

Policy Title:	Mandatory Reporting to Medical Examiner	
Applies To:	All Team Members	
Approved:	Effective:	Next Review:
Dec. 21, 2022	Feb. 2, 2023	Dec. 21, 2026
Sponsor:	Senior Director, Quality Improvement & Safety	
Approval Authority:	Vice President, Medicine and Integrated Health Services	
Number: CL-PE-030	Manual: Interdisciplinary Clinical	

Note: This policy supersedes any sections of former District Health Authority policies that outline the process for mandatory reporting to medical examiner.

POLICY STATEMENTS

- In the event of the death of a patient within a Nova Scotia Health facility (including an Emergency Department) or where an individual is dead on arrival, there is a duty to immediately report the death to the Medical Examiner’s Office in accordance with the [Fatality Investigations Act](#) if there is reasonable cause to suspect any of the following:
 - The death was the result of:
 - Violence,
 - Suspected suicide, or
 - Accident (e.g., recent trauma, a fall, hip fracture, head injury, dislocation, etc.).
 - The death occurred as a result of the suspected misadventure, negligence, or accident on the part of the attending physician or Team Members.
 - The cause of death is undetermined.
 - A stillbirth or neonatal death has occurred where maternal injury has occurred or is suspected either before admission or during delivery.
 - The death occurred:
 - Within ten days of an operative procedure, or
 - Under initial induction, anesthesia, or the recovery from anesthesia from that operative procedure, or

- The person is an inmate and died in a Nova Scotia Health facility, was dead on arrival, or died while admitted to or detained in a Nova Scotia Health Facility, but while not on the premises.
2. In the event of the death of an individual (**in hospital, long term care, or in community**), there is a duty to immediately report the death to the Medical Examiner's Office if Nova Scotia Health Team Members or physicians have knowledge of or reasonable cause to suspect any of the following:
- The death was the result of:
 - Violence,
 - Suspected suicide, or
 - Accident (e.g.: recent trauma, a fall, hip fracture, head injury, dislocation, etc.).
 - The individual died unexpectedly while in good health.
 - The individual who died was not under the care of a physician.
 - The cause of death is undetermined.
 - The death occurred as a result of improper or suspected negligent treatment by any person, or
 - The death occurred as a result of any of the following, which was probably caused by, or connected with the person's employment or occupation:
 - A disease or ill health
 - An injury sustained by the person, or
 - A toxic substance introduced into the person.

REFERENCES

Legislative Acts

Fatality Investigations Act, Statutes of Nova Scotia. (2001, c. 31). Retrieved from <https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/fatality%20investigations.pdf>

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Policies

Note: This policy supersedes any sections of former District Health Authority policies that outline the process for mandatory reporting to medical examiner.

[Legally Mandated Notifications - AVDHA 120.034](#)

[Legally Mandated Reporting - SSH-AD-110-240](#)

[Care of the Patient After Death - GASHA 1-170](#)

[Care of the Patient after Death - CDHA CC 90-040](#)

[Death – Post Mortem Care Medical Examiner and Autopsy Cases - CBDHA 4 -13](#)

[Unexpected Death in the Emergency Department – SWNDHA VII-965](#)

Appendices

Appendix A: Definitions

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Team Member	Unless specifically limited by a certain policy, refers to all Employees, On-Site Medical Staff, learners, Volunteers, board members, contractors, contract workers, franchise Employees, and those with affiliated appointments and other individuals performing activities within Nova Scotia Health.
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POLICIES BEING REPLACED

CDHA CC 90-040 Care of the Patient After Death (partial replacement)

SSH-NU-400-362 Cases Reportable to the Medical Examiner (partial replacement)

SWNDHA 800.969 Post-Mortem Care/Autopsy (partial replacement)

SWH 511.0 Intake and Release of Remains- Yarmouth Regional Hospital Morgue (partial replacement)

CBDHA 4-13 Death - Post Mortem Care Medical Examiner and Autopsy Cases (partial replacement)

VERSION HISTORY

Version:	Effective:	Approved by:	What's changed:
Original	2023-02-02	VP, Medicine and Integrated Health Services	N/A