

Pennsylvania State Coroners Association
Administrative Guideline

This guideline was developed as a recommendation for releasing the names of juveniles during a death investigation.

A **Standard** is the least minimum level of acceptable performance

A **Guideline or Principle** is a suggested level of performance, but not a standard

A **Best Practice** is the most rigorous level of performance and is based on current knowledge without resource limitations. (Shall; cannot deviate from; required)

Several of you have asked about releasing the name of a juvenile to the media, during the performance of your duties. As you know, the Coroner's View Form is delivered to the Prothonotary's / Clerk of Courts Office by January 30th of the new year. The View Form contains the name, age, race, address, Cause and Manner of Death, date and time of death and location of death. The View Form is created on every death the Coroner's Office investigates.

In Pennsylvania, a juvenile's name cannot be released by Law Enforcement or a District Attorney' Office during a criminal investigation. The juvenile's name is protected from the media unless he/she is adjudicated as an adult.

However, there is no law, statute or regulation for the Coroner's Office to release the name of a juvenile.

The best practice is consistency! If your Office has released the names of deceased juveniles regardless of the Cause or Manner of Death, then continue that same practice. If your Office has consistently took the stance of not releasing a juvenile's name then continue that practice, until it is challenged in court.

Nonetheless, DO NOT release a name for one investigation and then not for another. This will cause issues for your Office on several levels; from the media, legal next of kin, law enforcement and community. Remember whatever practice you decide, maintain the consistency!

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