



MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING INSTRUCTION

UNEXPLAINED INFANT DEATH INVESTIGATIONS

ISSUED: March 2, 2021

EFFECTIVE: March 2, 2021

REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:

Inspector Paul Formolo

DATE: February 8, 2021

ACTION: Amends SOI (December 21, 2016)

WILEAG STANDARD(S): NONE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard operating instruction is to provide guidelines to members investigating an unexplained infant death, where gross negligence may have been a contributing factor.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. UNEXPLAINED INFANT DEATH

The unexplained death of an apparently healthy child less than one year of age.

B. GROSS NEGLIGENCE

An extremely careless action that is willful or reckless in nature with disregard for the consequences to the safety of another.

C. INFANT

A child less than one year of age.

III. INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Upon notification of an unexplained infant death where gross neglect is suspected as a contributing factor, the Criminal Investigation Bureau (CIB) shift commander shall assign a supervisor from the CIB to supervise the scene of the investigation.

B. The scene of an unexplained infant death shall be investigated as a potential crime scene.

C. The CIB shift commander may notify the following agencies of an unexplained infant death where gross neglect is suspected as a contributing factor depending on the circumstances of the investigation:

1. Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office [REDACTED]

2. Division of Milwaukee Child Protection Services (DMCPS) [REDACTED]

3. Medical Examiner Office [REDACTED]
 4. Milwaukee Health Department [REDACTED]
- D. The CIB supervisor assigned to supervise the scene shall be responsible for the overall scene investigation and shall:
1. Ensure that all principal parties and witnesses are separated prior to being interviewed by CIB detectives.
 2. Ensure that the scene investigation is complete and that all evidence is properly obtained and collected.
 3. Ensure all required reports are filed.
 4. When warranted, ensure the unexplained infant death investigation is reviewed in the district attorney's office.
 5. Ensure a formal referral is made to the DMCPDS, regardless if they respond to the scene. The Sensitive Crimes Division can be contacted and assist with conducting the referral. The supervisor shall also ensure that all involved parties are checked to determine if there are any prior or pending referrals with DMCPDS.
 6. Whenever it is determined that the living conditions are not suitable or safe for children, or for any reason the children present will not have proper and adequate supervision, the scene supervisor shall consult with DMCPDS to determine if the children should be taken into protective custody or otherwise placed.

IV. DETECTIVE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

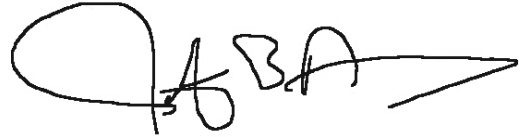
A detective assigned to investigate an unexplained infant death shall immediately respond to the scene unless otherwise directed by a CIB supervisor. A detective will be assigned a specific function by the on scene CIB supervisor. Although not exhaustive, the following functions should be accomplished:

1. Continuous collaboration with any outside agencies listed in section III (C) assisting with the investigation.
2. Ensure the area where the child was discovered is defined and secured as well as any other area that may contain evidence which may assist in determining the cause of death.
3. [REDACTED]
4. Ensure that the child is less than one year of age.
5. Determine whether the child was [REDACTED] before being found unresponsive.

6. Obtain a detailed description of the circumstances [REDACTED].
7. [REDACTED]
8. Determine who found the unresponsive child and the time.
9. Document the [REDACTED] with the unresponsive child, such as [REDACTED]
10. Obtain a description and condition of the [REDACTED]
11. Determine the general health of the child.
12. Obtain a description and condition of any person who may have been sleeping with the child [REDACTED]
13. If it has been determined that alcohol and/or drugs were used by any person sleeping with the child, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] the onscene supervisor should be consulted [REDACTED]
14. The presence and/or use of [REDACTED] should be documented.
15. Determine the child's [REDACTED] over the last [REDACTED]
16. Determine the child's [REDACTED] over the last [REDACTED]
17. Note the child's body, especially signs of trauma.
18. Note the condition of the [REDACTED] any vomit, mucus or blood observed.
19. Determine the presence of smokers in the household.
20. Determine if the child was born [REDACTED]
21. Determine if the child was known to have [REDACTED]
22. Note the name and phone number of the child's pediatrician and last visit.
23. Document the names and birthdates of the child's parents, caregivers and all persons normally in the household as well as all persons present at the time of death.
24. Determine if forensic interviews of children are needed.
25. Note all [REDACTED] in the home.

26. File all required reports.

Note: When an unexplained infant death investigation warrants review in the district attorney's office for potential prosecution, there shall not be a summary arrest absent extraordinary circumstances. All relevant parties shall be ordered into the district attorney's office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.B.N.' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

JEFFREY B. NORMAN
ACTING CHIEF OF POLICE

JBN:mfk