

Generic Example: Access the Electronic Medical Record Request

{Recipient's Address}

{Date}

Dear {Add Salutation}

I am the *{Add Requestor Position or Title within the MDI Office}* of the office of *{Add Name of MDI Office}*. Our doctors and medicolegal investigative staff office would like to obtain access to your electronic medical record system. This access would benefit our work as well as your medical records staff, families of the decedents, organ procurement organizations (OPOs), and funeral directors.

Our office requests (hundreds, thousands) of medical records each year for the deaths that we investigate. Each of these involves contacting your medical records staff, your staff locating the records, and then sending them to us. Sometimes one case may involve two or more requests because of incomplete records. Many medicolegal death investigation agencies around the country have this electronic medical record access and find that it works well, improves efficiency for all including your hospital record's staff who would no longer receive medical record requests from us. This access would save your records departments from dealing with our myriad of requests and busy fax lines.

We already have access to your medical records as there is a HIPAA exemption for Medical Examiners/Coroners (section 45 CFR 164.512g) that allows us to obtain medical records. We are asking to access them electronically.

The ability to access these medical records in real time by our investigators would allow us to have key information before starting an autopsy or even before we decide to take jurisdiction of a death. This speeds up the investigative process, preventing delays for families who are planning funeral services.

In addition, this helps with organ and tissue recovery processes. All potential organ and tissue donors who are reportable medicolegal deaths, must be "cleared" by a medical examiner/coroner before the donation can proceed. We must decide if the donation would compromise our investigation (e.g., homicides). This often entails a review of the medical records at all hours of the day and night. Real-time electronic access will all a quicker response to the recovery organization's request.

As a next step I would kindly ask that we meet to discuss what actions or processes can be taken to ensure our office receives electronic medical records for death within our jurisdiction.

Please contact *{Add information of individual to contact and by methods such as email, phone and add dates/deadlines that a response is needed}*

I look forward to hearing from you,

[Signature and Affiliation of the Requestor]