
**NEVADA COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**



CORONER'S DIRECTIVE

16
Effective Date **05/30/99**
2/6/18

SUBJECT **AUTOEROTIC DEATHS**

POLICY To provide the investigator with general information regarding autoerotic deaths

PURPOSE To provide the investigator with a general understanding of the causes of autoerotic deaths and the signs/evidence thereof

CODE REFERENCE

CASE LAW

DEFINITIONS

PROCEDURE

A. General Information

Death from accidental asphyxia occasionally occurs as a result of masochistic activities of the deceased. This manner of death has been described as "sexual asphyxia" or "autoerotic death".

B. Special Observations/Evidence

Typically, a white male is found in a partially-suspended position either nude, attired in articles of female clothing, or with his penis exposed. A ligature, suspended from a point within his reach, is affixed to his neck; it is padded to prevent visible evidence of his activity. There is no indication of suicidal intent and the death surprises friends, relatives, and associates. Normally, there is an absence of mental or sexual disorder in the deceased's history.

C. Typical Cases

The death is attributable to asphyxia. While the most common method is neck compression, more bizarre exotic forms involving chest compression, airway obstruction, and oxygen exclusion with gas or chemical replacement have come to

the attention of medical and criminal investigators.

D. Summary

A young white male is found in a partially-suspended position with some evidence of masturbatory activity present. The death is sexually motivated, accidental in nature, and a surprise to associates of the deceased. Although the most common method of death is neck compression, other more exotic forms are being reported. The motivational factor is thought to be enhancement of orgasm through the reduction of oxygen to the brain. There is no apparent intent to die. The activity is masochistic in nature and often associated with other sexual fantasies of the practitioner, which may be evident by the presence of diaries, pornography, or other such paraphernalia at the scene or in the decedent's possession. Although males predominate in this deviation, females are also known to have died as a result of its practice. The psychological autopsy is a useful technique in resolving those instances where it is not clear whether the motivational intent was suicidal or autoerotic in nature.