

Brian K. Myers, Coroner
Bob Bellas, Chief Deputy
Courthouse Administration Building
450 Market Street
Kittanning, PA 16201

The Coroner investigates all sudden, suspicious, violent, traumatic, criminal, unexplained and certain operative deaths. These investigations are conducted in order to expand the knowledge and understanding of mechanisms which result in death and having viewed the body, shall investigate the facts and circumstances concerning deaths which occurred within the county for the purpose of determining whether an autopsy is warranted or an inquest thereof shall be in the following cases:

- Sudden deaths not caused by readily recognizable disease or where the cause of death cannot be properly certified by a physician on the basis of prior or recent medical attendance
- Deaths occurring under suspicious circumstances, including alcohol, drugs or other toxic substances, may have had a direct bearing on the outcome
- Deaths occurring as a result of violence or trauma, whether apparently homicidal, suicidal or accidental including mechanical, thermal, chemical, electrical or radiational injury, drowning or industrial accidents
- Any death in which trauma, chemical injury, drug overdose or reaction to drugs or medical treatment, was a primary or secondary, direct or indirect, contributory, aggravating or precipitating cause of death
- Operative and peri-operative deaths in which the death is not readily explainable on the basis of prior diseases
- Any death wherein the body is unidentified or unclaimed
- Deaths known or suspected due to contagious disease and constituting a public hazard
- Deaths occurring in prison, a penal institution or while in the custody of the police
- Deaths of persons whose bodies are to be cremated, buried at sea or otherwise disposed of
- Any sudden infant or fetal death
- All emergency room deaths.

The purpose of an investigation shall be to determine the cause of any such death and to determine whether or not there is sufficient reason for the Coroner to believe that any such death may have resulted from criminal acts or criminal neglect of persons other than the deceased. In all cases where the Coroner has jurisdiction to investigate the facts and circumstances of a death, the body and its surroundings shall be left untouched until the Coroner has had a view thereof or until he shall otherwise direct or authorize the removal or release of the body.

The laws of the Commonwealth provide that the Coroner shall take custody of all personal effects which appear to have been on or about the person at the time of the death until lawfully claimed by proper persons. Care shall be taken in the gathering of these effects in order to facilitate identification of the deceased and further any police investigation that might be in progress.

Links

- [Pennsylvania State Coroner's Association](#)