



OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER

Milwaukee County

March 16, 2020

To: Hospital/Clinic Administrators
Nursing Supervisors
Hospital Physicians
Hospital Chiefs of Staff
Hospice Physicians/Administrators
Nursing Home Physicians/Administrators
Risk Managers
Funeral Directors
Emergency Medical Services

Subject: The COVID-19 issue

As you are probably aware, Governor Evers has issued an Executive Order directing a Public Health Emergency and establishing Wisconsin's Response Protocol for COVID-19. If you are aware of or involved with any COVID-19 related deaths, please notify the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office at:

414-223-1200

The Medical Examiner's Office is responsible for the certification of deaths that constitute a public health emergency, in this case, COVID-19. In that regard, the Office will be signing the death certificates in all cases of deaths in Milwaukee County related to COVID-19 infection.

In the majority of cases, no autopsy will be performed. If you have contact with the families of the deceased prior to death, please relay this information to them.

If COVID-19 has been tested for and confirmed before death, the Medical Examiner's Office will assume jurisdiction and sign the death certificate by review of the decedent's medical records. The body will be released to a funeral home and will not be transported to the Medical Examiner's Office.

If COVID-19 has been tested for and has not yet been confirmed, we will determine jurisdiction when the test results become available. In the meantime, the body can remain in the hospital morgue or one of the Office's medicolegal death investigators may authorize release to a funeral home.

If COVID-19 is suspected in a case of a death outside of a medical facility and no testing has been performed, an investigator will respond and obtain swabs for testing. While testing is underway, the body can be released to a funeral home, and jurisdiction will be determined once the test results are obtained.

933 WEST HIGHLAND AVENUE · MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53233 · TELEPHONE: (414) 223-1200

BRIAN L. PETERSON, M.D.
Chief Medical Examiner

Please remember that the Medical Examiner's Office is always available to help. Please contact us with any questions or concerns.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian L. Peterson, M.D." The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Brian L. Peterson, M.D.

The Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office is Accredited by
the National Association of Medical Examiners

