DEATH CERTIFICATION

Death certification consists of determining a cause and manner of death for those cases that fall under jurisdiction of the Medical Examiner's Office and completing a California Death Certificate for the individual. The *cause* of death can be summarized as the disease or injury that initiates the sequence of events that ultimately results in the person's death. The *manner* of death is classified into one of the following five categories: natural, accident, suicide, homicide or undetermined. Once a determination is made following an examination, the cause and manner of death are entered into the office's internal electronic data system, followed by entry into the California Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) and an electronic signature.

The Medical Examiner is able to issue a cause and manner of death shortly after the initial examination in approximately two-thirds of all deaths. However, many deaths require additional investigation and/or testing to determine the cause and/or manner of death. When this is the case, the certificate of death will be temporarily listed as "Pending." The certificate will then be amended following further investigation or examination. In a small percentage of cases, neither a cause nor a manner of death may be determined even after completion of the autopsy, further investigation, and/or extensive toxicological testing.