



# SUDDEN DEATH AND FOUND HUMAN REMAINS

## LE-037

Effective Date: 2000/09/15  
Amended: 2010/02/26  
Reviewed: 2014/05/20

### **Policy Statement**

*It is the policy of the Regional Municipality of Peel Police Services Board that the requirements set out in this document shall form part of the Board Policies and the Chief of Police is hereby directed to comply with these requirements in his/her administration and operation of the Peel Regional Police.*

### **1. Subject**

The guiding principles under which the Chief of Police is to establish procedures and processes relating to sudden or unexplained death investigations and investigations into found human remains.

### **2. Specific Definitions**

#### **“found human remains”**

Means any portion of a human body in an advanced state of decomposition and includes skeletal remains. Where the origin of the remains is unclear, they shall be presumed to be human remains until determined otherwise;

#### **“major case”**

Means:

- (i) homicides as defined in subsection 222(4), Criminal Code of Canada, and attempts;
- (ii) sexual assaults, and all attempts; (includes sexual interference, sexual exploitation and invitation to sexual touching;
- (iii) occurrences involving non-familial abductions, and attempts;
- (iv) missing person occurrences, where circumstances indicate a strong possibility of foul play;
- (v) occurrences suspected to be homicides involving found human remains;
- (vi) criminal harassment cases in which the offender is not known to the victim; and
- (vii) any other case designated as a major case by the Major Case Management Executive Board

#### **“sudden death”**

Means any death which results from:

- (i) homicide;
- (ii) suicide;
- (iii) unexplained or unknown causes;
- (iv) the sudden and unexpected death of a child under five years of age;
- (v) multiple fatality incidents, as well as railway fatalities and aviation fatalities;
- (vi) persons dying in hospitals following suspected accidents, suicides or homicides; or
- (vii) natural causes where police are called to the scene.

### 3. Policy Requirements

It is the policy of the Board with respect to sudden or unexplained death in investigations into found human remains that the Chief of Police shall:

- (a) Ensure complete compliance with legislative and constitutional requirements, and recognized legal principles;
- (b) Ensure that members act with full respect for human dignity and according to professional standards of skill, integrity and accountability;
- (c) Maintain both officer and public safety as a priority;
- (d) Ensure that there is 24 hour police response to all sudden death investigations;
- (e) Provide training that ensures officers investigating sudden or unexplained death and found human remains have the knowledge, skills and abilities to vigorously investigate all sudden deaths with a view to establishing the cause and circumstances, and where culpability can be established, to apprehend and charge those responsible;
- (f) That it develop and maintain procedures that require investigations into sudden or unexplained deaths and found human remains be considered potential homicides and be undertaken in accordance with the Peel Regional Police Criminal Investigation Management Plan;
- (g) Ensure that occurrences falling within the definition of a major case are investigated in compliance with the procedures set out in the *Ontario Major Case Management Manual*; and
- (h) Regularly review procedures on sudden or unexplained death investigations and investigations into found human remains to keep current with case law, inquests, inquiry findings, and amendments to related legislation.

### 4. Measurement Methods/Systems

The Chief of Police shall conduct an ongoing statistical analysis and qualitative review for all sudden death investigations to ensure the integrity of investigative practices and procedures.

### 5. Reporting

The Chief of Police shall report on an exception basis. This applies to those circumstances where an investigation into a sudden or unexplained death and found human remains has resulted in an “exceptional” circumstance, or a circumstance which may be considered detrimental to the police service; and/or has significant issues of potential liability to the Board and the police service.

As part of a separate Annual Report on Adequacy Regulation, the Chief of Police shall report on compliance with this section of the policy.

### 6. Authority/Legislative Reference

Ontario Regulation 03/99, Section 12(1)(j) and 29  
Ontario Major Case Management Manual  
Board Minute #191/00  
Board Minute #29/10  
Board Minute # 44 /14

**7. Linkage to Appropriate Police Service Procedure/Directive**

I-B-402(F) Forensic Identification Services  
I-B-720(F) Sudden Death Investigations  
Criminal Investigation Management Plan