

Costa Mesa Police Department
Hospice Care Deaths

XXXX PURPOSE (6/9/04). To establish a policy that defines an Attended Death and the procedures to be taken by the responding officer.

XXXX ATTENDED DEATH (6/9/04). An Attended Death is one where the death was expected as a result of a terminal illness and the person has been under a physicians care within the past twenty (20) days. The death should also be considered an Attended Death if the person dies at "home" under the care of a hospice program or in a licensed board and care facility. A hospice is defined as a facility or program designed to provide a caring environment for supplying the physical and emotional needs of the terminally ill.

XXXX RESPONDING OFFICER (6/9/04). The officer responding to an Attended Death will determine if the death meets the criteria of an Attended Death. The officer responding will notify a field supervisor of the circumstances. The field supervisor need not respond to an Attended Death. The officer's primary responsibility is to assist the family/caregivers when requested.

If there are any suspicious circumstances, the death will be considered a Suspicious Death and handled as outlined in Costa Mesa Police Manual sections 1320-1350.

The officer will contact the Orange County Coroners officer at (714) 647-7410. There maybe some situations were the family members or hired caregivers were given instructions as to what they need to do to report the death directly to the coroner. In all cases the responding officer should work in concert with the caregivers and being sensitive to family requests. Under these circumstances, the coroner may have already been notified.

In the event that the coroner has not been notified or you are requested by a family member or hired caregiver. The officer should be prepared to answer the following questions when contacting the coroner:

- Patients name
- Date and time of death
- Gender
- Race
- Home address
- Telephone number
- Martial Status
- Occupation
- Location of death
- Who pronounced death and their relationship
- Any signs of trauma
- Mortuary
- Medications taken at the time of death
- Next-of-Kin notification
- Physicians name and when last treated
- Cause of death
- Hospice care information

XXXX REPORTING (6/9/04). The officer will prepare an Incident Report documenting the circumstances of the death. CSI and photographs are not needed on an Attended Death.