

Deaths Which Must Be Reported to the County Medical Examiner

Deaths due to or related to any type of violence or trauma

Deaths due or related to acute overdose of legal or illegal drugs and/or alcohol

Sudden, unexpected deaths of infants and children

Deaths of adults lacking a medical diagnosis which could reasonably result in death

Deaths due to drowning

Deaths due to thermal or chemical burns, or smoke inhalation

Death by disease, injury, or toxicity resulting from employment

Deaths of prisoners

Deaths due to hypo- or hyperthermia

Death of a fetus greater than 20 weeks gestation or weighing at least 350 grams resulting from maternal trauma or acute drug use

Deaths due or related to any of the above or any other non-natural event, **regardless of the time elapsed between the injury and death. If death is related in any way to a discrete injury or poisoning event, the period of time between the non-natural event and the death is irrelevant.**

Examples of delayed deaths include:

- * An elderly person who dies months after becoming bedridden from a fall
- * A person who dies of urosepsis due to paraplegia following a car crash years before
- * A person who develops pneumonia as the result of anoxic brain injury after choking on food

Tennessee Code Annotated § 38-7-108-a :

Any physician, undertaker, law enforcement officer, or other person having knowledge of the death of any person from violence or trauma of any type, suddenly when in apparent health, sudden unexpected death of infants and children, deaths of prisoners or persons in state custody, deaths on the job or related to employment, deaths believed to represent a threat to public health, deaths where neglect or abuse of extended care residents are suspected or confirmed, deaths where the identity of the person is unknown or unclear, deaths in any suspicious/unusual/unnatural manner, found dead, or where the body is to be cremated, shall immediately notify the county medical examiner or the district attorney general, the local police or the county sheriff, who in turn shall notify the county medical examiner. The notification shall be directed to the county medical examiner in the county in which the death occurred.