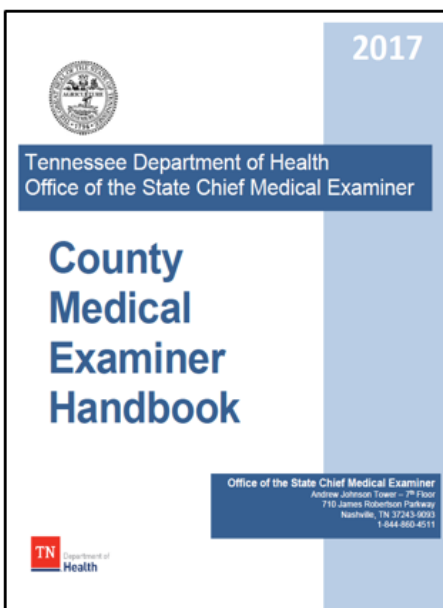


OSCME NEWSLETTER

OSCME Progress Report: Updated County Medical Examiner Handbook

The past few months have been very busy for the Office of the State Chief Medical Examiner (OSCME). The staff has finished the task of rewriting the County Medical Examiner's Handbook. The last update was completed in 1999, so the handbook has been completely rewritten, reorganized and updated to include changes in the Tennessee Code Annotated and other useful information. The handbook should be ready to go to the printers by the time you receive this newsletter and available on the OSCME website at: <https://www.tn.gov/health/section/OSCME> under "Resources for the Medical Examiner." We hope it will prove to be a useful tool for you in performing death investigations.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the working group comprised of representatives from each of the five regional forensic centers, who reviewed and made recommendations to

the handbook. The working group members included: Dr. Darinka Mileusnic-Polchan, Dr. Feng Li, Laura Beth Parsons, F-ABMDI, Dr. James Metcalfe, and Dr. Benjamin J. Figura.

I would also like to thank the Medical Examiner Advisory Council for their review, input and approval of the handbook.

If you have not attended one of the "Bullet, Drugs and Deception: A Team Approach to Death Investigation," sessions there is still time to sign up for the last three sessions scheduled for April 27th and 28th at Paris Landing State Park, May 17th and 18th in Johnson City or June 13th and 14th at Roane Medical Center. Limited seating is available. You can register to attend at <https://sites.google.com/site/oscmejagtraining>. This course offers 16 hours POST/EMS credit and 14.75 hours CME credit. The OSCME has received positive feedback from those who have attended thus far.

The first two sessions of "Death Investigations 101" have been scheduled for May 3rd at the Macon County EMS Classroom and May 4th at the Putnam County EMS Classroom. If you work in one of those judicial districts (15-Macon, Jackson, Smith, Wilson, & Trousdale Counties) (13-Clay, Pickett, Overton, Putnam, Cumberland, White, & DeKalb Counties), you can register to attend at: Macon County: <https://goo.gl/forms/jF9ArXT0b990BSdi2> or Putnam County: <https://goo.gl/forms/qGHqvK46G4FCcCC3>. This course offers eight hours POST/EMS credit

and 5.75 hours CME credit.

Be sure to look at the OSCME website for recent updates and additions. New information is being added frequently along with updated forms and documents.

Interim Medical Examiner Database off to a Great Start

The Interim Medical Examiner Database (I-MED) has gotten off to a great start. Currently 130 Users are registered, most of whom are entering their own cases. Staff at the OSCME are entering cases as they are received. Registering in I-MED gives access to the information that has been entered for your county. Registering is easy; just contact Andrew Wilson or Fran Wheatley at 615-837-5039 or toll-free 844-860-4511. They will be happy to get you enrolled and answer any of your questions. You can also register anytime online at https://apps.health.tn.gov/Medical_Examiner/ As a reminder the State Department of Health will reimburse your county \$25 for every Report of Investigation that is either entered into the I-MED database or that is received by the OSCME. If you or your mayor's office have any questions about getting started please contact MDIs Andrew Wilson or Fran Wheatley, they will assist with any questions about entering cases, generating a monthly case list to submit for a claim for fee or completing a claim for fee sheet. The fillable pdf version of the Report of Investigation can be found at https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/health/attachments/OSCME_-_Report_of_Investigation.pdf

Consumer Product Related Deaths Should be Reported to US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)

Deaths in which a consumer product may have caused or contributed to the death of an individual are reportable to the County Medical Examiner, per T.C.A. §38-7-108. Consumer product related deaths require a complete investigation by the CME/CMEI and should be reported to the **United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)**. It is recommended that an autopsy be performed on such cases.

The CPSC is an independent federal regulatory agency that was created in 1972 by Congress in the Consumer Product Safety Act. In that law, Congress directed the Commission to "protect the public against unreasonable risks of injuries and deaths associated with consumer products." There are thousands of types of products under the CPSC jurisdiction. Examples of common products that should be reported include toys, ATVs, bicycles, cigarette/charcoal lighters, cribs, fireworks, mattresses, portable generators, pack-n-plays, etc. Visit www.cpsc.gov and click on the tab titled "Regulations, Laws & Standards," "Voluntary Standards" for an alphabetized list of product categories. Types of deaths involving consumer products include but are not limited to falls, recreation vehicle accidents, asphyxiations/suffocations, drownings, carbon monoxide poisoning, fires, appliance/furniture tip-overs and electrocutions. When investigating a death involving a consumer product consider the following:



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
CONSUMER PRODUCT
SAFETY COMMISSION

Did the product contribute to or cause the death?

Does this product fall under the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's jurisdiction?

Who is the manufacturer, and what is the model brand name and serial number of the product?

Is the product available for examination? If so, where is it located?

There are several ways to report an unsafe consumer product or a product-related death:

Online: <https://www.saferproducts.gov/CPSRMSPublic/Incidents/ReportIncident.aspx>

Mail: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
4330 East West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814

Phone: (800) 638-2772; TTY
(301) 595-7054

Fax: (301) 504-0124 or (301) 504-0025

Hours: Monday–Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Messages can be left anytime.

Prior to completing a CPSC report, it may be necessary to create an account (no cost). Have the case information ready for reference to assist in answering the questions required on the report.

Statewide Electronic Death Certification Beginning in Tennessee

In the coming months, the Office of Vital Records plans to implement a statewide electronic death registration system (EDRS). Multiple training sessions are planned in eight locations across the state. Online training will also be available. As of October 2016, Tennessee was one of only five states without an electronic death registration system.

The advantages of a well-functioning EDRS are multiple: county health departments will be able to electronically access records and issue death certificates locally to families; the medical certifier may complete the cause and manner of death sections according to his or her schedule instead of that of the funeral home; and, perhaps most importantly, the timeliness, accuracy and completeness of vital statistics in Tennessee will be enhanced.

The staff of the OSCME has been actively involved with the development of the system for over a year and are now assisting in generating training materials for certifiers and funeral homes. In addition, the OSCME can act as a resource for certifiers needing assistance in formulating the best wording for the cause and manner of death determination.

A user access request form and more information are available at: <https://www.tn.gov/health/section/vital-records>