WHEN TO CALL THE CORONER

A quick-reference guide for healthcare and public safety professionals

Contact the coroner when a death involves any of the following circumstances:

1. VIOLENT, INJURIOUS, OR NON-NATURAL DEATHS

- Homicide (suspected or confirmed)
- Suicide
- Accidental injury (falls, motor vehicle accidents, fire, chemical exposure, drowning, etc.)
- Firearm injuries
- Poisoning or drug overdose

2. UNEXPLAINED OR SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES

- Sudden or unexpected death without a clear natural cause
- Circumstances inconsistent with clinical history
- No qualified provider available or willing to sign a natural death certificate
- Any death where the cause or manner cannot be confidently determined

3. DEATHS INVOLVING CHILDREN

- All unexpected deaths in children under 1 year old
- Any child death involving possible abuse, neglect, or an unsafe environment
- Deaths with an active or recent CPS case

WHEN IN DOUBT, CONTACT THE CORONER FOR GUIDANCE.

See reverse for additional circumstances and the North Dakota Coroners Directory.

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ADDITIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

4. IN-CUSTODY OR STATE-SUPERVISED DEATHS

- Jail or prison inmates
- Individuals detained by law enforcement
- Persons under correctional supervision, DHS care, or psychiatric hold
- Suspected child abuse or neglect
- Elder abuse or institutional neglect
- Domestic violence–related injuries

5. ENVIRONMENTAL CAUSES

- Fire-related deaths
- Extreme heat or cold exposure
- Starvation or malnutrition
- Radiation or chemical exposure

6. UNIDENTIFIED / UNCLAIMED / UNUSUAL REMAINS

- Unidentified bodies
- Decomposed, skeletonized, or partial remains
- Remains discovered outdoors or in unusual locations

NORTH DAKOTA CORONERS DIRECTORY

www.ndcoroners.com/coroners-directory

This pocket guide is a quick-reference aid based on the supplied "When to Call the Coroner" document. It is not a substitute for applicable law, local protocols, or direct consultation with the coroner.

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