



RELEASE OF BODY
Reference: SC Code of Laws Section 44-29-20

CAUTION: THESE HUMAN REMAINS MAY CONTAIN DANGEROUS, CONTAGIOUS, OR INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

A. USE STANDARD PRECAUTIONS.

1. Use Standard Precautions (as if all remains are infected) if in **direct contact** with the body, blood, or other body fluids. Avoid contact with blood and body fluids with your mucous membranes (eyes, mouth, etc.) or non-intact skin. Wash hands thoroughly and promptly with soap and water after any direct contact with blood or body fluids or any human remains.
2. Always wear gloves while directly handling remains, particularly if open cuts, abrasions, or other lesions are present on your hands. Other personal protective equipment (i.e., eyewear) should be used if there is a chance of splashes or splatters of blood or body fluids.
3. It is unnecessary and impossible to accurately test every patient for every communicable disease. It is unnecessary to use a body bag as a routine infection control procedure for all human remains.

B. SC List of Reportable Conditions, published annually by DHEC, lists communicable/ contagious/ infectious diseases. Use of Standard Precautions is needed to protect against transmission. These diseases are categorized as follows:

1. Respiratory (airborne) pathogens, such as common colds, tuberculosis, SARS, and flu.
2. Bloodborne/ mucous membrane pathogens, such as Hepatitis B and C Viruses, and HIV.
3. Other contact-communicable pathogens, such as common skin bacteria (i.e., Staph, Strep), other bacterial diseases like plague, leprosy, and anthrax; viruses (i.e., respiratory, enteric).
4. Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE), such as Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD).

C. ADDITIONAL PRECAUTIONS FOR PERSONS PERFORMING OR ASSISTING IN POST-MORTEM PROCEDURES

In addition to the standard precautions listed above, the following precautions should be used by persons directly performing or assisting in postmortem procedures:

1. All persons directly performing or assisting in postmortem procedures should wear gloves, masks, protective eyewear, gowns, and waterproof aprons.
2. Instruments and surfaces contaminated during postmortem procedures should be decontaminated with an appropriate chemical germicide.

D. SAFETY PROCEDURES, REQUIRING BODY BAG USE, FOR HANDLING HUMAN REMAINS WITH SUSPECTED TRANSMISSIBLE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY (TSE)

1. The body of a person with suspected or confirmed Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) should be placed in a sealed body bag prior to moving or transport. This is normal procedure for any body with known infection risk. Care should be taken to prevent leakage of body fluids from the bag.
2. Restricted post mortem examinations/autopsies should be done in suspected cases of TSE, unless the examination is conducted in a dedicated facility with TSE-dedicated or disposable instruments. Examiners should practice universal (standard) precautions as well as disposable protective clothing, eye, and head wear.
3. Embalming of suspected TSE unautopsied bodies can be safely done utilizing the following procedures: (1) Use of an impermeable sheet or body pouch to avoid surface contamination with body fluids; (2) Drainage of all body fluids into a stainless steel container, and (3) Use of cyanoacrylates (super glue) to seal perfusion sites followed by wiping those sites with bleach.
4. Embalming of suspected TSE-autopsied bodies can be safely done utilizing the following procedures: (1) Use of disposable masks, gowns, gloves, and protective eye wear, (2) Use of an impermeable sheet or body pouch to contain suture leakage, (3) Drainage of fluids into a stainless steel container that is subsequently decontaminated via sodium hydroxide and disposed of in customary mortuary waste fashion, and (4) Use of cyanoacrylates (super glue) to seal perfusion sites and wipe entire body down with bleach - including perfusion and autopsy incision sites.



RELEASE OF BODY

E. Release of Body

To comply with notice requirements of SC Code of Laws Section 44-29-20 for protection of healthcare providers, mortuary, and other personnel, this body is is not potentially infected with a dangerous, contagious, or infectious disease as designated by the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Please observe all appropriate Standard (Universal) Precautions (especially wearing gloves) while in contact with these remains. If a bona fide exposure to blood or body fluids occurs, immediately notify the healthcare facility's infection control practitioner or SC DHEC at 888-847-0902.

- This body should be bagged, as indicated in section A or D.
- This body has been diagnosed as or strongly suspected of being infected with Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE).

This information is strictly confidential and must not be disclosed except as allowed by law.

Signature: _____
(Physician, hospital, facility designee, or other person or entity in possession of remains)

Date: _____

F. Office Mechanics/Filing

Copies of "RELEASE OF BODY" form are not required to be submitted to DHEC. The facility should maintain a copy in accordance with its policies.

References:

CDC, MMWR, Vol. 53, No.RR8; 1 pp. 13-15.

World Health Organization (WHO). Infection Control Guidelines for Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies, 1999, pp. 17-20. (<http://www.who.int/emc-documents/tse/whocdscsraph2003c.html>).

RELEASE OF BODY FORM- Instructions for Completing DHEC 0942

Purpose:

This form serves to inform healthcare providers, morticians, and coroners of standard infection control and other appropriate precautions when in contact with deceased bodies concerning: respiratory (airborne) pathogens, bloodborne/ mucous membrane pathogens, other contact-communicable pathogens, and transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE), such as Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD).

Explanation and Definition:

This form is to be completed by the physician, mortician, coroner, facility designee, or other person in possession of remains

Item-by-Item Instructions:

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Item 1: Check the appropriate box regarding whether the human remains are considered infectious as defined by DHEC on page 1, section C.

Item 2a: Check this box to indicate use of a body bag.

Item 2b: Check this box to indicate that the human remains are known or suspected of TSE infection.

Signature/Date: Enter signature and date.

Office Mechanics/Filing:

Process this form in accordance with your facility or institution. Copies of this form are not required to be submitted to DHEC.