**ISO/IEC 17020**

**COMPUTERS**

**DEFECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

**REAGENTS**

**6.2.13** Computer use in the Medical Examiner Office: As to inspections, computers are used in the Medical Examiner Office as a database tool. The office uses no automated equipment that requires validation of calculations.

1. The database functions are continually evaluated through daily work applications. The Medical Examiner’s Office requests changes to the database, and to forms generated from the database through County Information Technology (IT). County IT replaces hardware based on work span expectancy, and replaces any broken hardware. IT updates county software periodically, or as required. General management (troubleshooting) of the MedTrack database is the responsibility of the office manager (quality manager).
2. Data Security and Integrity is protected as followed.
   * 1. Entrance into the Medtrack database is password protected. IT requires that passwords be changes every 3 months, and parameters for acceptable passwords are built into the system.
     2. The database records the name of each user when new information is entered, or information is changed.
     3. The office policy “DATABASE AND REPORT WRITING” emphasizes the importance of correct input of information, and accuracy of information
     4. The County IT Department performs incremental backups of files in all network location Monday through Thursday nights. On Friday night, a full backup begins and runs Saturday and Sunday. The fourth weekly backup set of each month is pulled out of rotation and retained for 6 months. (If a file is accidentally deleted, IT can restore the file if the deletion is recognized within 6 months.) The Medical Examiner’s Office backs up all digital photographs, autopsy reports and toxicology reports to two external hard drives. Once hard copy case files are scanned into the archive database, the Medical Examiner’s Office backs up those files to external hard drives to ensure retention of the entire case file.

**6.2.14** Defective Equipment Procedure

* 1. Autopsy tools: Any tools that are found to be defective, or break are immediately discarded and replaced. Multiple replacement tools for each item are kept in stock for this purpose.
  2. As X-rays are digital, improper functioning is recognized immediately. X-ray equipment replacements are not available in the office. The defective unit is taken out of service and tagged with an orange tag stating “out of service, until repaired”. Private X-rays services (portable X-rays) from the community are used until repair.
  3. Cameras: the digital cameras provide immediate visual feedback of photograph quality. While taking pictures, photographs are monitored periodically on the digital screen. Any camera not functioning appropriately is immediately taken out of service, and replaced by another camera. (Multiple spare cameras are available for investigations, and autopsy). Photo memory cards are uploaded directly after autopsy/investigation. The office has recovery software in case of memory card malfunction. If photographs are lost from any scene investigation or autopsy, this is noted in the database in the narrative by case number.

See also, Medical Examiner Policies: Facility and Equipment Maintenance; Scientific/Optical Equipment Maintenance; Photographs and Digital Images; Digital Dental X-ray

**6.2.15** All equipment is tracked in a database, and identified by number. The database includes relevant information:

1. Identity of the item, manufacturer
2. County identification number
3. When the item entered service, repair history, and disposal/retirement date.
4. Current equipment location, or assigned staff member with possession of equipment.
5. Any damage or alternation to equipment
6. The location of the manufacturer’s instruction manual, even if available on the internet.
7. Maintenance schedule, if appropriate

**Culture Media and Reagents**

* Prior to use of culture media, it will be checked to establish it is not beyond outdate.
* The Medical Examiner’s Office purchases pre-diluted and packaged formalin, and bone decalcification solution. These are labeled appropriately to content and have the required hazardous chemicals symbols label. The manufacturer’s label includes concentration and expiration date.
* See NAME Accreditation Checklist A 4 r, g, i.
* Formalin fixed tissues are incinerated according to retention schedule.
* The Medical Examiner’s Office stores no volatile solvents.
* Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are kept together in a binder that includes each potentially hazardous chemical used in the office.