

Death in Custody Process Overview

When a death occurs within a County-owned correctional facility, a comprehensive investigation is immediately initiated to determine the facts surrounding the death. The investigative process involves multiple independent agencies, each conducting its own review, analysis, and assessment within its respective area of authority. These independent bodies include:

External Agencies

San Mateo County District Attorney's Office

Conducts an independent investigation to determine whether any criminal conduct contributed to or was associated with the death.

California Department of Justice (DOJ)

All in-custody deaths are required to be reported to the California Department of Justice within 10 days. The California DOJ documents the death and records it in a publicly available database.

San Mateo County Coroner's Office

Completes an independent death investigation, which may include an autopsy, toxicology testing, and pathology examination, to determine the Cause and Manner of Death.

Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC)

All in-custody deaths are required to be reported to the Board of State and Community Corrections within 10 days, followed by the Death Review Report, which is required to be submitted within 60 days. BSCC completes an independent review of the death and makes recommendations based on their findings.

Sheriff's Office

San Mateo County Sheriff's Office Investigations Bureau

Conducts a thorough death investigation, concurrent to the external investigations, to determine the factors surrounding the incarcerated persons' death.

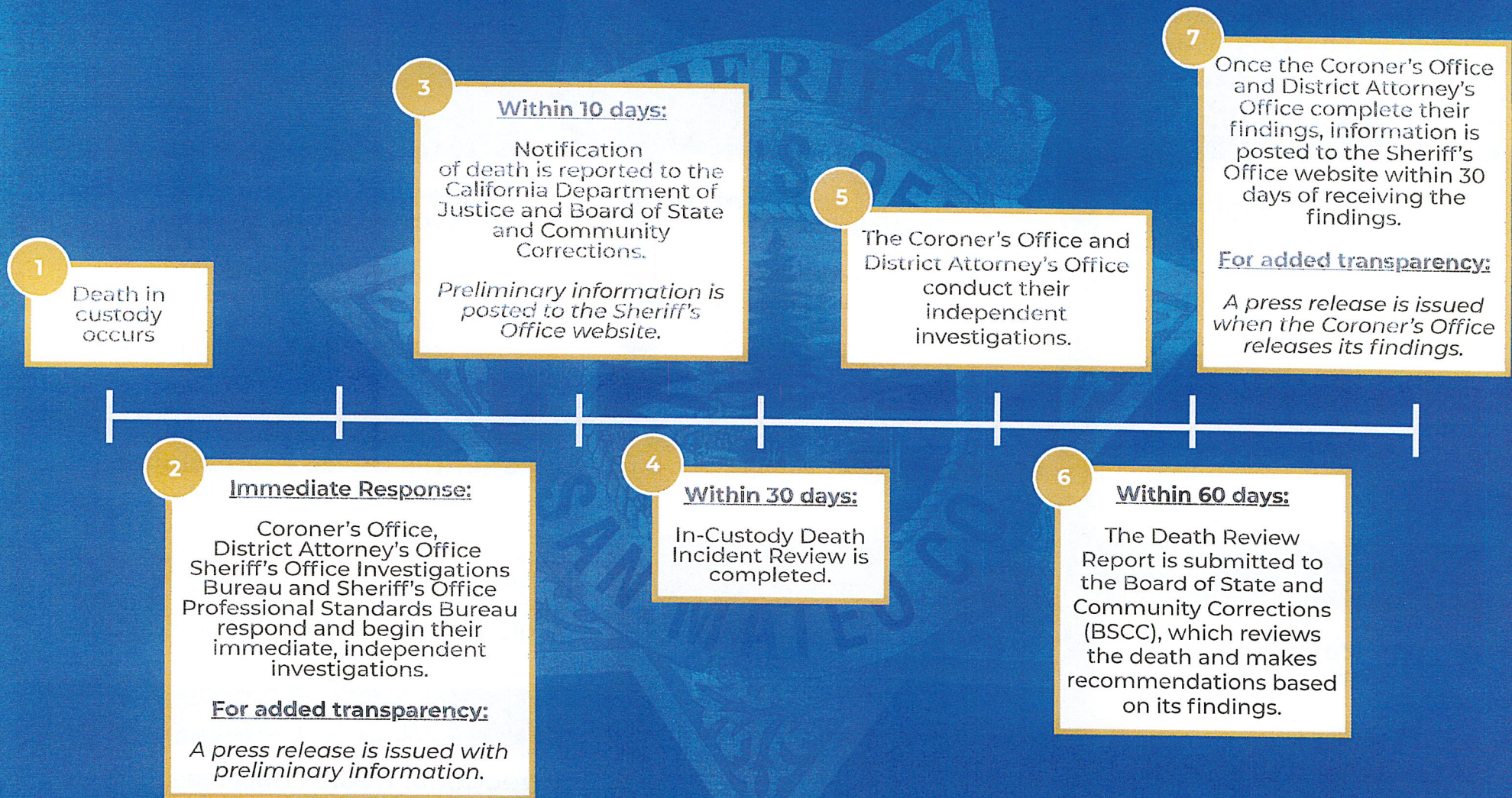
Sheriff's Office Professional Standards Bureau

Completes an administrative review to determine whether personnel responsible for the care and custody of the incarcerated person acted in accordance with Sheriff's Office policies, procedures and applicable standards of care.

Correctional Health

Correctional Health Services, Division of San Mateo County Health

Participates in the death-in-custody incident review within 30 days. Physicians and medical staff review the incarcerated person's known medical conditions, medications, treatments received and other medical information relevant to the death.



At the conclusion of the independent investigations, the Sheriff's Office carefully reviews all findings and takes appropriate steps to improve County correctional facilities, as well as the Sheriff's Office's policies, procedures, and standards of care.