



*State of North Carolina*  
*Department of Public Safety*  
*Prisons*

Chapter: E  
Section: .2500  
Title: **Inmate Death  
Procedures**  
Issue Date: 09/05/14  
Supersedes: 11/14/11

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***POLICY AND PROCEDURE***

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**.2501 Purpose**

To establish operational procedures for the proper reporting, documentation and investigation of inmate deaths within North Carolina's Prisons. The procedure should be consistent for all prisons, institutions, correctional centers, plants, office buildings and other properties operated under the authority of North Carolina Prisons.

**.2502 Policy**

Proper reporting, documentation and investigation of inmate deaths are important and necessary to ensure that the details, facts and chronological order of events are maintained in an incident resulting in the end of an inmate's life. Whether the incident be natural or of unnatural causes, division staff should ensure meticulous documentation of all pertinent facts surrounding the moments before, leading up to the inmate's death as well as what actions were taken once staff became aware of the inmate's death.

**.2503 Resource & Reference**

The North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Prisons Health Care Procedure Manual AD V-2 should be utilized as a guide for this policy.

**.2504 Procedures**

Upon the death of an inmate, no person shall be authorized to disturb the body at the scene of death. This prohibition does not limit or prohibit resuscitation efforts and is not intended to interfere with such efforts. At the time the inmate death is discovered, the Facility OIC should utilize Form DPIDC included at the end of this policy to ensure all policy requirements have been met. The facility medical staff will also complete a list of tasks as required in Prisons Health Care Procedure Manual AD V-2.

Unless a valid DNR document is in place the County Medical examiners will be contacted to conduct an autopsy for all inmate deaths.

**.2505 Facility Responsibilities**

- (a) Notify Facility Head immediately
- (b) Notify Director of Prisons or designee (Duty Officer) immediately
- (c) Notify County Medical Examiner in county of death immediately

- (d) Notify Local Law Enforcement with jurisdiction immediately if unexpected death or by unnatural causes.
  - (1) Obtain written reports concerning outcome of their investigation. (If applicable)
- (e) Notify Deputy Director for Health Services by next business day unless unexpected death such as suicide or if by trauma. In those cases notify immediately.
- (f) Collect all inmate medications from personal property (both prescription and over the counter) and turn over to facility medical staff. Facility medical staff will send the medication to the Central Pharmacy for proper disposal.
- (g) Obtain a completed copy of DC-135 - Notice of Inmate Death.
- (h) Complete DC-230 – Inventory of Personal Effects
- (i) Obtain statements DC-138B from all witnesses both staff and inmate.
- (j) Complete Incident Report in OPUS
- (k) Notify immediate family of death of inmate. (Complete letter documenting fact)
- (l) Assign investigator to incident.
  - (1) Conduct investigation and complete investigation cover sheet summary.
  - (2) Submit to Facility Head with all supporting documents.
- (m) Compile all necessary documents into a packet and submit three (3) copies, one (1) each to the following: Regional Director, Deputy Director of Prisons and Deputy Director for Health Services. The packet must include the below stated:
  - (1) Investigator Cover Sheet
  - (2) Complete Incident Report (Investigator cover sheet and incident report should be thorough and consistent)
  - (3) DC-135 Notice of Inmate Death
  - (4) Death Certificate
  - (5) Autopsy Report (If required by County Medical Examiner)
  - (6) Documents indicating disposition of inmate body.

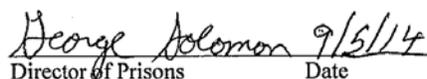
- (7) Copies of reports from investigating Outside Law Enforcement Agencies. (If applicable)
- (8) Copy of notification of death letter to immediate family of inmate.
- (9) Copy of letter to Clerk of Court in county of inmate residence issuing check to the estate of the inmate from deceased inmate trust fund account. Include photocopy of check. (If applicable)
- (10) Copy of DC-230 Inventory of Personal Effects. (Signed and Witnessed by staff) (Signature by recipient or documentation for no signature)
- (11) Cover letter from Facility Head.

(n) Death of a foreign-born national

- (1) Verify on the OR11 the national origin of any Foreign National who dies in custody. If place of birth is any location outside of the United States or its territories, contact the Chief of Auxiliary Services, Manager of Classification or their designee. This notification should occur within 24 hours of death.
- (2) Auxiliary Services staff will also review the Alert Screen each day to determine if a Foreign National has died.
- (3) Auxiliary Services will notify the appropriate consulate of the death of any Foreign National.

**.2506 Region Responsibilities**

- (a) Review Inmate Death Report for all necessary documents.
- (b) Review Inmate Death Report for thoroughness of investigation.
- (c) Cover letter to be completed by Region Director or designee.
- (d) Forward completed report to the Deputy Director of Prisons.

  
Director of Prisons                      Date

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## Inmate Death Report Checklist

Created 07/14/2010

COMPLETED √	ITEM	DATE/TIME	STAFF
	Notified Facility Head (Immediately) (Document in Incident Report)		
	Notified Director of Prisons/Designee (Immediately) (Document in Incident Report)		
	Notified County Medical Examiner in county of death. (Immediately) (Document in Incident Report)		
	Notified Chief of Health Services by next business day unless by suicide or trauma. Then Notify immediately. (Document in Incident Report)		
	Notify Law Enforcement Agency with jurisdiction of location of death. (If applicable) (Document in Incident Report)		
	Obtain Reports from outside Law Enforcement Agencies. (If applicable)		
	Collect and forward all medications (prescription & over the counter) in inmate's personal property to medical staff who will send to pharmacy for destruction. (If applicable)		
	Obtain completed DC-135 (Include copy in Inmate Death Report)		
	Complete DC-230 Inventory of Personal Effects (Signed by completing officer / Signed by witnessing Staff /Signed by recipient or documented justification for no signature		
	Obtain Statements from all Witnesses (Include Copies in Death Report)		
	Complete Incident Report and enter into OPUS		
	Complete Investigation Cover Sheet with summary of facts (Consistent with Incident Report)		
	Obtain Copy of Death Certificate (3 copies)		
	Obtain Copy of Autopsy Report (If required by Medical Examiner)		
	Obtain Documents indicating Disposition of the Inmate's body		
	Notify Immediate Family Member of Inmate Death (Place copy of letter in Death Report)		
	Notify Prisons Chief of Auxiliary Services or designee IF inmate is a foreign-born national		
	Send deceased inmate trust fund account balance to Clerk of Court of inmate residence. (Include copy of letter and check in death report)		
	Forward Completed Inmate Death Report to Facility Head. (Cover Sheet added from Facility Head)		
	Forward Completed Inmate Death Report to Region Director. (Cover sheet added from Region)		
	Forward Completed Inmate Death Report to Deputy Director's Office.		

