
Schedule No. **13**

**County Coroner/
Medical Examiner
Records Schedule**

**This schedule supersedes Coroners Schedule #13 and
titled to include Medical Examiners**

**Adopted by the Local Government
Records Committee, Oct. 2005**

MONTANA LOCAL GOVERNMENT RETENTION SCHEDULE

DEPARTMENT: CORONER / MEDICAL EXAMINER – THIS SCHEDULE SUPERSEDES CORONERS SCHEDULE #13; TITLE CHANGED TO INCLUDE “MEDICAL EXAMINER”

ITEM	RECORD TITLE AND DESCRIPTION	RETENTION TIME	COMMENTS
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Note: Not all Coroners / Medical Examiners will have all of the record series listed in this schedule. The listing of a record series does not mean that the records must be created.

1.	APPOINTMENT RECORDS- a. Appointments b. Training records	a. Permanent b. Permanent	a. If these are recorded in the Clerk & Recorders office, that is the official record., and the Coroner, Sheriff’s office or Medical Examiner copy is a copy.
2.	AUTOPSY RECORDS AUDIO/VIDEO Taken as an autopsy is conducted by the Coroner or Medical Examiner. Includes a description of the body and the activities and observations during the dissection. Notes any injuries, condition of internal organs, and type of wounds received. Notes relative age, gender and race of deceased. After transcription, these recordings become part of the case file.	Until verbatim transcription is verified.	
3.	AUTOPSY SUPPORTING RECORDS May contain copies of hospital, nursing home, ambulance, or law enforcement homicide records used for reference. May be used in determining the cause of death opinions. A medical examiner may use this information to produce a brief summary of the deceased medical history, which should then be included in the MEDICAL EXAMINER CASE FILE .	Until obsolete, superseded or no longer needed.	
4.	BODY LOG Log of bodies received and leaving the Coroners/Medical Examiners office. May include ID number, date, time of arrival, delivery agent, name of body if known, date and time released and to whom the body was released.	4 years after release of body.	
5.	BURIAL TRANSFER PERMIT LOG Log tracking permit numbers which must be issued if the Coroner or Medical Examiner has possession of a body for five or more days.	1 year	
6.	CORONER/MEDICAL EXAMINER CASE FILES. CREMATION AND NO JURISDICTION INVESTIGATION FILES. Records generated by referrals made to the medical examiner for which no further investigation is required. May contain notes on brief inquiries required to determine jurisdiction or to obtain medical history and duplicate copies of death certificates prepared by attending physicians. Does not contain autopsy records.	4 years after referral and investigation	

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7.	DEATH REPORTS AND INDIGENT BURIAL RECORDS Records that document review, screening and disposal, compiled for deaths not warranting a full investigation.	6 years	
8.	DISASTER VICTIM CASE FILE- UNMATCHED Information of alleged victims of a disaster; contains information from relatives, co-workers, photos of victim when alive, medical records and x-rays; gathered in an effort to identify the victim’s remains if/when discovered. If victim’s remains are identified, the information is kept as part of the case.	Until matched or ruled out as a victim.	
9.	INQUESTS Arranged chronologically. Includes proceedings of coroners inquest; identification of deceased, date of death, witnesses, coroners jurors, testimony and verdict to cause and manner of death	Permanent	This should be microfilmed and the microfilm stored offsite.
10.	MEDICAL EXAMINER CASE FILES: IDENTIFIED Records for which the identity of the decedent has been identified. May contain a record of all investigations including the findings, opinions, inspection reports, case notes, radiographs, laboratory tests results, photographs, and autopsy reports.	30 years	
11.	MEDICAL EXAMINER CASE FILES: UNIDENTIFIED. Records for which the identity of the decedent has not been identified. May contain a record of all investigations including the findings, opinions, inspection reports, case notes, radiographs, laboratory tests results, photographs, and autopsy reports.	Until identified, then classify as Identified	
12.	PERSONAL PROPERTY RECORDS Lists what personal property arrived with the body, and how it was disposed of.	6 years after release of property	
13.	MEDICAL EXAMINER/CORONER REGISTER/ CARD FILE INDEX / LEDGER Contains complete coroner/medical examiner records listed chronologically and alphabetically. Cross references to the case files.	Permanent	This should be microfilmed and the microfilm stored offsite.
14.	RESEARCH AND STUDY FILES Consists of copies of various medical examiner case files, criminal evidence that is no longer needed for prosecution, news reports, published scientific articles, as well as findings and conclusions on a particular manner or method of death.	Until obsolete, superseded or no longer needed.	

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15.	SKELETAL REMAINS INVENTORY Inventory control and analysis records for all bones currently in storage, of all skeletal remains brought to the department.	As long as the case file	
16.	SPECIMEN/TISSUE/ STAIN SECTION RECORDS Documents and reports related to the collection, processing, and testing of stained section, paraffin tissue blocks, first cut glass tissue slides, and other specimens used in a criminal investigation.	As long as the case file.	
17.	TOE /BODY IDENTIFICATION TAGS Duplicate tags placed on a body by the Coroners office for internal monitoring. The tag contains information specific to the Medical Examiners processing purposes.	Until obsolete, superseded or no longer needed.	
18.	VIDEOS/PHOTOGRAPHS –SCENE Of the death scene for use in determining the cause of death.	As long as the case file	