

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER**  
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**OCME Press Release**  
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The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner is an independent state agency tasked with the duty to investigate deaths that constitute a threat to public health, which certainly includes death related to known or suspected COVID-19 infection.

At the beginning of the pandemic we issued letters that were distributed to all hospitals and nursing homes reminding them to report these deaths and also providing a form to them for ease of submitting the data to our office. We also provided advice to licensed providers on how to appropriately complete a death certificate for a COVID-19 death, or even a Probable COVID-19 death.

Also at the start of the pandemic we began the process of swabbing deceased persons where the doctor, family, funeral directors, or care provider had concerns that the death could be due to COVID-19. At that time swabs and COVID-19 testing was limited and sometimes unavailable. Through this process we identified 110 deaths that we classified as being due to COVID-19 infection. These deaths occurred in skilled nursing facilities 61 (56%), private residences 35 (32%), hospitals 7 (6%), assisted living homes 6 (5%), and hospice 1 (1%).

On a daily basis the OCME shares data on the COVID-19 deaths reported to our office with the Department of Public Health Vital Records division and Infectious Disease section to make sure that we are all capturing these COVID-19 deaths accurately and comprehensively. All of these deaths are included in the State COVID-19 death totals.

We recently presented data regarding our efforts to swab the deceased people in our state to offer re-assurance that, even after death, we have gone to every length possible to diagnose and accurately represent the way in which COVID-19 has affected our residents.

I strongly believe that our State has done it's best to diagnose and accurately report all COVID-19 deaths in all living situations, including Nursing Homes. The OCME will continue to be diligent in our efforts to diagnose and appropriately certify the deaths due to COVID-19 in Connecticut.