



ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURAL ORDERS

SOP 2-21

Effective: 11/18/2020

Review Due: 11/18/2021

Replaces: 01/10/2018

2-21 APPARENT NATURAL DEATH/SUICIDE OF AN ADULT

Related SOP(s), Form(s), Other Resource(s), and Rescinded Special Order(s):

A. Related SOP(s)

[2-73 Submission of Evidence, Confiscated Property, and Found Items](#)

[5-4 Juvenile Section](#)

B. Form(s)

PD 3066 Apparent Natural Death Worksheet

C. Other Resource(s)

None

D. Rescinded Special Order(s)

None

2-21-2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline procedures for responding to and investigating apparent adult natural deaths and suicides.

2-21-3 Policy

It is the policy of the Albuquerque Police Department (Department) to investigate any adult apparent natural death or suicide, to document the cause(s) of such death, and ensure that no evidence is lost or concealed.

2-21-4 Definitions

None

6 2-21-5 Procedures

A. Apparent Natural Death

1. For all apparent adult natural death calls, except calls where a death occurs in a hospital, hospice, or nursing home, the dispatched officer shall:
 - a. Check for signs of life;
 - b. Investigate the incident and complete the incident report, and the Form Apparent Natural Death Worksheet;



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- c. Call the Office of the Medical Investigator (OMI) for all unattended deaths, including apparent overdoses;
 - i. Sworn personnel shall call a Crime Scene Specialist (CSS) to the scene if OMI deems the death to be suspicious; and
- d. Coordinate with the OMI on next of kin notification and document in the report. The officer shall only make death notification accompanied by another officer. The officer may call a Chaplain to assist in the death notification. Telephonic death notifications do not require a second officer.

B. Apparent Suicide

1. For all apparent suicides, the dispatched officer shall:

- a. Be responsible for securing the scene and conducting the investigation;
- b. Conduct a preliminary investigation;
 - i. Take statements, if witnesses are present;
- c. Request that OMI respond to the scene;
 - i. Coordinate with OMI on next of kin notification and document in the report;
- d. Request a CSS. After confirming through OMI that the death is a suicide, only the investigating CSS shall make arrangements with the Evidence/Disposition Unit for the release of evidence to the family, consistent with SOP Submission of Evidence, Confiscated Property, and Found Items; and
- e. Make the death notification accompanied by another officer. The officer may call a Chaplain to assist in the death notification. Telephonic death notifications do not require a second officer.

2. The dispatched supervisor shall ensure that the investigation is comprehensive and complete.

C. The Crimes Against Children Unit (CACU) investigates all child deaths, consistent with SOP Juvenile Section.