

How do I obtain my loved one's property?

In some cases, certain items of your loved one may be retained by this office for safe keeping. If you have questions about any items we may have, please give us a call at the number listed on the front of this brochure. Please note, clothing will be transferred with your loved one to the funeral home or crematory. We only retain items that are on their person, such as in their pockets or the immediate surrounding areas. In some cases, jewelry or other items may be sent with your loved one to the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office. Any questions regarding property left on their person can be directed to our Tarrant County office at the following number: (817)-920-5700

***Unidentified remains can not be released until a formal positive identification can be established. In most cases, a picture ID can be compared to verify identity. If a positive identification can not be made on scene, the Medical Examiner's office will attempt to make a formal positive identification by use of fingerprint analysis, dental records, or DNA. Depending on the technique applied, this process may take several days. Our office may contact the family in regards to obtaining medical records, or, in some cases, a DNA sample for comparison.**

****Rulings on cause and manner of death are available for public viewing on the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's website at the following web address:**

<https://mepublic.tarrantcounty.com/>

This information is provided as a public service and in accordance with federal laws. In cases where next of kin has yet to be established or where positive identification has yet to be made, this information is withheld.

Please accept our condolences on the loss of your loved one. We are here to assist you in any way we can. We assure you that we will do everything in our power to determine, to the best of our ability, the cause and manner of your loved one's death.

Our Staff:

Jennifer Hernandez, Chief Investigator
Bob Murphy, Forensic Death Investigator
Julie Carriker, Forensic Death Investigator
Chris Kuhlman, Forensic Death Investigator
Lindsay Hendrix, Forensic Death Investigator
Heidi Hess, Forensic Death Investigator
Bryan Lee, Forensic Death Investigator
Andrea Crocker, Administrative Assistant

M.E. Case Number: _____

If you should have any questions or need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us through our office number or email listed at the front of this pamphlet.

You may also visit the Tarrant County Medical Examiner website for more information:

<http://access.tarrantcounty.com/en/medical-examiner.html>

**Tarrant County Medical
Examiner's District
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
Serving
Tarrant, Denton, Parker, and Johnson
Counties
Nizam Peerwani, M.D.
Chief Medical Examiner**



**Denton County Medical Examiner's
Office
535 S. Loop 288, Suite 1132
Denton County Government Center
Denton, TX 76205
(940)-349-2870
Fax (940)-349-2871**

medicalexaminer@dentoncounty.com

**Accredited by
National Association of Medical
Examiners and American Society of Crime
Lab Directors**

FAQ's

We know this time can be quite confusing and shocking. We understand that you need some time to process and to grieve. We would suggest making contact with family, friends, and/or clergy if you wish, to establish a support network. Here we have provided some answers to some frequently asked questions:

What is my next step?

Your first step is to contact a funeral home or crematory of your choosing to begin making final arrangements for your loved one. When you speak with them, please inform them that your loved one is currently at the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office in Fort Worth at the following address:

200 Feliks Gwozdz
Fort Worth, TX 76104

Why Fort Worth?

Our office operates under the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's District. Our office in Denton is an investigative office only. All of our physicians who perform the exams, and our labs are located at the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office in Fort Worth.

Why is the Medical Examiner's Office involved?

Texas Law requires the Medical Examiner to investigate all deaths that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- When the death could be considered unnatural in nature (ex. Due to a motor vehicle accident or a fall, etc.)
- When there is no physician available and willing to sign the Death Certificate
- When there is not enough sufficient medical history to make a determination

Will an autopsy be performed?

There are many different types of exams performed by our Medical Examiners. The decision on which type is performed is up to the Medical Examiner assigned to the case. Please note, an autopsy is not typically performed on someone with significant medical history who appears to have passed due to natural causes. Also, the Medical Examiner's office is not allowed to perform an autopsy simply at family's request. If you do not wish an autopsy to be performed, you may sign a waiver of autopsy, however, this does not always guarantee an autopsy will not be performed.

When will I be able to see my loved one?

The next time you will be able to view your loved one will be after they have gone to the funeral home/crematory of your choice. Tarrant County Medical Examiner's office does not allow family/friends to see their loved ones.

Do I have to pay for an autopsy to be done?

All services rendered in investigation of your loved one's death are provided by the county government at no charge to you.

When will my loved one be released to the funeral home or crematory of my choosing?

Your loved one's remains will be released to your funeral home or crematory after the Medical Examiner's office has finished that portion of their investigation (on average within 2-3 days).

How can I obtain the death certificate?

Death certificates will be issued to you by your funeral home or crematory. In some cases, the manner and cause of death will say "Pending". After the case is finalized and the cause and manner have been decided upon, a final death certificate will be issued to you also from the funeral home or crematory. Please note, due to the nature of some cases, determining cause of death may take several weeks.

When will the autopsy report be complete and how may I obtain a copy?

All examination reports (with the exception of X-Rays and photographs) are subject to required disclosure in accordance with Chapter 522, Government Code, and family may obtain a free non-certified copy by sending a written request through email to the following email address:

tcmerecords@tarrantcounty.com

You may also request one by mail by sending your request and a self-addressed envelope to:

Records Custodian
Tarrant County Medical Examiner
200 Feliks Gwozdz
Fort Worth, TX 76104

*Non family members will incur a fee