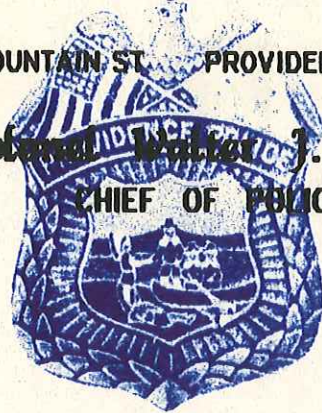


PROVIDENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT

HEADQUARTERS

209 FOUNTAIN ST. PROVIDENCE, RI 02903

Colonel Walter J. Clark
CHIEF OF POLICE



September 7, 1988

MEMORANDUM

To: Commanding Officers

This memorandum will reiterate and further clarify Department policy and procedures governing the Medical Examiner.

The Medical Examiner will be notified when the death of an individual is unusual, questionable or in cases of a violent death; whether from a simple accident or from suspected homicide. More explicitly, cases involving:

1. accident;
2. homicide or suicide (bodies are not to be handled);
3. death as a result of a disease following an injury/illness;
4. sudden death when in apparent good health;
5. death whereby the deceased was not under a physician's care;
6. abortions;
7. death from a contagious disease;
8. deaths of a suspicious or unnatural nature;
9. deaths which occur when the deceased is in prison or in the custody of the police; and,
10. sudden infant death.

The general rule which is to be followed by members of this Department is that officers will not disturb a dead body until the medical examiner arrives at the crime scene and orders removal of body.

In the case of a death occurring in a crime scene situation, the collection and preservation of evidence will be accomplished in the usual manner with appropriate personnel and receipts to maintain the "chain of evidence". Normal police procedures will be conducted; such as any inquiries, the dusting for fingerprints (excluding those of the deceased) and the photographing of the crime scene. The preservation of the location of the weapon, ligatures, drugs, syringes, needles, narcotic powder or liquid, tourniquet; and any other evidence possibly related to the death will be collected and preserved.

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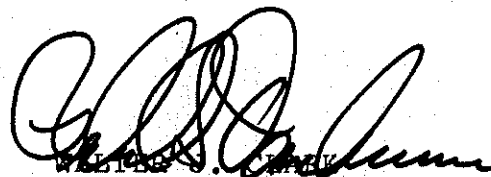
When death is a result of a traffic accident, the shoes of the victim along with the brake and accelerator pedals will be requested in all driver deaths. All clothes are necessary for examination in any vehicular death; but are most important when a pedestrian is involved. Helmets and other protective gear should be made available when the decedent is a cyclist.

The Commanding Officer will ensure the safe passageway for the Medical Examiner's arrival at the scene of a traffic accident; and to also secure his safety while conducting his investigation.

The Medical Examiner will give permission for removal of the body from the scene of a traffic accident when indicated so by the flow of traffic or inappropriate public view.

Deaths which are not reported to the Medical Examiner are simply those deaths which are of a natural cause where the individual has been receiving medical treatment from a physician.

It should also be noted that some of our Medical Examiners are not familiar with the Providence area and especially some of its isolated areas. Therefore, it will be the responsibility of the Commanding Officer to have a member of his command provide the Medical Examiner with an escort to the scene.



William S. Clark
Colonel
Chief of Police