



# LUBBOCK COUNTY MEDICAL EXAMINER

Charles Addington, D.O.  
Chief Administrative Medical Examiner

We appreciate your collaboration in handling the documentation process for the release of remains. To ensure accuracy and compliance with legal requirements, we would like to provide you with some guidelines regarding the verification of decedent information for the Lubbock County Medical Examiner's Office. We have also updated our Release of Remains form. This form is an official document and should not be modified by anyone outside of the Medical Examiner's Office. Once our office receives a completed release form, we will review it for accuracy. If there are any errors or if the form itself has been modified, we will contact your office and require that you submit a corrected release form. **Our release times and processes have not changed.**

1. **Primary Identification Method:** The preferred method for identifying the decedent is through the presentation of a valid driver's license (or government-issued ID card, passport, etc.). This document provides the most reliable and accurate information, including the legal name and date of birth.
2. **Verification Process:** The Lubbock County Medical Examiner's Office receives pertinent death information, including the decedent's name, date of birth, time of death, etc., from various referring agencies such as Police, Hospital, Fire, EMS, Hospice, and others. We diligently input this information exactly as provided, operating on the assumption that it is accurate until we can get it verified. In cases where identification is found at the scene, verification of the name and date of birth is straightforward. However, in situations where no scene is involved or when the case does not require an autopsy, we rely on the cooperation of family members and funeral homes to supply the necessary documentation for verification. This collaboration ensures that the information in our system is verified and corrected if necessary.
3. **Use of Birth Certificate:** While birth certificates may be used to verify legal names for babies and children, they are not typically used for adults. However, in cases where there is a discrepancy in the date of birth, the birth certificate may be used to confirm the correct date.
4. **Social Security Number Verification:** Although the social security number is a requirement for funeral homes to notify the Social Security Administration of a death, it is not a requirement for the medical examiner's office. Furthermore, it is not the best form of identification when trying to identify a decedent.



# LUBBOCK COUNTY MEDICAL EXAMINER

Charles Addington, D.O.  
Chief Administrative Medical Examiner

5. **Listing Alias or AKA:** In cases where the name on the driver's license matches the name in our computer system but does not match the name on the social security card, the name in our computer system will not be changed. Instead, we will list the name discrepancy as an Alias or AKA (Also Known As) in our system. Funeral homes can keep the name that passed through the social verification process on the death certificate as long as the name that we have in our system is also listed on the death certificate as an AKA. This ensures accurate documentation on both sides while acknowledging the discrepancy.
6. **PCP Designation:** Upon notification of a death, our office may not be able to immediately determine the type of case it is (autopsy, hold only, record review, etc.). In cases where an autopsy is not required, our investigators must ascertain if there is a designated primary care physician (PCP) who can certify the death certificate. This process involves contacting the PCP, which can result in a delay in providing you with the information that you need. We will only disclose the name of the PCP assigned to certify a death certificate for a Non-ME (Medical Examiner) case after receiving confirmation directly from that PCP or a representative from their office. Please contact our office directly for any further questions or discussions regarding this as it involves a process that can sometimes be very detailed.
7. **Accuracy and Compliance:** It is imperative to prioritize accuracy and compliance with legal requirements in documenting the decedent's information. This helps prevent errors and discrepancies in official records and ensures that the documentation process adheres to regulatory standards, not just for the Medical Examiner's Office but for Funeral Homes as well.
8. **Communication Protocol:** We highly encourage an open line of communication between our office and your funeral home to promptly address any discrepancies or questions regarding the decedent's identification. This collaborative approach facilitates the smooth processing of paperwork and ensures accuracy in our records. We view ourselves as part of the same team, committed to providing compassionate and efficient assistance to the families we serve.

Thank you for your attention to these guidelines. If you have any questions or need further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us.