

SUNY DOWNSTATE MEDICAL CENTER
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OF BROOKLYN
POLICY AND PROCEDURE

No. CER-3

Subject: DISPOSING OF AMPUTATED LIMBS

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I. PURPOSE

To outline a standard procedure that should be followed when patients and/or their families request that an amputated limb be buried.

II. POLICY

All amputated limbs are disposed of in accordance with Health Department rules and regulations concerning the disposal of infectious waste. Most amputated limbs are handled by the Department of Pathology as waste material and disposed of in accordance with standard Department of Pathology procedures. In some instances, however, patients and/or their families may request that an amputated limb be buried.

III. DEFINITION

None

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

Medical/Dental Staff, Pathology Department, Admitting Department

V. PROCEDURE/GUIDELINES

In instances when patients and/or their families request that an amputated limb be buried, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The surgeon or operating room nurse calls the Admitting Department to indicate that a patient/family has requested that an amputated limb be buried.
2. The Admitting Department records the amputated limb in the Death Book.
3. The limb is maintained by the Morgue Attendant either in Pathology or by the Morgue, depending on the time of day and whether tissue analysis is required.
4. The surgical house officer is responsible for completing and signing the "Certificate of Amputation" in the Admitting Department. Admitting then submits the certificate to the Funeral Director, who submits it to the New York City Department of Health.
5. The family of the patient is responsible for contacting a licensed funeral director who will make the necessary burial arrangements.
6. The Funeral Director comes to the Admitting Department, signs the "D" book in order to take possession of the limb, leaves the authorization forms and picks up the certificate.
7. Admitting advises the Morgue Attendant that the Funeral Director has signed the appropriate documents and the Morgue Attendant releases the limb to the Funeral Director.
8. Should the family request City burial of a limb, the Certificate of Amputation form must be completed by the surgical house officer.
 - The Admitting Department indicates on the form that the limb is for City burial, and will submit the completed form to the New York City Department of Health.
 - A representative of the City Health Department will contact the Morgue Attendant and arrange to pick up the limb.
 - When the City directs its representative to the Admitting Department, the "D" Book is signed and the City Burial Certificate is picked up.
 - The Morgue Attendant then releases the limb to the City for burial.

VI. ATTACHMENTS

None

VII. REFERENCES

None

Date Reviewed	Revision Required (Circle One)		Responsible Staff Name and Title
12/05	Yes	No	
11/07	(Yes)	No	George Allen: Director / Infection Control
	Yes	No	
	Yes	No	