



Ohio Administrative Code Rule 3701-5-14 Coroner's protocol.

Effective: March 19, 1993

(A) The coroner shall investigate the death of and perform an autopsy on any child under two years of age that dies suddenly when in apparent good health unless a court with jurisdiction determines under section 313.131 of the Revised Code that an autopsy is contrary to the religious beliefs of the child. The coroner shall investigate the death and perform the autopsy by conducting the following:

- (1) An investigation of the site where the child was found dead and indicating, if the information is available, whether the child was observed to die, when the child was last seen alive, the place of death, the circumstances under which the child was found dead and by whom, the position of the child when found, and the identity of all individuals who attempted to resuscitate the child;
- (2) A complete medical history of the child, including, if the information is available, the child's date of birth, birth weight, type of delivery, number of well-baby visits, history of major illness including recent illness and any medical treatment, feeding history, birth mother's prenatal history and history of any drug use, whether any siblings have suddenly died under the age of two while in apparent good health or have died from any other cause;
- (3) An external examination of the child including noting the child's state of nutrition and development, examining the nares and choanae, determining the age, race, sex, body length, and body weight of the child, and evaluating the child for evidence of rash, dehydration, anomalies, and injury;
- (4) An internal examination including evaluating the epiglottis, larynx, and trachea, and noting the presence or absence of thymic petechiae, pleural petechiae, epicardial petechiae and fluid blood;
- (5) A microscopic examination of any of the following that are indicated after conducting paragraphs (A)(1) through (A)(4) of this rule, provided that a specimen is possible to obtain:
 - (a) One vertical section of the heart including the left atrium and left ventricle;



- (b) One section of each lobe of both lungs;
 - (c) Both kidneys and adrenals;
 - (d) The ileum including a Peyer's patch;
 - (e) The liver and pancreas;
 - (f) The larynx including the epiglottis;
 - (g) The brain, including the cortex, basal ganglia, mid-pons, and medulla, each to include meninges;
and
 - (h) The thymus; and
- (6) Any other examination or investigation that is indicated by the facts and circumstances of the case.
- (B) The coroner shall perform the following procedures where indicated by the facts and circumstances of the case:
- (1) A total body x-ray for evidence of repetitive battering;
 - (2) Biochemical determinations of sodium, potassium, and glucose, using vitreous humor;
 - (3) Bacterial cultures of heart blood, spleen, both lungs, stool, cerebrospinal fluid and larynx;
 - (4) Viral cultures of the heart, both lungs, one kidney, gastrointestinal tract and brain; and
 - (5) A collection for testing of spinal fluid, urine, and gastric contents, five to ten milliliters of whole blood, and approximately ten grams of the liver. These specimens shall be examined and the presence and levels of the following shall be determined:



- (a) Common agents acting upon the central nervous system;
 - (b) Salicylates;
 - (c) Alcohols;
 - (d) Carbon monoxide; and
 - (e) Any other agents as appropriate to the case.
- (6) Retention of frozen liver, brain, kidney, and lung specimens for a period of at least six months
- (C) The coroner shall report to the Ohio department of health a preliminary diagnosis of the cause of death of any child under two years of age who died suddenly when in apparent good health. The preliminary diagnosis shall be reported to the Ohio department of health as soon as possible, but no later than seventy-two hours after the death of the child and shall be made either orally, or on a form prescribed by the director of the Ohio department of health containing the following information:
- (1) The child's name, sex, age, race, date of birth and date of death;
 - (2) The child's county of residence and county of death; and
 - (3) The mother's and father's name, age, and address.

If the preliminary diagnosis is orally made to the Ohio department of health, the coroner shall also report the preliminary diagnosis on the form prescribed by the director and shall submit the form to the Ohio department of health within fourteen days.

(D) If the child's parent makes a request for the preliminary results of the autopsy, the coroner or person designated by him shall give the parent an oral statement of the preliminary results after they are available.



(E) The coroner shall send written notice of the final results of the investigation and autopsy, including the final results of examinations, investigations and procedures required in paragraphs (A) and (B) of this rule, to the Ohio department of health, the health district or department with jurisdiction in the area in which the child's parent resides, and, upon a request of the parent of the child, to the child's attending physician, within a reasonable time after the final results are available. The coroner shall send written notice of the final results to a parent upon written request.