Temporary Research Permit Process

BURIAL TRANSIT PERMIT TEMPORARY RESEARCH DISPOSITION

Aim

Our goal in this document is to outline the creation of a workflow that allows all relevant parties to track the remains of decedents who have consented to have those remains used for research and training purposes by the Nevada System of Higher Education. This process will not apply to outside educational institutions or other donation organizations.

Priorities

1. Follow all relevant Nevada Revised Statutes and Administrative codes
2. Track the chain of custody within Nevada in such a way that a donated body can be found at all times.
3. To meet the needs of Nevada's System of Higher Education's needs for research and training.

The Issue

Several programs within the Nevada System of Higher Education require that bodies that have elected for anatomical donation need to be taken directly to the facility without first going to the Funeral Home to be issued a Burial Permit. The ultimate disposition of these remains will be burial, cremation, entombment, etc. The anatomical donation before final disposition will be anywhere from eighteen months to two years. Currently these bodies are not being tracked during that phase.

The Solution

We will create a modified disposition form, a Burial Transit Permit Temporary Research Disposition, that can be used only if the final disposition is anatomical donation and the disposition place is one of the listed Nevada System of Higher Education locations. Other anatomical donation dispositions will have to follow the normal permitting procedures.

We believe that this Temporary Research Permit falls under paragraph 2 of Nevada Administrative Code 440.185, which allows for the State Registrar to issue a permit without a completed certificate of death for any case that would cause significant difficulty or expense to the applicant.

Actors and Responsibilities

The Office of Vital Records

The office of Vital Records has created a blank Burial Transit Permit Temporary Research Disposition document that can be filled out by whoever delivers the body to the research institution and can be signed by the receiver of the body. The form will collect the decedent's name, date of birth, location of death, as well as the funeral home and research institution it is going to. It must also be signed by a Funeral Director before It is uploaded into the record.

We will add three new fields into the Disposition tab of the Vital Records portal:

1. NV Higher Ed Temp Disposition (Y/N dropdown)
2. NV Higher Ed Temp Disposition Location (dropdown from table)
3. NV Higher Ed Temp Disposition Complete (Y/N dropdown)

The Office of Vital Records will be able to run periodic reports to determine the number and location of these temporary research dispositions, and well as make sure that they are returned to the funeral home for their final disposition no more than two years later.

The Funeral Home

The funeral home that picks up the body will be responsible for transporting the body to the research facility, making certain the Temporary Research Disposition form is filled out properly and that it is signed by a licensed Funeral Director and uploaded into the record created withing 24 hours of death of discovery of the body, per NRS 440.540. They will also be responsible for mark Nv Higher Ed Disposition Complete as "Yes" when the body moves to its final disposition. The presence of the permit does not in any way change the legal requirements prescribed in NRS.

Nevada Higher Ed Research Institutions

Will be assuming temporary custody of the body and will be responsible for it for the duration of its temporary disposition, they will also be responsible for alerting the funeral home when that temporary disposition has ended.

Additional Details about the UNR Anatomical Donation Program

1. **What is the determination for the decedent to be part of the UNR program?**
   Acceptance is determined is determine through the criteria into UNR Med's Anatomical Donation Program *University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine General Information Regarding Anatomical Gifts* only after the donor's death and is based on several medical, legal, and educational considerations. Certain conditions may render a donor ineligible for acceptance. For example, UNR Med generally cannot accept donors who died by suicide, donors with certain communicable diseases, or donors who have been diagnosed with conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or Hepatitis B or C. In addition, significant physical trauma may preclude acceptance if the condition of the remains would limit their suitability for anatomical education. A final determination cannot be made until after death, when required screening and blood testing are completed. Blood testing is typically performed as soon as practicable following death, often within approximately 24 hours, to ensure the most accurate results. The outcome of this testing, together with a review of the donor's medical history and the condition of the remains, is used to determine whether the donation can be accepted.

   Donors who have sustained substantial physical trauma, such as from a gunshot wound or a serious motor vehicle accident, would not be eligible for acceptance because the resulting injuries can affect the educational value of the donation and the program's ability to utilize the remains for their intended instructional purposes.

2. **What is the application process?**
   The donor must complete two originals of the Anatomical Gift Form, both of which must be notarized. The donor must also complete the attached Medical History Form. Upon completion of these documents, the donor will be provided with a Donor Card and is encouraged to carry it at all times in the event of accidental death. Donors are also encouraged to discuss their anatomical donation plans with family members and other appropriate representatives. Please note that completion of the required documents is not a guarantee that UNR Med will accept an anatomical donation. Donors are advised to have alternative funeral arrangements in the event donation cannot be accepted. A final determination regarding acceptance of a donation cannot be made until after the donor's death. Acceptance may be affected by a variety of factors, including the results of required post-mortem blood testing, the presence of a communicable disease, death by suicide, or death resulting from significant physical trauma, as discussed above.

3. **What are the parameters of participating in this program?**
   In accordance with the Uniformed Anatomical Gift Act and NRS 451.500 et seq., the only person authorized to make an anatomical donation to UNR Med is the intended donor themselves and they must be over the age of 18 years old. Donors must be of sound mind when applying for the donation program. Of course, a donor may revoke

their application for anatomical donation and request to be removed from the donor database at any time.

4. **What if a case should be a Coroner case?**
   If the Medical Examiner determines that a decedent who is registered as a donor with UNR Med requires a full autopsy, the decedent's remains generally cannot be accepted into the anatomical donation program because they are no longer suitable for anatomical education. In such cases, the decedent is not transferred to UNR Med. If the donor elected and paid the optional Cremation Guarantee Fee, which allows donors to secure cremation services regardless of whether their remains are ultimately accepted into the donation program, UNR Med will cover the remaining cost of cremation even though the donation cannot proceed. If the donor did not elect the optional Cremation Guarantee Fee, UNR Med will notify the donor's next of kin or designated representative that the donation cannot be accepted. Following completion of the Medical Examiner's autopsy, responsibility for funeral, cremation, and other final disposition arrangements will remain with the decedent's family or estate.

5. **What if the donation to UNR interrupts a coroner's investigation?**
   As discussed above, decedents subject to coroner or medical examiner jurisdiction are not transferred to UNR Med until all required examinations have been completed and the body has been released. Therefore, so long as the examination does not affect the suitability of the remains for anatomical donation and the body is ultimately released to UNR Med, anatomical donation should not disrupt, delay, or interfere with any ongoing investigation.

Nevada Funeral Board

The Funeral Board will be able to run reports showing the locations of all, which will only be allowed for NV System of Higher education Burial Transit Permit Temporary Research Disposition locations, and will be able to see any Temporary Research Disposition Permits attached to the death record.

Nevada Revised Statute

NRS 440.500 Burial and removal permits: Issuance; contents; death from infectious, contagious or communicable disease.

1. Except as provided in subsections 2 and 3, if a certificate of death is properly executed and complete, the local health officer shall then issue a burial or removal permit to the funeral director. The permit must indicate the name of the cemetery, mausoleum, columbarium or other place of burial where the human remains will be interred, inurned or buried.

2. In case the death occurred from some disease that is held by the Board to be infectious, contagious, or communicable and dangerous to the public health, no permit for the removal or other disposition of the body may be granted by the local health officer except under such conditions as may be prescribed by the Board.

3. The Board may by regulation provide for the issuance of the burial transit permit prior to the filing of the completed death certificate if that requirement would result in undue hardship.

NRS 440.530 Burial permit to accompany body. The permit shall accompany the body to its destination, where, if within the State of Nevada, it shall be delivered to the sexton or to any other person in charge of the place of burial.

[Part 9:199:1911; RL § 2960; NCL § 5243]

NRS 440.540 Necessity for permit to inter more than 72 hours after death; removal of body to another registration district.

1. Except as provided in subsection 2, the body of any person whose death occurs in this state shall not be interred, deposited in a vault or tomb, cremated or otherwise disposed of, removed from or into any registration district, or be held temporarily pending a further disposition more than 72 hours after death, until a permit for burial or removal or other disposition thereof has been properly issued by the local health officer of the registration district in which the death occurred.

2. If the person who is to certify the cause of death consents, a body may be moved from the place of death into another registration district to be prepared for final disposition.

[Part 23:199:1911; RL § 2974; NCL § 5257]—(NRS A 1977, 353)

Nevada Administrative Code

NAC 440.185 Issuance of burial or removal permit without certificate of death. (NRS 440.120) The State Registrar or a local registrar of vital statistics may issue a burial or removal permit without a completed certificate of death, or a certificate eligible to be registered, for:

1. A case of a coroner or medical examiner which is pending investigation; or
2. Any case requiring significant difficulty or expense to the applicant.

(Added to NAC by Bd. of Health by R066-16, eff. 11-2-2016)