
Purpose

This policy recognizes that the Bemidji Police Department will sometimes be called to investigate deaths.

Policy

It shall be the policy of the Bemidji Police Department to be notified of all deaths occurring within the corporate City Limits. The Bemidji Police Department may investigate any death further at their discretion.

Procedure

The following procedures should be followed when responding to and investigating a death:

1. Consider necessary enforcement action and maintain secure control of the immediate scene.
2. Identify any potential suspects, weapons, and obvious evidence. Care should be exercised to *protect* evidence and *not collect* obvious items.
3. Initial arriving officers should notify the shift supervisor or OIC of the circumstances.
4. Officers should assist and provide medical aid to any injured persons if necessary.
5. Identify witnesses, separate and remove any non-involved persons.
6. Responding officers should take care to leave any obviously deceased persons undisturbed. If the deceased has been moved or medical resuscitation has been attempted, officers should carefully note and document the activity in their official report.
7. A supervisor or OIC will respond to all death investigation scenes and determine the level of response necessary. For non-suspicious deaths, including hospice, managed care, or accidental deaths a detective response is not prescribed. For non-witnessed deaths which have potential to be suspicious, detective consultation is recommended for possible response.
8. In cases of suspected homicide or suicide, the BPD on-call detective will be contacted for further assistance.
9. In cases of custodial facility deaths such as the Beltrami County Jail or Northwest Minnesota Juvenile Center, a detective must be contacted for response.
10. In cases of any child/juvenile death or near death, a detective will be consulted for possible response and collaboration with child protective services. These cases should be handled to the same degree of a homicide.
11. In all instances, detailed photographs should be obtained and included in the case report.

12. The shift supervisor or OIC will be responsible for coroner notification and consultation in cases where a detective is not needed. The shift supervisor or OIC will then complete the BPD Coroner's Report and arrange for removal of the deceased.
13. Command Staff shall be notified of all deaths or near deaths requiring a detective response.

Minnesota State Statute 390.11 requires many categories of deaths to be immediately reported to the County Coroner's Office or Medical Examiner. *In all instances, the Shift Supervisor or OIC shall inform the Beltrami County Coroner of any non-health care facility death reported to the Bemidji Police Department.* 390.11 Subd 2 authorizes the County Coroner or Medical Examiner to perform an autopsy at their sole discretion and in the best interest of the public.

Reference or Revision Date(s):

A. REFERENCE:

1. Minnesota State Statute 390.11: *Investigations-Reports of Death*
2. Minnesota State Statute 390.11 Sub 2: *Autopsies*

B. REVISION DATE(S):