

Scenario : One “untimely” death at a home with rigor & lividity.

- 1) First certified EMT-B/EMT-I on scene
 - a) Assume Incident Command
 - b) If suspicious of death upon arrival, put on gloves before entering building
 - c) Inform KCF-415 that you are on-scene
 - d) Introduce self to family
 - e) Perform medical evaluation of a body
 - i) Body condition clearly indicating biological death.
 - (1) Complete decomposition or putrefaction: the skin surface (not only in isolated areas) is bloated or ruptured, with sloughing of soft tissue, and the odor of decaying flesh.
 - (2) Dependent lividity and/or rigor: when the patient’s body is appropriately examined, there is a clear demarcation of pooled blood within the body, and/or major joints (jaw, shoulders, elbows, hips, or knees) are immovable.
 - (a) To avoid disturbing clothing or unnecessarily rolling the body, examine thighs and legs for lividity.
 - (3) Procedure for lividity and/or rigor: All of the criteria below must be established and documented in addition to lividity and/or rigor in order to withhold resuscitation:
 - (a) Respirations are absent for at least 30 seconds; and
 - (b) Carotid pulse is absent for at least 30 seconds
 - (i) Or there are no heart sounds at apex of heart for 30 seconds; and
 - (c) Lung sounds auscultated by stethoscope bilaterally are absent for at least 30 seconds; and
 - (d) Both pupils, if assessable, are non-reactive to light; and
 - (e) There is no indication of or suspicion of hypothermia.
 - (4) Balance efforts between confirming biological death and preservation of potential crime scene.
 - f) After determination of above: notify KCF-415 that there is an “untimely” (Do not use code numbers or letters).
 - i) Ask them to hold ambulance in quarters
 - (1) As courtesy, make call to ambulance service by phone when under control
 - ii) Hold Halifax Rescue in quarters
 - iii) Dispatch Vermont State Police and Constable to location
 - g) Call medical control
 - i) Start run sheet
 - ii) Report findings with times, address, name, age, DOB to Medical Control
 - iii) Record name of Doctor, time of call and instructions
 - (1) Follow medical control’s instructions
 - h) Operate as IC until relieved by a Halifax EMS officer
 - i) Initiate Check-in List
 - j) Establish scene boundaries
- 2) Arrival of second EMT-B/EMT-I provider
 - a) Confirm medical findings/provide witness to medical status
 - b) Sign check-in list
 - c) Maintain scene boundaries
- 3) All EMS providers beyond 3 are to remain away from the immediate scene, unless IC otherwise specifies.
 - a) Vehicles may be held at remote staging area or returned to quarters per instructions from IC
 - b) Ambulances, fire trucks, and other apparatus at scene should return to quarters in service, if possible
 - c) Other EMS personnel should return to quarters as appropriate or directed by IC.

- 4) Tasks that must be completed while on-scene
 - a) Establishment and maintenance of scene boundary
 - i) Use tape, doors, kind words
 - b) Instruct family that the scene must be treated as potential crime scene until cleared by police
 - i) Acknowledge the cultural and religious rites of others,
 - c) Limit one's own physical actions & equipment
 - i) Note or photograph location of own equipment then remove equipment to your vehicle
 - d) Access to home
 - i) Remove vehicles from driveway, park remotely
 - ii) Clearly identify drive with cones or other devices
 - iii) Develop parking plan for police vehicles, ME and funeral home
 - iv) Establish and maintain Check-In List
 - (1) Capture names of all present including:
 - (a) Family
 - (b) Halifax EMS
 - (c) Vermont State Police
 - (d) M.E.
 - (e) Detectives
 - (f) Others
 - e) Complete EMS paperwork
 - i) Complete Halifax EMS two-part run form
 - ii) Complete VT EMS multi-part form
 - iii) Have forms available for VSP and others
 - f) Communicate to family the plan of action for the next hours
 - i) Arrival of police
 - ii) Arrival of a detective
 - iii) Arrival of a representative from the medical examiner's office
 - iv) Arrival of funeral home
 - v) Possible others
 - vi) Arrival of family
 - g) Communicate to family that situation will likely take 3-5 hours

- 5) Responsibility for the Incident Commander
 - a) As IC one must work within a delicate balance
 - b) Recognize role as one of liaison between
 - i) Family
 - ii) Town
 - iii) Agencies
 - c) Recognize that senior most police officer (Sgt, Detective) will like assume leadership during his/her time on scene. As IC, you provide continuity and facilitation.
 - d) Control access to scene
 - i) Deny access if necessary,
 - ii) Provide escort if necessary,
 - e) Provide information
 - f) Coordinate and dispatch resources as needed

Notes:

Uncertified personnel are not permitted to reroute resources nor to cancel the response to a call.
 Personnel may be held on scene pending police arrival.

