

Columbus Police Division Directive	EFFECTIVE	NUMBER
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<b>Death Investigations and Reports</b>		



**Cross Reference: 2.01, 2.02, 3.01, 4.02, 5.04, 6.02, 8.06**

## I. Definition

### A. In-Custody/Detention-Related Death

The death of a person while being taken into custody, while in custody, or while being detained by Division personnel. **This includes a death** involving or caused by a police-involved vehicular pursuit, stopping tactic, or use of force.

## II. Policy Statements

- A. Sworn personnel will not normally be involved when a death is from apparent natural causes and a hospice organization is involved and available. Responding personnel shall provide the appropriate assistance requested, which may include notifying hospice personnel not already present.
- B. Sworn personnel becoming aware of the death of a mentally or developmentally-disabled person shall notify the coroner, regardless of the circumstances.
- C. Statements obtained from Division personnel as a result of an order to comply with questioning during an administrative investigation of an in-custody/detention-related death will not be shared with or used in any criminal investigation or proceeding involving the personnel so ordered to answer questions. Personnel who are the focus of a criminal investigation may invoke their constitutional rights.
- D. The decision to conduct an administrative investigation into a proximate, detention-related death of an individual shall be made by the Chief of Police after a briefing on the circumstances.

## III. Procedures

### A. Death of a Foreign National

#### 1. Responding **P**ersonnel

**N**otify a Communications Bureau supervisor, regardless of the circumstances.

#### 2. Communications Bureau **P**ersonnel

- a. Upon notification from sworn personnel that a death of a foreign national has occurred, notify a Communications Bureau supervisor.



8. Deputy Chief

- a. Review the investigative package.
- b. Determine whether the actions of the involved personnel were within Division policy.
- c. Make a determination regarding corrective or disciplinary action.

9. Chief of Police

- a. Make a final determination if departmental charges will be filed.
- b. Cause involved personnel to be notified of the final determination.

E. Apparent Natural Deaths - No Hospice Organization Involved

1. Responding Personnel

- a. Ensure that a doctor or medic has made the death pronouncement.
- b. Complete a DOA *incident report*.
- c. Notify the **coroner's office** of the death.

(1) If the coroner releases the body, request the coroner's permission to release all personal property from the body to relatives at the scene.

(2) If the coroner orders that the body be transported to the morgue, collect personal property and list it in the narrative section of the report.

(a) If the value of cash is \$500 or more, submit all property to the Property Control Unit, note the property number in the Incident Report, and forward a copy of the property slip to the Homicide Unit.

(b) If the value of cash is less than \$500, note the amount in the Incident Report narrative and release the property to the transporting attendant.

d. Notify relatives of the death.

(1) Relatives are responsible for contacting a funeral home to make arrangements for the body to be transported, if released by the coroner.

(2) If relatives are not present and cannot be located, notify the **coroner's office** to make arrangements for the body to be transported.