



**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
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**STATEMENT FOR DIGITIZED POLAROID IMAGES  
PERIOD COVERED: 1973 – 1998**

**What is the “Digitization Project of 2013”?**

In effort to ensure retention and lack of quality degradation of historic Polaroid images in cases files from 1973-1998, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) Quality Assurance and Control officer initiated the “Digitization Project of 2013” that converted Polaroid images into digital images. 167,482 Polaroid photos were converted during this project period. Due to budgetary and time constraints, the accepted error rate for the conversion of Polaroid photos to digital was 3-5%. 10% of all photos were reviewed for quality assurance and when poor image quality or other errors exceeded 5% of the set being reviewed for quality, 100% of that set was reviewed and all errors identified were corrected.

**What Constituted an Error?**

An error for a converted photo to a digital image format included, but was not limited to inaccurate photo count, missing case, poor image quality (i.e. too light or too dark), wrong decedent association with case number, or more than one confirmed decedents with the same case number assignment in the grouping of photos.

**How does that impact OCME cases from 1973-1998?**

Upon completion of the digitization project the original/physical photos for calendar years 1973 – 1998 were approved for destruction by the District of Columbia’s Office of the Secretary: Office of Public Records, and were destroyed on June 27, 2014.

If you receive a copy of an OCME case file pursuant to subpoena or court order that includes production of case photos from the relevant time period, and believe one of the digital photos is an “error”, you may contact the OCME Records Management Unit to assist you with evaluating the case file and relevance of the photos received.