


Approved



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