

American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators

Code of Professional Responsibility

The ABMDI certified individual is expected to embrace the following principles:

Personal Knowledge:

- Be knowledgeable of all federal, state and county laws that dictate the authority and responsibility of the medicolegal jurisdiction served and the position of medicolegal death investigator.
- Be knowledgeable of medical, legal, law enforcement, forensic science and environmental information that will aid in conducting complete death investigations and apply this knowledge.
- Be proficient in the use of available investigative tools and knowledgeable of alternative resources accessible through other agencies.

Personal Behavior:

- Treat all those you come in contact with in your position as an investigator with respect, courtesy, fairness and consideration.
- Maintain a professional working relationship with all members of your office and cooperating agencies so that a positive rapport will be established between the agencies with whom you interact.
- Maintain an effective communication system with all forensic and ancillary personnel, to insure that department and other persons involved in the death inquiry will be informed as to the progress of each case.
- Stay abreast of the 'state of the art' by attending continuing educational programs and conferences, establishing professional relationships with medicolegal death investigators in other jurisdictions and obtaining and maintaining ABMDI certification.
- Educate and publish scholarly works dealing with the field of medicolegal death investigation to assist fellow investigators.

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Death Investigations:

- Maintain an open and objective approach to each death investigation for which you are responsible.
- Conduct thorough, timely, scientific and systematic death investigations of all persons whose deaths are reported to you.
- Accurately record statements made by witnesses, noting any discrepancies, additions or misinformation and present this information to the office and the courts.
- Prepare a complete, detailed report of each death that is reported to you as expeditiously as possible without sacrificing accuracy or thoroughness.
- Disseminate investigative information rapidly to departmental staff, forensic scientists and law enforcement personnel to achieve a coordinated, efficient and complete death investigation.
- Assist in accurately determining the decedent's identification.
- Identify, locate and notify the decedent's next of kin in the most rapid manner possible without sacrificing accuracy or civility.
- Maintain an effective communication system with all forensic and ancillary personnel so that departmental and other persons involved in the inquiry will be informed as to the progress of the investigation.

Office Etiquette:

- Conduct or attend regularly scheduled conferences with your superior and/or fellow investigators to review death investigations and methodology so that the highest quality death investigation can be achieved by ongoing assessment of investigative methods, policies and procedures.
- Suggest to superiors new methods, policies and procedures that may improve the quality and/or accuracy of death investigations performed.
- Assist in the training and development of new investigative staff members as requested.
- Suggest at appropriate times those budget items that would/could increase the effectiveness or efficiency of investigative and departmental staff.