5-09/090.05 - Determination of Death

The responding deputy's first responsibility is to assess the condition of the patient/victim. This assessment of the patient/victim is necessary in order to determine the proper course of action to be taken. It shall be the policy of this Department that deputy personnel will resolve any doubt of life or death in favor of an assumption of life and provide appropriate medical assistance. If the patient/victim is obviously dead, the reporting deputy should describe, in detail, in the appropriate reports, the objective symptoms of death which prompted the conclusion that the patient/victim was beyond help.

Department personnel who are not physicians shall not pronounce persons dead or use the phrase "the victim was pronounced dead" in Department reports unless the victim was so pronounced by a physician. Include the name of such physician in the appropriate reports.