Annex F - Mass Fatalities - Administration

Purpose

To provide emergency medical examiner services required during a mass fatality situation including recovery, identification, examination and storage of remains until family members can be contacted.

A mass fatality incident is defined as an occurrence of multiple deaths that overwhelms the usual routine capability of the Medical Examiner (ME). The ME will define and therefore implement this plan when ten or more deaths occur at one given location. The plan may also be implemented for an incident involving fewer deaths but a prolonged or more involved scene commitment.

Scope

The ME will investigate those deaths occurring in Hennepin or Ramsey County that are due to disaster(s) in accordance with Minnesota Statute 383B.225.

Organization

The ME responsibilities during an emergency will be carried out with existing ME personnel, augmented as necessary by public and private services.

Functions of the ME would be similar to those performed daily, but greatly expanded in the event of a mass fatality situation. Staff will be organized to allow for increased caseload during these situations. This will require specialized units and augmented staff to accomplish activities such as recovery, identification, examination and record keeping.
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Annex F- Mass Fatalities- Operations

I. Control

A. Location

For disasters that involve less than 30 dead in one location, the bodies will be transported to the ME for further examination. If the physical structure of the ME has been impaired, the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) will be contacted per agreement and a temporary morgue with associated services will be utilized on MAC property. MAC property is also to be used when the size of the disaster exceeds available space at the ME.

B. Line of Succession

The Chief Medical Examiner (CME) will be in charge of overall disaster services to the dead. In the event the CME is not available, the Assistant Chief Medical Examiner will perform those duties.

II. Responsibilities

A. General

The ME will coordinate emergency medical examiner services with the appropriate County the University of Minnesota.

A. Family Assistance Center (FAC)

1. Responsible for taking care of the families which includes: gathering antemortem information; sharing information with the families; developing a notification procedure; and, to help provide information and services to family members that they may need in the days following the incident.

2. Site Selection - It is extremely important that the site selected be functional for the incident, i.e., if the families are coming from out-of-town the site may be a hotel or motel. For a local incident churches, business offices and schools should be considered. The location should not be close to the actual scene but should be easily accessible to the families. Parking should be a consideration depending on the number of families expected.

CDC- Medical Examiners, Coroners, and Biologic Terrorism
## Annex F- Mass Fatalities - Resources

### Hennepin County Medical Examiners Office

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