TEHAMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT · CORONER DIVISION

Frequently Asked Questions for Families

The Tehama County Sheriff's Department Coroner Division extends our deepest sympathy for your loss. We hope the answers below help guide you through the days ahead.

Important Contacts

Tehama County Coroner's Office
(530) 527-1130
22840 Antelope Blvd., Red Bluff, CA 96080

Sheriff's Records (reports)
(530) 529-7940
Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
records@tehamaso.org
Application online: tehamaso.org/records

Clerk & Recorder's Office (death certificates)
(530) 527-3350
633 Washington Street, Room 11, Red Bluff, CA 96080

Veterans Service Office
(530) 529-3664
444 Oak Street, Suite C, Red Bluff, CA 96080

Common Questions

Why is the Coroner involved?

The Coroner is required by state law (Government Code 27491) to investigate any sudden, violent, or unusual deaths, or other deaths that fall within the jurisdiction of the Coroner. It is the responsibility of the Coroner's Office to establish positive identity of the deceased and to determine the date, time, circumstances, and the cause and manner of death.

The Coroner's investigation is not limited to the examination of the deceased and may include interviews with family members and other witnesses. The collection of physical evidence and the safeguarding of personal property found at the death scene may also occur.

What should I do right now?

Select a funeral home and inform the funeral director that the death is being handled by the Coroner's Office. Ask them to notify us as soon as possible. Our office does not select funeral homes, nor do we make arrangements.

If someone is making arrangements on behalf of the family, the Coroner must be provided with written authorization to release the deceased, signed by the legal next of kin.

Where will my relative or friend be taken?

Your loved one will be transported to the Coroner's main facility, located at **22840 Antelope Blvd., Red Bluff, CA 96080**, (530) 527-1130.

Is it necessary for me to come to the Coroner's Office to identify the body?

No. In a majority of cases, visual identification is not required. Should it become necessary for you to come in or to bring other records or x-rays, you will be contacted.

Is viewing allowed?

No. The Coroner's Office has a no-viewing policy. Arrangements for viewing can be made at the funeral home.

Will an autopsy be performed?

The Coroner will decide whether an autopsy is necessary; however, approximately 75% of the deaths we investigate do not require one. We may not perform an autopsy if the cause of death can be determined from other criteria and is of natural causes. If the deceased has been under the care of a physician and no suspicion of foul play exists, an autopsy may be waived.

Will an autopsy prevent viewing at a funeral?

No. Although incisions are made, they are placed so that they will not be seen, and they are very carefully closed after the procedure, just as in surgical procedures. At all times, the decedent is treated with the utmost respect.

How long will it take before my relative or friend is released from your office?

Your loved one will be released to the mortuary as soon as the examination is complete. Examinations are scheduled according to the availability of the physician or forensic pathologist and typically take place within one week.

To help avoid delays, families are encouraged to select a funeral home and make arrangements within 72 hours of being notified of the death. Your funeral director will coordinate the release on your behalf.

Will I be charged for other Coroner services?

The County is required to assess certain fees for transportation and storage. You will be asked to pay this fee by your funeral service provider.

Where can I obtain a death certificate?

A death certificate is issued after the examination is completed. Occasionally, more extensive testing is required, in which case an interim death certificate is issued that will allow the family to make funeral arrangements. Contact your funeral home or the Tehama County Clerk & Recorder's Office at (530) 527-3350.

How do I obtain an autopsy, investigation, or toxicology report?

You must officially request a copy from Tehama County Sheriff's Records. The Application for Records is available online at tehamaso.org/records, and completed applications may be emailed to records@tehamaso.org.

Fees apply for copies of reports. Please contact Records at (530) 529-7940 or records@tehamaso.org, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., for current pricing and request details.

What about tissue or organ donation?

In conjunction with Donor Network West and other agencies, we will make an effort to provide information to you about tissue donation upon request. For more information, please see the **Organ, Tissue & Body Donation Resources** guide available on the Tehama County Coroner's webpage at tehamaso.org/coroners-office.

My relative or friend was in the military. Who can I contact for information?

Persons who served in the Armed Forces, were honorably discharged, and meet other service requirements may be entitled to a veteran's burial. For information, contact the Veterans Service Office at (530) 529-3664 or your funeral director.

If there are no funds for cremation, what can I do?

If the deceased or the legal next of kin do not have sufficient funds for cremation, the alternative may be indigent cremation. The current indigent cremation application is available on the Tehama County Coroner's webpage at tehamaso.org/coroners-office. Please read the application and its requirements carefully before submitting it.

The next of kin should contact the Tehama County Coroner's Office at (530) 527-1130 **before** releasing the decedent to a mortuary or funeral home.

How can personal possessions be claimed?

Any personal possessions in the custody of the Coroner may be claimed by the legal next of kin. To avoid any inconvenience, please call the Coroner's Office for an appointment. Sometimes personal possessions are taken into custody by other law enforcement agencies; you will need to contact those agencies to recover possessions in their custody.

Unless there is a need to hold clothing as evidence, it will be disposed of for the safety of all persons involved. Government documents (driver's licenses, passports, military identification cards) will not be released to the next of kin but will be returned to the issuing agency for disposition.

I need to enter my relative or friend's residence, but it is sealed. What can I do?

It is a misdemeanor to remove the Coroner Seal or to enter without written authorization from the Coroner's Office. Please call (530) 527-1130 to make formal arrangements.