

We hope the advice and counseling provided by the information provided in this pamphlet and by your Funeral Director will help you during this time of loss. However, should you need additional assistance, please telephone our office at (530) 668-5292.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Mike McGowan, First District
Helen Thompson, Second District
Max Rexroad, Third District
Mariko Yamada, Fourth District
Duane Chamberlain, Fifth District



YOLO COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER E.G. PRIETO

Information from the Yolo County Sheriff's Department Coroner Section



2500 East Gibson Road
Woodland, CA 95776
Business Hours 8:00a.m. - 5:00p.m.
(530) 668-5292
(Available 24 hours)

Supervising Deputy Coroner

Robert A. LaBrash

Deputy Coroners

Gina M. Powers
James A. Andrade
Laurel Weeks

We at the Yolo County Sheriff's Department Coroner Section extend our deepest sympathy to you during this difficult time. We hope that the information contained in this pamphlet will assist you by providing answers to commonly asked questions.

Q. WHY IS THE CORONER INVOLVED?

A. The Coroner is required by state law (G.C. 27491) to investigate any sudden, violent, or unusual deaths, or other deaths that fall within the jurisdiction of the Coroner. It is the responsibility of the Coroner's Office to establish positive identity of the deceased; determine the date, time, circumstances, and the cause and manner of death. The Coroner's investigation is not only limited to the examination of the deceased, but may include interviews with family members and other witnesses. The collection of physical evidence and the safeguarding of personal property found at the death scene may also occur.

Q. WHAT SHOULD I DO RIGHT NOW?

A. Select a funeral home and inform the funeral director that the death is being handled by the Coroner's office. Ask them to notify us as soon as possible. Our office does not select funeral homes nor do we make arrangements. In the event someone is making arrangements for the family, the Coroner must be provided with written authorization to release the deceased, signed by the legal next of kin.

Q. WHERE WILL MY RELATIVE / FRIEND BE TAKEN?

A. He / She will be transported to the Coroner's main facility located at 2500 East Gibson Road, Woodland, CA 95776 (530) 668-5292.

Q. IS IT NECESSARY FOR ME TO COME TO THE CORONER'S OFFICE TO IDENTIFY THE BODY?

A. No. In a majority of the cases, visual identification is not required. Should it become necessary for you to come in or bring other records or x-rays, you will be contacted.

Q. IS VIEWING ALLOWED?

A. No. The Coroner's office has a no viewing policy. Arrangements can be made at the funeral home for viewing.

Q. WILL AN AUTOPSY BE PERFORMED?

A. The Coroner will decide if an autopsy is necessary, however approximately 75% of deaths we investigate do not require one. We may not perform an autopsy if the cause of death can be determined from other criteria, and is of "natural causes." If the deceased has been under the care of a physician accessing the medical history, and no suspicion of foul play exists, an autopsy may be waived.

Q. WILL AN AUTOPSY PREVENT VIEWING AT A FUNERAL?

A. No. Although incisions are made, they are placed so that they will not be seen; they are also very carefully closed after the procedure just as in surgical procedures. At all times, the decedent is treated with the utmost respect.

Q. HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE BEFORE MY RELATIVE/FRIEND IS RELEASED FROM YOUR OFFICE?

A. Generally it should not take more than two to three days. Your Funeral Director will coordinate the release on your behalf.

Q. WILL I BE CHARGED FOR OTHER CORONER SERVICES?

A. The County is required to assess certain fees for transportation and storage. You will be asked to pay this fee by your funeral service provider.

Q. WHERE CAN I OBTAIN A DEATH CERTIFICATE?

A. A death certificate is issued after the examination is completed. Occasionally, more extensive testing is required; in which case an interim death certificate is issued which will allow the family to make funeral arrangements. Contact your funeral home or the Yolo County Health Department (530) 666-8680.

Q. HOW DO I OBTAIN AN AUTOPSY, INVESTIGATION, AND TOXICOLOGY REPORT?

A. You need to officially request a copy from the Coroner's Office. The first set of reports is free to the next-of-kin. Contact the Coroner's Office at (530) 668-5292, available twenty-four hours a day for details.

Q. WHAT ABOUT TISSUE / ORGAN DONATION?

A. In conjunction with Sierra Regional Eye and Tissue Bank and other agencies, we will make an effort to provide information to you about tissue donation. If you are interested in donation, call Sierra Regional Eye and Tissue Bank at (916) 456-0276.

Q. MY RELATIVE / FRIEND WAS IN THE MILITARY, WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR INFORMATION?

A. Persons who have served in the Armed Forces, were honorably discharged, and meet other service requirements may be entitled to a Veteran's burial. For information contact the Veteran's Service Office and your funeral director.

Q. IF THERE ARE NO FUNDS FOR BURIAL, WHAT CAN I DO?

A. If the deceased or the legal next of kin do not have sufficient funds for burial, the alternative may be indigent cremation. The next of kin should contact the Yolo County Public Administrator at (530) 666-8100.

Q. HOW CAN PERSONAL POSSESSIONS BE CLAIMED?

A. Any personal possessions in the custody of the Coroner may be claimed by the legal next of kin. To avoid any inconvenience, call the Coroner's Office for an appointment. Sometimes personal possessions are taken into custody by other law enforcement agencies. You will need to contact those agencies to recover personal possessions in their custody. Unless there is a need to hold clothing as evidence, it will be disposed of for the safety of all persons involved. Governmental documents (driver's licenses, passports, military identification cards) will not be released to the next of kin, but will be returned to the issuing agency for disposition.

Q. I NEED TO ENTER MY RELATIVE / FRIENDS RESIDENCE, BUT IT IS SEALED. WHAT CAN I DO?

A. It is a misdemeanor to remove and/or tamper with the Coroner Seal or enter without written authorization from the Coroner's Office. Please call (530) 668-5292 for formal arrangements.