



## ASSIGNMENTS INVOLVING THE DECEASED

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### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To set forth the policy and procedure when operating on the scene of an assignment involving a decedent in the absence of proper authority.

### 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all members of the Bureau of EMS and Voluntary Hospital ambulance personnel who provide pre-hospital emergency medical care in the New York City 911 system.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Crime Scene** – Any location where evidence of a crime or suspected crime is found. This includes, but not limited to, homicide, suicide, trauma, sexual assault, pedestrian struck, motor vehicle collision (MVC) involving serious injury or death, Hazardous Material scene, fire, grossly decomposed body, evidence of alcohol abuse, or discovery of illicit drugs or drug paraphernalia.
- 3.2 **Proper Authority** – For the purposes of this operating guide procedure, proper authority shall be defined as an on-duty Law Enforcement Officer or representative from the Office of Chief Medical Examiner (OCME), operating on the scene in uniform or civilian clothes. Proper identification shall be requested if there is any doubt as to the identity of the person representing themselves.
- 3.3 **Responsible Adult** – A person of or over the age of eighteen (18) years without cognitive impairment who, in relation to the deceased, is a parent, stepparent, grandparent, guardian, legal spouse, sibling, adult child, or an individual who will remain responsible for the deceased until the arrival of a proper authority.
- 3.4 **Temporary Housing Facility** – A short-term accommodation that provides safe, secure, and stable shelter for individuals or families who are experiencing housing insecurity or homelessness.
- 3.5 **Secure Location** – For this operating guide procedure, a secure location shall be defined as an area where the deceased cannot be viewed or accessed by individuals not associated with the deceased.

**NOTE:** *A temporary housing facility is not a Secure Location.*

#### 4. POLICY

- 4.1 Members who determine that a patient is deceased may depart the location without the presence of a proper authority only when the criteria outlined in this procedure are met.

***NOTE: This policy does not apply to a suspected crime scene operation or deceased in public view.***

#### 5. PROCEDURE

- 5.1 When a disposition code of 10-83D or 10-83R is determined, members **shall not** depart the scene when **any** of the following conditions exist:
- 5.1.1 The deceased is under the age of 18,
  - 5.1.2 A proper authority **or** responsible adult is not present,
  - 5.1.3 There is a reasonable belief that a crime scene exists,
  - 5.1.4 The deceased is not in a secure location, or
  - 5.1.5 The deceased remains are decomposing.
- 5.2 Members **shall** remain on scene until the conditions set forth in Section 5.3 of this operating guide procedure are met.
- 5.3 When a disposition code of 10-83D or 10-83R is determined members **shall** depart the scene when a proper authority is on scene or **all** of the following criteria are met:
- 5.3.1 The deceased is 18 years of age or older,
  - 5.3.2 A responsible adult is present,
  - 5.3.3 There is no reasonable belief that a crime scene exists, and
  - 5.3.4 The deceased is in a secure location.
- 5.4 All of the decedent's information must be entered into the electronic Prehospital Care Report (ePCR).
- 5.5 Members shall contact the 24-hour 83D/83R phone line at EMS FDOC, (718) 999-7908 prior to leaving the scene of an assignment in which a pronouncement of death has been made and the proper authority has not arrived.
- 5.6 The ePCR data will be electronically forwarded to the OCME and must be exported **prior to** leaving the call location.
- 5.7 Members shall transmit their final disposition utilizing a mobile Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) device or respective borough dispatcher and return to the appropriate status.

5.8 EMS FDOC shall:

5.8.1 Document all of the following information received from an EMS unit.

- A. CAD number
- B. Unit designation
- C. Pronouncing EMT's shield number
- D. Time of pronouncement
- E. ePCR booklet number
- F. Name of the responsible adult and relationship to the deceased

5.8.2 Ask and document the following information received from an EMS unit:

- A. Is the deceased 18 years of age or older?
- B. Is there a responsible adult without cognitive impairment willing to stay with the deceased until NYPD or the Medical Examiner arrives?
- C. Is the death suspicious, a crime scene, suicide, drowning, drug or drug paraphernalia in view of the EMS crew?
- D. Is the deceased in a secure location, outside of public view?

5.8.3 Contact NYPD via the CAD system confirming that NYPD is still required at the location and document the information in the CAD message as outlined in Section 5.8.1.

**6. APPENDIX**

6.1 OGP 106-35, Appendix A Assignments Involving the Deceased Flowchart

6.2 OGP 106-35, Appendix B Condolence and Assistance Pamphlet

**BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF EMS**