



**Yukon
Coroner's
Service**

Fact Sheet General Public

A coroner is someone who investigates certain kinds of deaths, such as unnatural and unexplained deaths. The Yukon Coroners Service, which investigates these deaths in the Yukon, will be operating under the *Coroners Act* and the accompanying regulations. These will both come into effect in Yukon on August 19, 2021.

Presiding Coroners

The chief coroner must appoint a person to be the presiding coroner in the event of an inquest. The chief coroner will choose this person from a list created by the Minister of Justice. To be included in this list a person must be:

- a judge within the meaning of the *Territorial Court Act*;
- a lawyer with the prescribed qualifications;
- a former chief coroner of the Yukon or persons who have served as a coroner or medical examiner in the Yukon or another Province for more than five years.

Duty to Report

If a person seems to have died under the following circumstances, you must notify the chief coroner, an investigating coroner or a peace officer:

- as a result of violence, negligence, malpractice, misconduct or an accident;
- as a result of self-inflicted injury;
- suddenly and unexpectedly when the person appeared to be in good health;
- from a cause other than disease or sickness;
- from disease or sickness that was not being treated by a medical practitioner;
- in circumstances following which the body is not available; or
- any other circumstances that warrant an investigation.

[i See sections 13 to 16 of the Coroners Act for further information on reporting duties.](#)

This notification must happen as soon as you have reason to believe that the death happened in the Yukon.

Right to Request Inquest

A family member of a deceased person may, in writing, request that the Minister of Justice direct that an inquest be held. The Minister is required to give the requestor an opportunity to state the reason why an inquest should be held, and the Minister must notify the person of their decision on whether or not to hold an inquest.

The Minister must notify the requestor of their decision within 60 days of receiving the request or after having received the Chief Coroner's Report, whichever comes later. This decision is final.

Offences under the Coroners Act, 2018

Failure to Report Death

A person who does not provide notification of a death under circumstances specified in the Act is liable to a fine not exceeding \$500.

Disturbing Scene of Death

A person who disturbs the scene of a death by altering the scene in way outlined in the Act is liable to a fine not exceeding \$1000.

If it is shown that the person disturbed the scene of death for the purpose of destroying evidence, the person is liable to a fine not exceeding \$1000 and/or a term of imprisonment not exceeding six months.

Obstruction of Coroner

A person commits an offence if they knowingly hinder, obstruct or interfere with a coroner or a person acting under the direction of the coroner in the performance of their duties. A person who commits this offence under the Act is liable to a fine not exceeding \$1000 and/or a term of imprisonment not exceeding six months.

General Offence

A person who contravenes a provision of the *Coroners Act* which does not have another penalty listed is liable to a fine not exceeding \$1000 and/or a term of imprisonment not exceeding six months.

[See part 8 of the Coroners Act for further information on offences.](#)



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