



**San Diego County Sheriff**

**Training Bulletin**

**William D. Gore, Sheriff**

**August 2017**



## **Overdose Death Response Protocol**

The Undersheriff recently sent out a directive ([#1707-01](#)) regarding the Department's response to overdose deaths in the field. All staff shall request the on-call SID Detective to respond to assist with any death suspected to be a drug overdose. The goal of this new protocol is to train deputies to treat the scene as a criminal investigation rather than a basic death investigation. It will also task SID Detectives with the follow-up investigation related to the identification of a source of supply and the possible arrest of associated individuals. It is the intent of the San Diego Sheriff's Department to make an impact on both the supply and demand side of the narcotics epidemic. Additionally, it is imperative law enforcement makes every effort to locate dangerous drugs such as fentanyl and keep them from hitting the streets.

The following are guidelines set forth by the San Diego District Attorney's Office regarding the items needed for a proper investigation. Familiarize yourself with these requirements so you are prepared to handle an overdose death per the new protocol.

### **Witness Interviews**

On scene

Recorded if possible

Corroborate (i.e. hotel information, video surveillance from gas stations, stores, etc.)

Telephone numbers and social media of all coconspirators

Physical description & identifying information about all coconspirators

Meet locations, vehicle descriptions

Observation of decedent's behavior in hours before death

Decedent's drug history, rehab efforts, method of ingestion

Without disclosing the drug that caused the death, determine what friends and family thought the decedent died from

What is their impression as to decedent's drug of choice (help determine whether decedent knew what he was smoking/injecting)

What is witness' knowledge of victim's financial situation, employment etc.

The information in this Training Bulletin was provided by CID Captain Adams-Hydar and edited for distribution by the In-Service Training Unit. If you have expertise in a particular subject and would like to write a training bulletin, please contact Corporal Michael Cruz at In-Service Training, [REDACTED]

### **Suspect Interviews & Criminal History**

Corroborate any stories

Record

Confirm known facts & timeline

Provable false lies

Confirm phone numbers and social media as to suspect and others

Prior conviction

Any prior bad acts

Prior drug history (if we can show suspect is experienced with fentanyl, then suspect is acutely aware of its effects)

Did this suspect ever share drugs with the decedent, who purchased them Establish where, how often did the suspect give drugs to the decedent and how often did the suspect receive drugs from the decedent

### **Admission to Distribution**

Quantity, Purity, Source, Victim Vulnerability, History with victim, Knowledge or history of overdoses.

Establish knowledge of decedent's drug use, rehab efforts, and method of ingestion

Establish if suspect ever gave drugs to the decedent on prior occasions

### **Electronic Evidence**

Seize cellphones and preserve, including letters of preservation to phone/ social media companies

Search warrants or signed consent form (including passwords)

Request for cell site information

Subscriber Information

Precise location request/search warrant

Pen register/ Trap & Trace

Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)

### **Photographs**

Drugs & paraphernalia

Cell Phones

Witnesses

Deceased (including surrounding location- example, decedent passed out in car with needle?)

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