

INSTRUCTIONS FOR T. BARR (Pathologist)

[Note: Do not let anyone see these instructions.]

1. Case Summary

Ash Johnson was in a fatal accident on October 1 [-1] when the motorcycle he/she was riding in the dry riverbed of the Ronson River hit a large rock. He/She was ejected over the handlebars and fell face down into the gravel riverbed. The force of the ejection broke his/her neck. He/She was taken to University Hospital where he/she was pronounced dead.

You are the forensic pathologist at the Medical Examiner's Office who performed the autopsy on December 3, [-1] to determine the cause of death of Ash Johnson.

2. Personal background

You are a physician licensed to practice medicine in this state. You grew up here and attended the local university and received your undergraduate and medical degrees there. You did a four-year residency in pathology. You are board certified. You work as a pathologist in the Medical Examiner's Office.

[Feel free to develop any realistic personal and additional professional background.]

3. Your Story

You are the pathologist at the Medical Examiner's Office who performed the autopsy on Ash Johnson to determine the cause of death.

Your testimony will be consistent with your autopsy report. Ash Johnson died on October 1, [-1] as a result of a neck fracture which ruptured his/her spinal cord, caused when he/she was ejected from his/her motorcycle and landed face down into the riverbed gravel. In your opinion, the neck fracture happened because the helmet Johnson was wearing was a Best Helmet with a 3-inch rigid visor. The visor hit the ground first and forced Johnson's head violently downward, breaking his/her neck.

This is the first time in your years as a forensic pathologist that you have found a motorcycle helmet with a 3-inch rigid visor caused a fatal neck fracture. But for the rigid visor, Johnson would not have fractured his/her neck. However, you have no opinion on whether the open-face visor with a fixed 3-inch brim is unreasonably dangerous.

4. Documents

You have seen, and are familiar with, the documents attached to these instructions. If there is a circumstance where, while you are staying in character, you would show one of the

documents below to an attorney, you can do so, but you cannot show any attorney this set of instructions.

5. Instructions on role playing

In role-playing Dr. Barr, please stay “in character” at all times.

To play this expert witness role, you will probably need to do some computer research to “get up to speed” so you can realistically play the role of a medical examiner. You will want to become familiar with the type of work you did in this case.

T. Barr, M.D.
YY County Medical Examiner
100 Congress Ave.
Springdale, XX

Occupation

Forensic Pathologist, YY County Medical Examiner since [-13]

Testified numerous times since [-13] in civil and criminal cases to establish the cause of death.

Education

University of XX, BS degree, [-23]

University of XX Medical School

M.D. degree, [-19]

Residency in pathology, University Hospital

[-19]-[-15]

Post-doctorate in pathology, University Hospital

[-15]-[-13]

Licenses and Certifications

M.D. degree, [-19]

Board certified in Forensic Pathology by the American Board of Pathology, [-15]

AUTOPSY REPORT

YY County Medical Examiner's Office

Date: December 3, [-1]

Person Examined: Ash Johnson

Address:

Background

This is the body of a well-nourished 22-year-old male/female, who had a motorcycle accident on October 1, [-1]. He/She fell off a motorcycle while riding in the dry bed of the Ronson River. The motorcycle hit an object, causing him/her to be ejected over the handlebars, and he/she landed face down in the riverbed.

External Examination

Body dressed in tee shirt, blue jeans, sneakers and an open-face helmet with a 3-inch rigid visor. Visor and front of helmet show scratch marks in direction of travel. Face, nose and mouth also have lacerations in direction of travel. Helmet otherwise intact.

Neurological System

Hyperflexion of neck downwards. Ligaments by C5 and C6 are severed. Sixth cervical spinal cord tear.

Cause of Death

Hyperflexion downward on neck causing tearing of ligaments at C5-C6, and tear of spinal cord at C6.

T. Barr, M.D.
Pathologist
Date: December 3, [-1]

State of XX

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

Deceased Name:

Ash Johnson

Sex:

male/female

Date of Death:

October 1 [-1]

Place of Death:

Springdale

Municipality of Death:

YY County

Domestic Status:

Single, never married

Manner of Death:

Accident

Cause of Death:

Fracture of cervical spine

Date issued:

10/1/[-1]

Issued by:

State of XX,

Office of Vital Statistics

Certificate No.:

1871

