



Leicestershire Police

Investigation of Deaths Policy

Policy Owner:	D/Ch. Supt
Department Responsible:	Crime and Intelligence Directorate
Chief Officer Approval:	ACC Crime
Date of Next Review:	Oct 2025

This procedure has been reviewed against APP.

Moved to APP:	Not moved over to APP
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Rationale:	Contains specific local directions of the Coroner/s
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This document has been produced in conjunction with the Leicestershire Police Legislative Compliance Pack

Review log

Date	Minor / Major / No change	Section	Author
25 th August 2010	Minor	Policy Links & Appendix A	Ds 422 Swift-Rollinson
1-31/03/2011	Minor	Whole Document	Ds 422 Swift-Rollinson
12 th September 2011	Minor	Departmental name changes	Ds 422 Swift-Rollinson
7 th November 2011	Minor	Departmental name changes & Scope	DI 422 Swift-Rollinson
17 th October 2012	Minor	Change of title from Constabulary throughout and inclusion of Our Duty	DI 422 Swift-Rollinson
May/June 2013	Minor	Insert 19) as additional reason	DI 422 Swift-Rollinson

		where police attend a death; Change date of CDOP document	
November 2015	Minor	Name changes and insertion of new Sudden Death Report Form	DI 422 Swift-Rollinson
December 2016	Minor	Legislation and links.	DI 422 Swift-Rollinson
October 2018	Minor	1-20 reasons to attend and sudden death report form	DS 1990 Greenhalgh
July 2019	Minor	Addition of remote verification of death	TDI 1990 Greenhalgh
July 2020	Minor	Addition of extra wording in reason 1 for police attendance	DI 1990 Greenhalgh
April 2021	No Change	Reviewed no change	DI 1990 Greenhalgh
October 2021	No Change	Reviewed no change	DI 1990 Greenhalgh
October 2022	No change	Reviewed No change	DI 1990 Greenhalgh
October 2023	No Change	Reviewed – Changed review date to 2 years	DI 1990 Greenhalgh

Statement and Aims

Our core duty is to protect our communities. We will do this by focussing on:

- Protecting vulnerable people
- Dealing with those who cause most harm
- Effectively deploying our people
- Working with partners to solve locally identified problems
- Trusting our people to use their judgement to make good decisions
- Ensuring effective and efficient use of resources

In Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, it is a fact of life that people die every day and often the occurrence of a death is expected and with a known cause. In such cases, where the circumstances are straight forward; not regarded as being suspicious and the death has occurred within the home of the deceased (or a relative), The East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EMAS) will attend and pronounce death and will advise/assist the family in arranging funeral directors to remove the body. The East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EMAS) will also notify the Coroner of the death. In such cases Leicestershire Police will have no involvement.

There are occasions, however, when a death is suspicious or cannot be explained or it occurs in questionable circumstances. In such cases the death will be attended to and investigated by Leicestershire Police. Police officer attendance and action is always required in the following cases:-

- 1) Where the circumstances are **suspicious or cannot be explained** or
Where a medical professional states to police that death **does not appear to be from natural causes**
- 2) If the deceased is **under 18** years of age;
- 3) Where **death did not occur in the home** of the deceased or relative of the deceased (*home includes residential home / care home / nursing home / community hospital and gardens / yards etc*)*;
- 4) If there is **no known General Practitioner (GP)** for the deceased*;
- 5) Where a **relative/other responsible person is not easily contactable***;
- 6) Where **identification** of the deceased remains an issue*;
- 7) If there are **obvious physical signs of trauma or apparent deliberate violence**;
- 8) Where there is an **insecurity** at the premises or signs of forced entry;
- 9) Deaths which may result in **criminal charges**;

- 10) Deaths caused as a result of **industrial** or **agricultural** accidents and **work-related deaths** (but this does not include occupational diseases such as [Mesothelioma](#) or [Asbestosis](#) for example);
- 11) Suspected **Suicides**;
- 12) **Drug related deaths** and suspicions of such;
- 13) Deaths as a result of **drowning** including **diving deaths**;
- 14) Deaths in **police or prison custody** whilst serving a custodial sentence or if lawfully detained in any institution (this includes deaths of persons **detained under the Mental Health Act – whether voluntarily or not**);
- 15) Deaths on the **Railway** (responsibility of British Transport Police);
- 16) Deaths at **MOD Establishments**;
- 17) Deaths as a result of **fires**;
- 18) Fatal **Road Traffic Collisions**;
- 19) Where a **GP pronounces (but doesn't certify) death**, without EMAS attendance and officers are required to attend to complete coronial paperwork and identification of the deceased*.
- 20) Where Leicestershire Police is requested to attend a death by any person including EMAS or Coroner's removal.* (Attendance means we have been asked to deploy resources to the scene). Where EMAS inform Leicestershire Police of a death so relevant intelligence checks can be carried out this is NOT a request for attendance. In this event call takers should follow the process outlined post.

** Attendance of PRI is not required. Pronounce means to declare someone is dead certify is where the doctor indicates to the best of their knowledge and belief the cause of death.*

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all such deaths reported to Leicestershire Police are investigated in a proper and thorough manner and that, in the interests of the deceased's estate, the next of kin and the wider public:-

- The Coroner is in a position to determine the cause of death;
- Other relevant authorities are able to establish and apportion any subsequent liability.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to ensure that:

- Investigating officers conduct thorough and proper investigations;
- All relevant facts are reported to the Coroner and other relevant authorities;

- Appropriate information and support is provided to relatives carers and friends affected by the death.

Scope

This policy applies to all police officers and police staff of the Leicestershire Police as well as officers of the East Midlands Special Operations Unit - Major Crime (EMSOU MC).

This policy relates to the procedures for:

- The Investigation of Sudden Unexpected and Questionable Deaths;
- The Sudden and Unexpected Deaths in Childhood (SUDIC) investigation Procedure;
- The Local Safeguarding Children's Board Child Death Procedure

This policy is linked to:

- The ACPO Murder Investigation Manual
- The ACPO Guide to Investigating Child Deaths
- The Road Death Investigation Manual
- The Child Death Overview Procedures (CDOP)
- The Early Release of Bodies in Cases of Suspicious Deaths (memorandum of good practice)
- The ACPO Deaths Abroad Guidance Document
- CFA, ACPO, CPS, HSE (2014) Investigative Guidance: Firefighter Fatality in the Workplace
- Work Related Deaths - a protocol for liaison
- Prison Related Deaths - a protocol for investigators
- Death Abroad – An ACPO (advisory) reference guide for Police Investigating Officers to legislation, procedures and protocols
- Application for a licence for the removal of buried remains (including cremated remains) in England & Wales
- Petition for Exhumation

This policy does not relate to the investigation of deaths arising from road traffic collisions.

Legal Basis

The legal basis for the investigation of death comes in the main from the Police Act 1996 which gives a constable certain powers. Section 30(1) gives constables all the powers and privileges of a constable throughout England and Wales and Section 30(5) defines these powers as powers under any enactment whenever passed or made. These powers include the investigation and

detection of crime, apprehension and prosecution of offenders, protection of life and property and maintenance of law and order.

The Coroners & Justice Act 2009 provides certain powers relating to the coroner's statutory duty to investigate a death, providing coroners with explicit statutory powers of entry, search and seizure in the investigation of a death. Police officers can rely upon these powers when acting on behalf of the Senior Coroner, as a Coroners officer.

Monitoring

All deaths attended by Leicestershire Police, except homicides and those resulting from road traffic collisions, will be reported to the appropriate Coroner on the **Sudden Death Report Form**, (see [Appendix A](#)), which is a specialised report format requiring the inclusion of all details relevant to the death, the investigation and the supervision of the investigation. The **Sudden Death Report Form** can be found on *NICHE* and within the forms section of the document library on the intranet. Deaths attended by the EMAS, will be reported to the appropriate Coroner on their own paperwork.

A copy of the completed form will be available via *NICHE* to the EMSOU Major Crime / on-call Senior Investigating Officer who will review the information available on the report and arrange for the completion of any further work, as and when necessary.

Remote Verification of Death

Leicestershire Police in close collaboration with East Midlands Ambulance Service and HM Coroner's have trialled and successfully introduced protocols for the remote verification of death of deceased people through officer observation and the completion of a detailed question set with a trained East Midlands Ambulance Operative on the telephone. Remote Verification of Death can be used in very specific circumstances and only where the officer using it has explored every possible opportunity to save life. The process has been introduced to prevent ambulance attendance at incidents where sadly a person is clearly deceased and thus creates additional time for ambulance resources to attend incidents where someone is in need of immediate medical attention.

Appendix A: Sudden Death Report Form

East Midlands Regional Collaboration



SUDDEN DEATH REPORT FORM

FORM MUST BE EMAILED TO HMC BEFORE CEASE OF DUTY

Incident reference:

Occurrence reference:

To: Her Majesty's Coroner
District where death occurred: Please select District Coroner
Coroner contact email:

IDENTIFICATION OF THE DECEASED

Surname of deceased:				Other Names:			
Gender:		Date of Birth:		Place of Birth:			
Maiden Name:		Ethnicity:		Sexuality:			
Full Postal Address:							
Occupation (if retired/unemployed, you must detail last place of work): <i>If deceased was discovered at their place of work, include full details of employer and person responsible for the site.</i>							
Marital Status:	Single ☐	Married ☐	Widowed ☐	Divorced ☐	Separated ☐	Living with Partner ☐	Civil Partnership ☐
If married/partnership/widowed state the spouse's name, address and occupation }						Name	
If under 16 years of age include the names, address and occupation of the parents (including the details of biological/non-biological parents if applicable) }						Address	
Have child services been informed? If no, give rationale.							

Religion observed/practised:	Occupation
Person who discovered deceased/witnessed death (Full name, address, contact details and relationship to deceased):	
Who Identified the Body? (NAME)	
Who was the body identified to? (NAME)	
Time, date and location the identity of the deceased was confirmed:	
If identification provided by an individual, please complete a witness MG11.	MG11 TO BE RECORDED AND ATTACHED TO THE OCCURRENCE PRIOR TO SUBMISSION
If identification confirmed using documentation, please include any references (e.g. driver's license number, passport ID).	

NEXT OF KIN/RELATIVE DETAILS	
Next of kin details (name, address, contact number)	Relationship to Deceased -
Relatives (Indicate FIRST point of contact. Include Full name, address, email address, contact numbers and relationship). State preferred method of contact	
Relatives will be contacted by the appropriate Coroner's Office by telephone within 2 working days:-	

EXAMINATION OF THE BODY	
Date:	Time:
Location:	Person conducting:
Has the body been removed, or remained in situ?	
Where is the body being taken now?	
Name and address of undertaker, if applicable:	

Details of EMAS staff personnel, if applicable:

- Include full contact details

Details of mortuary staff receiving the deceased (continuity)

- Include full contact details

MEDICAL HISTORY

Deceased's Medical Practitioner (Full name, address, telephone number and postcode):

Details of the Professional who pronounced life extinct and the time death was verified:

- Include full name, address and contact details
- Observations or any additional information from the MP made at scene

Full Medical History:

- Consider medication, ongoing treatments or conditions, recent surgeries, injuries or hospitalisations
- Any mental health issues or addiction history? *Was the deceased sectioned under the Mental Health Act or subject to a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Order (DoLS) under the Mental Capacity Act?*
- Include current (prescribed /non-prescribed) medications
- Detail when last seen by GP/MP

PROPERTY

Medication recovered and currently prescribed to the deceased (as per labelling):

- Record any property reference numbers.

Non-prescribed drugs recovered from the address

- Record any property reference numbers.

Any other property recovered?

- Detail items, property reference numbers and a brief description and rationale for seizure

Prescribed medication for other household members
Location of the keys to the address of the deceased

CIRCUMSTANCES	
Date and Time of Death	
In your professional judgement are there any suspicious circumstances?	
<i>Please summarize the full circumstances of how the deceased was discovered; consider detailing:</i> CIRCUMSTANCES • <i>Accounts from witnesses and other persons present</i> • <i>When was the deceased last seen alive, by whom and in what circumstances?</i> • <i>If apparent suicide, search the property for communications (consider electronic devices as well as handwritten notes in diaries etc.)</i> SCENE • <i>Include a full description of the location (scene)</i> • <i>Position of the body (consider photographic evidence)</i> • <i>Clothing worn</i> • <i>Marks on the body (describe type, location)</i> GENERAL OBSERVATIONS • <i>Gas/electricity appliances operating</i> • <i>Is the premises secure? Check doors/windows, consider if there are signs of a disturbance</i> • <i>Any relevant lifestyle indicators?</i> • <i>Any suspicious circumstances?</i>	

FORCE CHECKS
Results of PNC/intelligence checks: To assist identification: consider aliases, tattoos, marks, scars, whether DNA confirmed
Recent Police Incidents: Include references where applicable
Was the deceased the holder of a Firearm/Shotgun Certificate? <i>If yes, detail arrangements for makesafe:</i>

Property Reference(s):
SUPERVISOR
Name, rank and collar number:

Support Groups and Information available to relatives	
Leicester Coroner's Office For City and South Leicester: (0116) 4541030/31 open Monday to Thursday 08:00-16:00, Friday 08:00-15:00 For North Leicestershire and Rutland: (0116) 305 7732 open Monday to Thursday 8:30–13:00 then 13.30-15:30, Friday 08:30-13:00 then 13:30-15:00	
Derbyshire Coroner's Office (01332) 343225 Monday to Thursday 08:00-15.30, Friday 08:00-15:00	
Nottinghamshire Coroner's Office (0115) 8415553 Monday to Friday 08:00-17:00	
Support Groups and Information available to relatives	
www.cruse.org.uk Cruse Bereavement Care 0844 4779400 / 0116 2884119 / 01664 500802 / 01530 510909/ helpline@cruse.org.uk 	
www.lullabytrust.org.uk (Cot Death) bereavement support: 0808 802 6868 / support@lullabytrust.org.uk 	
www.thelauracentre.org.uk The Laura Centre, Bereavement Counselling 0116 2544341 	
www.nhs.uk/carersdirect/guide/bereavement/pages/bereavementsupport.aspx 	
www.childbereavement.org.uk 01494 568920 	
www.epilepsy.org.uk/info/sudep-sudden-unexpected-death-in-epilepsy 0808 800 5050 	
www.sudep.org 01235 772850 	

www.uk-sobs.org.uk — 0300 111 5065 (9am to 9pm everyday)



www.nhs.uk/livewell/suicide/pages/suicidebereavement.aspx - NHS Losing Someone Close Through Suicide

www.papyrus-uk.org Prevention of Young Suicide – 0800 068 4141 pat@papyrus-uk.org



www.mind.org.uk 0300 123 3393



www.macmillan.org.uk 0808 808 00 00



www.bereavedpartnerssupportgroup.com



www.tcf.org.uk 0845 123 2304



www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancer-help/coping-with-cancer/dying/after/coping-with-grief



www.samaritans.org 08457 90 90 90

