



# OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HALL OF JUSTICE

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF



December 16, 2019

Brian K. Williams, Executive Director  
Civilian Oversight Commission  
World Trade Center  
350 South Figueroa Street, Suite 288  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. Williams:

**RESPONSE TO CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT COMMISSION  
LETTER DATED NOVEMBER 25, 2019**

This correspondence will serve as a response to your November 25, 2019 letter requesting the following:

*Provide LASD policies, procedures, practices and/or guidelines related to when a security hold on coroner's report (e.g. investigative, toxicology, autopsy) or other details can be released to the public.*

The following are the protocols for placing a security hold on a coroner's report (See Attachment A attached hereto). The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Homicide Bureau places security holds on coroner reports to preserve the integrity of investigations and when the premature release of information could jeopardize the case. The decision to place a security hold is on a case-by-case basis and at the direction of the handling investigators. Security holds are released when the case is adjudicated, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office issues a Letter of Opinion, or when the release of information can be safely accomplished without harming the investigation.

In regard to the release of information as it pertains to SB1421, we continuously collaborate with Audit and Accountability Bureau (AAB) to approve the release of case information at the appropriate times.

211 WEST TEMPLE STREET, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

*A Tradition of Service*  
— Since 1850 —

Mr. Williams

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December 16, 2019

*Provide a written response to the "Inspector General August 2019 Report on Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Compliance with Transparency Law" before our next COC meeting on December 17, 2019.*

Please find attached the response to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) dated December 16, 2019, regarding Mr. Huntsman's statements at the Civilian Oversight Commission meeting on November 19, 2019, which address his comments and responds to OIG's August 2019 report. (See Attachment B attached hereto.)

Please contact me at [REDACTED] should you wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF



TIMOTHY K. MURAKAMI  
UNDERSHERIFF



**HOMICIDE BUREAU**  
**DETECTIVE DIVISION**  
**BUREAU ORDERS**



**Bureau Order Number: 9-7**

**Subject: Department of Medical Examiner (DME)  
Post Mortem Examination (Autopsy) Protocols**


Effective Date:	01/01/20	Last Date Revised:	
Last Date Reviewed:		Next Review Date:	01/01/2021

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Homicide Bureau places security holds on the Department of Medical Examiner (DME) Post Mortem Examination Protocol Reports to preserve the integrity of investigations and when the premature release of information could jeopardize the case. The decision to place a security hold is on a case by case basis, and at the discretion of the handling investigators. Letters requesting the security hold shall be produced from Homicide Bureau Operations, at the request of the case investigator, and approved by the Unit Commander. A spreadsheet of active security holds will be maintained in Operations. The status of ongoing security holds will be evaluated by the requestor and updated every 120 days for validity.

Security holds are released when the case is adjudicated, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office issues a Letter of Opinion, or when the release of information can be safely accomplished without compromising the investigation.

Investigators are reminded that the Coroner's Office charges for copies of their protocol. As such, orders for written protocols shall only be placed when required for the case investigation.

The Coroner's Protocol must always be ordered for fatal DIS/OIS cases. All other orders are at the investigators' discretion.

  
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**KENT A. WEGENER, CAPTAIN**  
**HOMICIDE BUREAU**