



Bedford County Coroners' Office

Bedford County Coroner
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SECTION 1237 - CORONER'S INVESTIGATIONS

(a) The coroner having a view of the body shall investigate the facts and circumstances concerning deaths which appear to have happened within the county, regardless where the cause thereof may have occurred, for the purpose of determining whether or not an autopsy should be conducted or an inquest thereof should be had, in the following cases:

- (1) sudden deaths not caused by readily recognizable disease, or wherein the cause of death cannot be properly certified by a physician on the basis of prior (recent) medical attendance;
- (2) deaths occurring under suspicious circumstances, including those where alcohol, drugs or other toxic substances may have had a direct bearing on the outcome;
- (3) deaths occurring as a result of violence or trauma, whether apparently homicidal, suicidal or accidental (including, but not limited to, those due to mechanical, thermal, chemical, electrical or radiational injury, drowning, cave-ins and subsidences);
- (4) any death in which trauma, chemical injury, drug overdose or reaction to drugs or medication or medical treatment was a primary or secondary, direct or indirect, contributory, aggravating or precipitating cause of death;
- (5) operative and peri-operative deaths in which the death is not readily explainable on the basis of prior disease;
- (6) any death wherein the body is unidentified or unclaimed;
- (7) deaths known or suspected as due to contagious disease and constituting a public hazard;
- (8) deaths occurring in prison or a penal institution or while in the custody of the police;
- (9) deaths of persons whose bodies are to be cremated, buried at sea or otherwise disposed of so as to be thereafter unavailable for examination;
- (10) sudden infant death syndrome; and
- (11) stillbirths.

(b) The purpose of the investigation shall be to determine the cause of any such death and to determine whether or not there is sufficient reason for the coroner to believe that any such death may have resulted from criminal acts or criminal neglect of persons other than the deceased.

(c) As part of this investigation, the coroner shall determine the identity of the deceased and notify the next of kin of the deceased.