicides and motor vehicle fatalities.

F. Coroner's Office

The custody of the personal property of the deceased is the responsibility of the coroner. The investigators have the responsibility for the custody and booking of evidence. Obtain an inventory (if only verbal) of property retained by the coroner and examine the personal identification of the deceased. If an autopsy is necessary, the investigator will contact the Coroner's Office and request an autopsy be performed.

G. Notification of Relatives

Notification of next of kin is the responsibility of the Coroner's Office, but the Department may assist as necessary, and in some cases make the notification. It is recommended that MCVAP or the Chaplains be used to assist with the notification.

Approved By:



Walter K. Vanatta
Chief of Police