

Death Protocol- Oakland ED

(C) BCH Emergency Department

Phone Numbers:

- **Donor network:**
1-800-553-6667
- **Coroner's office**
Alameda County:
510-382-3000

Patient pronounced dead in the Emergency Department

- Immediate priorities:**
- Family support: spiritual care, social work
 - Team support: PAUSE huddle, team clinical debrief (when possible)
 - Family must leave bedside until cleared by coroner
 - Cover body, do not remove any equipment, verify armband, apply tag to toe and shroud
 - For undifferentiated arrest, strongly consider tox screening

- Physician responsibilities**
- Notify coroner, determine whether case will proceed to medical examiner (document name, case #, and time of contact in EMR)
 - Notify PMD of death, if immediately unable, ask physician admin or oncoming attending for assistance
 - DO NOT complete death certificate, defer to PMD or medical examiner
 - Set disposition as "expired" in Disposition of EMR, complete required fields, **obtain donor info from RN**
 - Notify physician admin vial email

- Nursing responsibilities**
- **Within 30 minutes:** Contact donor network, obtain case #, **provide details to ED MD**
 - Place belongings in labeled bag
 - Hang reflection heart ornament in ED main areas to signify recent death
 - Place copy of medical record/CCFS in Manager's box
 - **Charge nurse:**
 - enter name and MRN to ED admit area of shift report
 - Notify House Supervisor

- Social Work**
- Verify coroner's involvement with ED attending
 - Give family:
 - Bereavement packet
 - Victims of crime application
 - Coroner/Pathology contact and case number
 - Notify Pediatric Advanced Care Team (PACT) for palliative services for family
 - Obtain consent for eventual release of body to mortuary

Coroner designates case will proceed to medical examiner*?

- No**
- PMD may request autopsy but should obtain consent from family
 - Parents should sign autopsy request form
 - Family may view/make contact with body if no autopsy to be performed

- Yes**
- Family not allowed to view or have further contact with body, inform that plans for burial after autopsy should be coordinated with coroner
 - Prepare body for transport to coroner
 - Charge nurse to compile medical record:
 - Copy of medical chart and face sheet
 - Autopsy consent form
 - Release of body form
 - Nursing files an event record in ZENworks application

***Almost all deaths occurring in the ED should be coroner cases. If ED team determines that autopsy is likely needed but coroner declines, ask what their determination of cause of death is. If unsure, advocate for autopsy.**