Pennsylvania Law requires the Coroner to investigate and determine the cause and manner of sudden and unexpected deaths where the attending physician is unable to determine the cause of death, or the death is a result of a homicide, suicide, accidental or undetermined means. It also includes deaths where the deceased has not been seen by a physician recently prior to death.

If, after the scene investigation, it is determined that further medical evaluation is required, the coroner’s office will arrange for transportation of your loved one to our facility.

Next Steps for the Next of Kin:

As soon as possible, identify a funeral home or cremation service of your choosing and immediately notify our office at (610) 344-6165.

Contact the funeral home and inform them that the deceased is being transported by the Coroner’s Office.

The funeral home will then contact the Coroner’s Office and make arrangements to have your loved one taken into their care once they are released.

Chester County Coroner’s Office
601 Westtown Road, Suite 090
West Chester, PA 19382

Office Hours:
Monday-Friday
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Phone: (610) 344-6165
Fax: (610) 344-6018
coroneroffice@chesco.org

CORONER
Sophia Garcia-Jackson, M.S., F-ABMDI
Chief Deputy Coroner
Caroline Johnson, M.S., D-ABMDI
First Deputy Coroner
Jesse Poole-Gulick, M.S., D-ABMDI

Mission Statement
The Chester County Coroner’s Office is an independent agency serving the citizens and honoring the deceased of the county by investigating the facts and circumstances concerning jurisdictional deaths which have occurred within Chester County. We determine the cause and manner of death, the identity of the decedent, and provide notification to the legal next of kin, while exhibiting the highest degree of compassion, professionalism, and integrity.

The Chester County Coroner’s Office extends its deepest sympathy during this difficult time. The information provided in this brochure is intended to assist survivors with decision making and helpful solutions during this time of loss.

Coroner Investigator’s Name:
Death Certificates

Once the cause and manner of death is determined, a death certificate is generated and provided to the responsible funeral home. The original certificate is filed with Vital Records by the Funeral Director. Certified copies of this certificate can be obtained from the Funeral Director or the Vital Records.

Pennsylvania Department of Health
Division of Vital Records
Death Certificate Processing Unit
PO Box 1528
New Castle, PA 16103
(724) 656-3100
https://mycertificates.health.pa.gov/

Cleaning Services (Biohazard/Hoarding)
The following companies specialize in biohazard cleanup and/or hoarding removal. The Coroner’s Office DOES NOT endorse or recommend any particular company.

A.D. Valor Technical Cleaning 610-646-5365
Aftermath, Inc. 800-366-9923
BELFOR Property Restoration 888-629-4768
Bio-One Chester Co. 484-995-3949
Bio Recovery Specialists 888-619-2952
Crime Scene Clean Up 800-295-5460
D.A.S.H. Bio-Recovery, LLC 888-972-0911
Mammoth Restoration 888-495-5211
Radical Restorations, Inc. 610-775-6535
Restoration Relief 1-855-6RELIEF
RestoreCore 800-231-1281
Restore More Restoration 484-699-2837
Revive Crime Scene Cleaning 267-886-6011
ServiceMASTER Clean 610-632-6291
ServPro Central Chester Co. 610-506-8919
Spaulding Decon 215-201-5533
Trauma Scene Cleaners 267-794-8460

Frequently Asked Questions

When will I know the cause of death?
If a cause of death is determined after the medical review and/or forensic examination, the cause of death may be available to the next of kin after the completion of the examination. However, if additional testing such as toxicology is being performed, it may take more time to complete our investigation.

What does a “pending” case mean?
Pending means the cause and manner of death have not been finalized and investigation is ongoing. A death certificate with “pending” as cause of death allows funeral arrangements to move forward. The most common reason for pending is toxicological testing. Usually toxicology results can take 8-12 weeks for processing. The next of kin will be notified of the final cause and manner of death once all reports have been received and reviewed. For this reason, if you change your phone number, please advise our office immediately.

How and when can personal property/possessions be claimed?
Generally, items to be released can be retrieved from the Coroner’s Office Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Please make contact with the Coroner’s Office at 610-344-6165 for more information.

How can I get a copy of an autopsy or toxicology report?
Next of kin can complete a request form available on our website (chesco.org/Coroner), which provides further information. There is a charge for certified reports.

Can I see my loved one at the morgue?
Arrangements for viewing at the morgue cannot be granted. The Coroner’s Office will work as quickly as possible to have your loved one taken into the care of the designated funeral home.

Who is considered the next of kin?
The legal next of kin is the closest living relative in the following order: spouse, adult child, parent, adult brother or sister, adult grandchild.

Information, support and guidance are available:

A Haven
Support for grieving children and their families
(484) 716-1807
http://www.ahaven.org/

The Center for Loss and Bereavement
(610) 222-4110
https://bereavementcenter.org/

The Compassionate Friends
Provides support for the loss of an infant or child.
(877) 969-0010
https://www.compassionatefriends.org

Crime Victims Center of Chester County
(610) 692-1926
https://www.cvcofcc.org/

Highmark Caring Place
Provides services for children dealing with death & loss.
(866) 613-4673
https://www.highmarkcaringplace.com

SIDS & Infant Death Resources
https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/programs/Pages/SIDS.aspx

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
Just Dial or text 988 for 24/7 hotline
https://988lifeline.org

Chester County Mental Health Crisis Intervention Hotline
(610) 280-3270

Grief Counselor & Educator
Annalie Korengel
(610) 952-2992