



OFFICE OF THE  
MEDICAL EXAMINER

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REQUESTS FOR SPECIMENS FOR DNA ANALYSIS

The Spokane County Medical Examiner's Office frequently receives requests for blood or tissue samples for the purpose of DNA analysis. These requests are often generated by questions of paternity determination.

Our primary mission is autopsy examination of sudden and unexpected death. During autopsy examination we procure blood and tissue samples, when possible, on all cases. The bulk of these samples are used for death investigation. Back-up samples are destroyed after three years. Reserved blood and/or tissue samples may be available for further testing by interested parties upon written request. The availability of these samples is prioritized for criminal and civil inquiries with due respect given to the rights of the decedent and their next-of-kin.

When all priority needs have been met, remaining samples will be rendered for paternity testing under the following conditions:

1. A formal request must be made in writing by the next-of-kin, attorney representing the next-of-kin, legal subpoena, or court order as needed. For those unsure of the wording for a formal request, a form is available on the Medical Examiner's Website under "Forms and Frequently Used Documents"
2. The Medical Examiner's Office will maintain a Chain-of-Custody for all samples and will therefore submit specimens directly to the testing agency as per their sample requirements. You will need to find an agency capable of performing specific testing and let our office know which one you will be using
3. Comparison testing of other individuals involved in paternity determination is outside the function of the Medical Examiner's Office.
4. An administrative processing fee of \$100, payable by check or money order, must be submitted with the formal request for specimens. The Medical Examiner's office cannot accept debit or credit cards at this time. This fee covers our processing, storage, and retrieval costs, and is non-refundable
5. The requesting individual is responsible for any and all costs associated with transfers and testing of samples. The testing laboratory will submit a separate bill to the requesting individual/agency.
6. Autopsy-procured samples will only be released when all appropriate documents or court orders have been submitted.
7. The Spokane County Medical Examiner's Office is not responsible for laboratory selection, test selection, test performance, or interpretation of the results of the DNA/Paternity testing. I acknowledge that I am responsible for all shipping and lab testing fees, in addition to the \$100 non-refundable fee paid to Spokane County for processing, storage, retrieval, and handling of biological specimens, which is enclosed.

Website: <http://www.spokanecounty.org/medexaminer/>

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