TITLE: TOXICOLOGY

Policy: The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) is assured adequate supporting services, equipment and facilities to perform autopsy examinations pursuant to DC Code § 5-1403 and 1409.

Purpose: To ensure proper post-mortem examination procedures in accordance with the mission of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

Scope: The following procedures are to assist Medical Examiner physicians to perform proper post-mortem examinations in a safe and secure environment.

1. General
   1.1. Toxicology specimen MUST BE TAKEN on all case types if possible, even if no toxicological tests are ordered
   1.2. Toxicology specimens include blood, urine, liver, vitreous humor, stomach contents, brain and bile.
       1.2.1. Vitreous humor should not be submitted in pediatric cases if the eyes are preserved for evaluation of retinal hemorrhages.
   1.3. Additional/alternative specimens may include muscle, spleen and kidney.

2. Testing guidelines per case type
   2.1. Cases requiring a complete toxicological analysis include
       2.1.1. Homicides
       2.1.2. Child and elder abuse
       2.1.3. Suspected drug related death
       2.1.4. Infant and children deaths (except motor vehicle crash victims)
       2.1.5. Deaths in custody for which there is no underlying lethal natural disease
       2.1.6. Drivers un motor vehicle crashes and any pedestrians
       2.1.7. Persons with natural disease in which ethanol and/or drugs of abuse may have contributed to the death
       2.1.8. Drowning
       2.1.9. Fire deaths