



## **BOULDER COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE**

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### **Tasks to consider during the investigation into a suspected Overdose**

#### **Victim:**

- Electronic Evidence:
  - Cell phone
    - Locate and attempt to place victim cell phone on airplane mode, turn off Bluetooth and Wifi...do not turn off phone. If unsuccessful, place phone into faraday bag to prevent cell tower connection.
    - Try to get passcode from friend/roommate/family member. If unsuccessful, utilize biometrics of victim to unlock phone (face/fingerprint). Generally, phones do not have privacy issues unless phone is utilized by multiple parties so a search without warrant is generally accepted (check with prosecutor's office). If able to access phone, try and locate IMSI/IMEI and/or MAC Address.
    - Determine victim's cell phone provider and phone number. Immediately (or soon as practical) send off a preservation request to cell phone provider for that number so that cell tower data/tolls/etc... is preserved.
    - Photograph the face of the cellphone for any unread messages/notifications if you cannot gain access. Might assist in timeline and last communication.
      - Additionally, if able to access phone, try and determine who the Source of Supply(s) might be. If able to determine their phone numbers, send off a preservation request to those cell provider(s) as well so that cell tower data/tolls/etc... is preserved.
      - If able to change the password on the phone, do so.
    - If able to see that victim utilized Snapchat, Instagram (Etc.), determine username/"handle" and immediately (or soon as practical) send preservation request to Snap Inc.....same goes if able to determine via Snapchat who the Source of Supply is. Snapchat's geo-location data is phenomenal and the sooner you can preserve Snapchat accounts, it's more likely you will be able to get Snaps and texts between parties....if unable to determine username, send phone number and/or email to Snap Inc. for preservation of account.
      - Same goes for other communication platforms (WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, etc...).

- Financial platforms are useful as well if you believe drugs may have been purchased via apps such as Venmo or the CashApp, etc... these apps will capture IP addresses, names, phone numbers, memo lines and financial data of those involved in transactions.
    - After initial search of phone, get phone to Forensics for a download to preserve evidence and for an easy way to navigate for more thorough search.
  - Camera/Video Systems (on scene or nearby)
    - CCTV inside/outside of residence.
    - CCTV attached to neighboring residence.
  - Computer Systems
    - Wi-Fi Internet router....attempt to determine service provider and the IP or MAC Address of router. Might be a good idea to have Electronic Forensics unit respond to capture data on the router (consent search or search warrant to capture data).
  - Digital Forensics
    - Notify them when on scene and ask for them to respond if needed.
    - Use their services when Search Warrants are obtained for associated evidence (cell phones, laptop/desktop computers, storage devices).
- Scene Evidence:
  - Photos of decedent or clothes surrounding him/her may assist in timeline when comparing with social media photos exchanged.
  - Look around the crime scene for prescription bottles. Doctors have a responsibility with their patients and the drugs that are prescribed. You could be dealing with a crooked doctor who is prescribing outside of the course of usual medical practice, and you could have a much larger conspiracy involving multiple patients who are being overprescribed (DEA is a good contact to make the first step as they have access to multiple federal databases and can get Prescription Data Monitoring Program data).
  - Determine if victim has a vehicle. If vehicle is newer, useful data can be gleaned from the vehicle's computer systems including GPS data and all phones that connect via Bluetooth.
  - Recent receipts of purchases made can assist in placing victim in locations prior to the death.
- Narcotic Evidence:
  - Locate and seize drugs/paraphernalia in residence.
  - Have drugs and paraphernalia with residue sent to a reputable lab for complete analysis such as CBI.
- Other Investigation notes:
  - Have a complete autopsy conducted of victim with complete toxicology.
  - Consult with the DA's Office and keep them updated.

### **Witness Interviews:**

- Electronic Evidence

- Cell phone
  - Ask to look at roommates/family/friends' phones (who are present) to see any information can be gleamed (texts, social media, calls, etc...).
  - Photos or videos off of witness phones.
- Camera Systems: Same as in victim section.
- Computer Systems: Same as in victim section.
- Interview questions:
  - Establish victim's timeline with roommates/family/friends who are present on scene and ask about drug use/abuse and if they know who the regular SOS is for the victim.
  - Establish who was present at the location within the last 24 hours.
    - CCTV footage can assist here
  - Record if possible.
  - Corroborate (i.e. Hotel information, video surveillance from gas stations, stores, etc.).
  - Telephone numbers and social media of all co-conspirators.
  - Physical description and identifying information about all co-conspirators.
  - Meet locations, vehicle descriptions.
  - Observation of decedent's behavior in hours before death.
  - Decedent's drug history, rehab efforts, method of ingestion.
  - Without disclosing the drug that caused the death, determine what did friends and family think decedent died from.
  - What is the impression as to decedent's drug of choice (help determine whether decedent knew what s/he was smoking/injecting).
  - What is witnesses knowledge of victim's financial situation, employment, presence of Naloxone (Narcan or Kloxxado) etc.

### **Suspect:**

- Electronic Evidence:
  - Cell phone: Same objectives as stated in the victim section.
  - Camera/Video Systems: Same objectives as stated in the victim section.
  - Computer Systems: Same objectives as stated in the victim section.
  - Be thinking of search warrants or signed consent forms (including passwords) for the above noted systems as well as vehicle warrants for data stored on the vehicles internal system.
  - Request for cell site information.
  - Subscriber Information.
  - Precise location request/search warrant.
  - Pen register/Trap & Trace (case dependent).
- Scene evidence at location of interview with suspect(s):
  - Obtain search warrants for locations where the suspect(s) might have utilized during their involvement of this crime.
- Suspect interviews:
  - Corroborate any stories.
  - Record interview.

- Confirm known facts and timeline.
  - Provable false lies.
  - Confirm phone numbers and social media as to suspect and others.
  - Prior convictions.
  - Any prior bad acts.
  - Prior drug history (if we can show suspect has experience with fentanyl or other narcotics, then suspect is acutely aware of their effects).
  - Did the suspect ever share drugs with the decedent, who purchased them.
  - Establish where, how often did the suspect give drugs to the decedent and how often did the suspect receive drugs from the decedent.
- Suspect Admission to Distribution:
    - Quantity, purity, source, victim vulnerability, history with victim, knowledge or history of overdoses.
    - Establish knowledge of decedents drug use, rehab efforts, and method of ingestion.
    - Establish if suspect ever gave drugs to decedent on prior occasions.