

# Ventura County EMS Determination of Death

## Obvious Death

Decapitation, Incineration, Hemicorporectomy, or Decomposition

OR

Rigor, Lividity, Catastrophic head trauma

Confirmed non-responsive, pulseless, and not breathing.

YES

NO

**TRAUMATIC ETIOLOGY**  
Blunt or penetrating trauma  
(sufficient to cause death)

**MEDICAL ETIOLOGY**  
Drowning,  
ingestion, asphyxiation,  
hanging, poisoning,  
lightning strike, electrocution.

**PEDIATRIC**  
Patient < 18 Y.O.

**ADULT**  
Patient  $\geq 18$  Y.O.

NO

**TRAUMA CENTER**  
ETA  
< 20 Minutes

YES

**BLS PROVIDER**  
TREAT NOW

**ALS PROVIDER**  
ASSESS ECG

**Initial Rhythm**  
Asystole or Wide Complex PEA Rate  $< 30$

YES

NO

**DOD**  
Withhold or Discontinue  
Resuscitation

**TREAT**

**TRANSPORT TO TRAUMA CENTER**  
Resuscitation while minimizing time to  
trauma center arrival according to  
705.29 traumatic arrest.

**TREAT**

Reference applicable 705  
protocols. Plan to resuscitate  
on scene.

**TRANSPORT DECISIONS**

Transport vs continued  
resuscitation on scene vs  
termination of resuscitative efforts  
according to policy 733 Cardiac  
Arrest Management