

Indigent and Unclaimed Remains

1122.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Health and Safety Code Section 7104 permits the Coroner to inter remains in cases where the decedent has insufficient assets and next-of-kin is either unable to be located or fails to perform his/her duty of interment. This policy establishes rules and guidelines for the handling of indigent and unclaimed remains held at the Coroner Division Facility.

1122.2 RESPONSIBILITY FOR DISPOSITION OF INDIGENT AND UNCLAIMED REMAINS

The person responsible for facilitating disposition of indigent and unclaimed remains under the jurisdiction of the Coroner Division shall be the Supervising Deputy Coroner assigned to indigent bodies.

1122.3 UNCLAIMED REMAINS

For any death where the decedent's next-of-kin with the right to control disposition and arrange for funeral goods and services has been successfully located and notified of the death, but fails to act, or fails to delegate his or her authority to act to some other person, disposition shall be made as follows:

(a) When the decedent is not in possession of the Coroner Division, the next-of-kin in control of remains shall be allowed seven (7) days, or ten (10) days if said person is the competent surviving spouse, to arrange for disposition before his/her rights are passed to the person(s) with next degree of kinship.

1. If all known next-of-kin fails to arrange for disposition of the remains, the Supervising Deputy Coroner shall refer the case to the Public Administrator for evaluation of the decedent's estate.

(a) If the decedent is found to have sufficient assets, the Public Administrator will arrange for final disposition of the remains.

(b) If the decedent is found to have insufficient assets, the Supervising Deputy Coroner shall arrange for final disposition of the remains.

(b) When the decedent is in the possession of the Coroner Division, the next-of-kin in control of remains shall be allowed thirty (30) days to arrange for disposition of the remains before his/her rights may be passed to the person(s) with next degree of kinship.

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- (b) If the decedent is found to have insufficient assets, the Supervising Deputy Coroner shall arrange for final disposition of the remains.

1122.4 INDIGENT REMAINS

Any death not under the jurisdiction of the Coroner, but found by the Public Administrator to have no known next-of-kin and insufficient assets for final disposition of remains, may be referred to the Coroner Division by the Public Administrator. In such instances, the Supervising Deputy Coroner shall accept the case, and perform a diligent search for next-of-kin. If none are located, the Supervising Deputy Coroner shall arrange for final disposition of the remains.