

Twin Falls County Coroner Staff

Dennis Chambers, Coroner
Cherrell Jacobsen, Chief Deputy Coroner
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Office Hours:

Monday 0800 - 1700
Tuesday 0800 - 1700
Wednesday 0800 - 1700
Thursday 0800 - 1700
Friday 0800 - 1700

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Twin Falls County is an Equal Opportunity Employer

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"Committed To Excellence"

The purpose of this pamphlet is to provide basic information about the Twin Falls County Coroner to assist you with the necessary procedures following a death.

Legal Requirements

State and County laws make it the duty of the Coroner to inquire into and determine the manner and cause of deaths that occur under the following circumstances:

Violence: To include homicides and suicides.

Accidental: To include vehicular, industrial, drowning, fire, falls etc.

Suspicious: Any death occurring under circumstances which do not appear to be natural.

Unattended: Any death occurring without a physician present at the time of the death outside of a medical facility.

In Custody: Any death occurring while incarcerated, including during arrest or while in any County, City or State correctional facility.

Overdoses: Any death suspected to be related to the use of illegal or prescribed drugs.

Abortion: Any death resulting from criminal or self-induced abortion. Other cases that are reviewed by policy to determine if they are to be accepted by the Coroner's Office are as follows:

Medical Facility Deaths: Any death occurring within 24 hours of admittance to a medical facility is investigated and a determination is made as to whether or not the death warrants the involvement of the Coroner.

Surgical Deaths: Any death occurring during surgery is investigated and a determination is made as to whether or not the death warrants the involvement of the Coroner.

Once a death has been reported to the Coroner an investigator will respond to the scene and conduct an investigation. As part of this process the decedent may be taken to the County Morgue pending further investigation and/or examination by a medical examiner (physician-pathologist) to determine the cause and manner of death.

The final determination will be based on the following information:

Initial Investigation: Information collected at the scene of the death and through follow-up investigation that will clarify medical history and circumstances surrounding the death.

Medical Examination:

(a) **External Examination:** A complete physical examination is conducted on the decedent. The findings and any known medical history are combined to determine the cause and manner of death. Although an external examination is non-invasive, it is sometimes necessary to obtain samples of body fluids to aid in determining the cause of death and/or contributing factors.

(b) **Autopsy:** A complete physical examination, internally as well as externally, is conducted on the decedent which includes a thorough examination of each organ and if necessary, microscopic examination of the organs. The findings of this examination together with the investigative findings and any known medical history are combined to determine the cause and manner of death. Although an autopsy is an extensive examination, it is sometimes necessary to obtain samples of body fluids to aid in determining the cause of death and/or contributing factors. *

*It should be noted that due to the fact that some of the above examinations are based on laboratory analysis, the final determination may be delayed depending on the type of analysis required.

Prescription Medication: All prescription medication prescribed to the decedent will be collected, examined and counted. Due to restrictions under the Idaho Code, prescription medication prescribed to the decedent will be seized and destroyed. They cannot be left in the home.

Choosing a Mortuary/Cremation Service

The Twin Falls County Coroner's Office has a system in place which utilizes most of the local mortuaries on a monthly rotation basis. What this means is that when the next of kin has no preference or is not immediately available to choose or there isn't any evidence of a pre-need designation by the deceased, the "duty mortuary" will transport the decedent to the their facility. This by no means obligates the next of kin to use that mortuary for their funeral arrangements. Preparations can then be made through that mortuary or any other mortuary or cremation service.

Personal Property

The Coroner is responsible for property that is either on the decedent or under the immediate control of the decedent. Property is then either released to the next of kin at the time of removal or notification. Otherwise the property is secured by the Coroner's Office. The property is available for release to the next of kin during normal office hours, 8:00 a.m. 12:00 noon; Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, or by appointment.

Twin Falls County Treasurer

In the event that the next of kin is not immediately available to secure the decedent's residence and personal possession, the County Treasurer may be called to secure the residence and the contents therein. This is done to protect the interest of the decedent and the next of kin. If the next of kin is available to take possession of the decedent's residence and its contents, there is no need for the involvement of the County Treasurer

Death Certificates

Death certificates are generated by the mortuaries or cremation services and as such, your funeral director or cremation service director will assist you in obtaining death certificates. Death certificates may also be obtained from the Bureau of Vital Statistics located in Boise, Idaho. There is a nominal fee for each death certificate and you may need more than one copy depending on the various aspects of the decedent's affairs.

Copies of Report

The next of kin may obtain copies of the Coroner's investigative report, reports of medical examination and toxicology from the Coroner's Office. Copies may be obtained in person or by written request. Medical examination reports can take up to several weeks before they are completed. *It should be noted that the reports of medical examination and toxicology can only be released to the legal next of kin or their designee. To obtain copies of police reports, you should contact the law enforcement agencies involved with the case.*

Coroner Service Fee \$ 40.00

Pursuant to Idaho Code 31-870 a fee of \$40.00 has been established This fee covers the scene investigation, body examination, death certificate and cremation authorization. The estate of the decedent will be billed within 30 days of the death report.

Miscellaneous Information:

Identification and Viewing: Contrary to popular belief, it is not required or usually necessary for the next of kin to come to the Coroner's mortuary to visually identify the decedent. We understand you may wish to see the decedent as soon as possible. In consideration of this, we will work with the funeral home or cremation service of choice to expedite the release of the decedent for viewing purposes. You can then work directly with them to arrange for this service. Viewings of decedents scheduled for autopsy are usually not allowed until after the release back to the mortuary of preference.

Veterans: Persons who have served in the armed forces and were honorably discharged may be entitled to a Veterans' burial. For more information contact your local Veteran's Affairs Office.

County Assistance: If the decedent's estate does not have sufficient funds to cover the cost of the disposition of the remains and you are unable to assume the financial responsibility, you may apply for Twin Falls County Assistance. Your funeral director or cremation service director will be able to assist you in this application process.

Related Agency Listings

Agencies that may provide assistance or information to make arrangements are listed below for your reference.

Twin Falls Sheriff.....	736-4063
Twin Falls Police.....	735-7209
Idaho State Police.....	324-6000
Buhl Police Department.....	543-4200
Filer Police Department.....	326-5000
Kimberly/Hansen Police Department.....	423-4151
Veterans Administration.....	733-7610 ext-21
White's Mortuary.....	733-6600
Reynolds Mortuary.....	733-4900
Parke's Funeral Chapel.....	735-0011
Farmer Funeral Chapel.....	543-4333
DeMaray Funeral Chapel.....	934-4406
Hove-Robertson Funeral Chapel.....	324-4555
Farnsworth Mortuary.....	324-7777
Payne Mortuary.....	678-5557
Serenity Funeral Chapel.....	733-0991
Hansen Mortuary.....	678-2521
Rasmussen Funeral Home.....	678-2100
Wood River Chapel.....	788-2244
Bureau of Vital Statistics.....	334-5980
County Assistance.....	736-4037