

Death Scene Investigation: Homicide Attribute Template

<< Qualifying instructions >>

This attribute form should be used if the death being investigated is suspected to be a homicide. The circumstances described and listed below should guide the scene investigation about the decedent, and the immediate conditions and circumstances leading to the death.

Following the key structure can guide the collection of all pertinent details in an organized and routine manner.

Key Structure:

- A. **Who:** people involved (sex, age, race/ethnicity, relationships, etc.)?
- B. **What:** What happened? What are the obvious signs of injury? What was happening immediately before the fatal incident?
- C. **Where:** Describe injury location, where the body was found, the surroundings
- D. **When:** Timing of incident and death, when was the last time the victim was known to be alive and by whom?
- E. **Why:** Why did the death occur? Argument? Fight? Robbery in progress? Relationship problems? Recent job loss, money problems, or other life stressors? Physical or mental illness?
- F. **How:** What were the apparent cause(s) and mechanism(s) of death?

Section A: Who

1. Decedent name and demographics (as known by observation), sex, age, race/ethnicity
2. Extended victim demographics: education, marital status, current relationship status, veteran status, sexual orientation, homelessness or housing instability, and
3. Relationship: Victim is the _____ of the Suspect.
4. If available, Suspect demographics (including extended demographics)
- 5.

CIRCUMSTANCES		
Yes/No	Crisis	MENTAL HEALTH
		Current diagnosed mental health problem
		Current depressed mood
		Current Mental Health/Substance abuse treatment
		Ever treated mental health or substance abuse problem
		Alcohol problem
		Other substance abuse problem
		Other addiction
		Mental Health Diagnosis - 1st:
		Mental Health Diagnosis - 2nd:
		Mental Health Diagnosis - Other:
		RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS
		Intimate partner violence
		Intimate partner problem
		Family relationship problem
		Other relationship problem
		Physical Fight
		Argument
		Argument Timing:
		PREVIOUS EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE
		Abuse or neglect led to death
		History of abuse or neglect as a child
		Previous perpetrator of violence in the past month
		Previous victim of violence in the past month
		CRIME AND CRIMINAL ACTIVITY
		Precipitated by another crime
		First crime in progress
		Nature 1:
		Nature 2:
		Stalking
		Prostitution or sec trafficking
		Terrorist attack
		Walk-by assault
		Gang related
		HOMICIDE/LEGAL INTERVENTION SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES
		Justifiable self-defense

		Victim was a police officer on-duty
		Victim was a bystander
		Random violence
		Victim was an intervener
		Victim used a weapon
		Mercy killing
		Hate crime
		Jealousy (lover's triangle)
		Brawl (3+ people in a physical fight)
		Drive-by shooting
		Drug involvement
		SUICIDE / UNDETERMINED SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES
		History of suicide attempts
		History of expressed suicidal thoughts or plans
		Recently disclosed suicidal thoughts / plan to commit suicide
		Disclosed intent to whom
		Left suicide note
		LIFE STRESSORS
		Contributing criminal legal problems
		Civil legal problems
		Job problem
		Financial problem
		School problem
		Eviction or loss of home
		Suicide of friend or family contributed to death
		Non-suicide death of friend or family
		Anniversary of a traumatic event
		Disaster exposure
