



BEI

**BUREAU DES ENQUÊTES
INDÉPENDANTES**

Independent Investigation:
**YOU, YOUR FAMILY,
AND BEI**

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Have you or a loved one been involved in an event that is the subject of an independent investigation? Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes (BEI) has deployed a team of investigators to shed light on the event. It has also assigned a specific investigator to respond to any questions or concerns you may have. He or she will stay in contact with you throughout the investigation to keep you up to date on its progress.

You will also find answers to some of your questions in this brochure.

WHAT IS BEI?

Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes is a specialized police force. As its name suggests, it inquires into all cases where, during a police intervention or while in police custody, a member of the public:

- Is seriously injured;
- Is injured by a firearm used by a police officer;
- Dies.

WHAT DOES BEI DO?

BEI is responsible for conducting a full and impartial investigation into the event. Its professional investigators perform their duties in accordance with the organization's values of impartiality, integrity, and diligence.

WHAT ARE THE STEPS IN THE INVESTIGATION?

As soon as BEI launches an independent investigation, it:

- Sends a team of investigators to the scene of the event, regardless of the location in Québec.
- Brings in a supporting police force (Sûreté du Québec, Service de police de la Ville de Montréal or Service de police de la Ville de Québec) to provide it with experts, particularly in forensic identification and collision reconstruction, depending on the nature of the event, to work under its supervision.
- Assigns a principal investigator responsible for the investigation.
- Contacts the coroner in the event of a death.
- Appoints an investigator to examine the scene and collect evidence.
- Designates another investigator to receive and analyze all the police reports and testimonies received.
- Selects the investigators who will be responsible for finding and interviewing witnesses.
- Assigns investigators to interview the police officers involved and those who witnessed the event to get their versions of the facts.
- Appoints an investigator to liaise with the family. The investigator will meet with the person involved or a member of his or her family and will keep in contact throughout the investigation, if that is the person's or family's wish.

IF THE PERSON INVOLVED IN THE EVENT IS INJURED

Anyone who is injured during an event is quickly sent to hospital to receive the necessary care. If the injured person is unconscious, BEI immediately locates and meets with a family member to inform them of the event. However, depending on how urgent and geographically remote the situation is, BEI may have to ask the police department involved in the event to contact the injured person's family.

IF THE PERSON INVOLVED IN THE EVENT DIES

If one of your loved ones dies during the police investigation, the death is declared either at the site of the event or at the hospital. The deceased's body is then transported to Laboratoire de sciences judiciaires et de médecine légale in Montréal.

Depending on the circumstances of death, Bureau du coroner may order an autopsy or a summary examination of the body. These steps are taken with the utmost respect for the deceased.

You cannot prevent a forensic autopsy from being performed on your loved one, because the *Act respecting the determination of the causes and circumstances of death* applies in all cases of death attributed to violent or unclear causes in Québec.

This requirement applies to everyone and no exceptions are made, even for reasons of personal conviction or religious beliefs.

Bureau du coroner assumes all costs for transporting the body and performing the forensic autopsy.

Formally Identifying the Deceased

The coroner uses all the investigation techniques at his or her disposal to ensure that the deceased is formally identified. In certain rare cases, the coroner may ask a member of the deceased's family or a legal guardian to make the identification based on a photograph.

Bureau du coroner releases the body when the forensic autopsy is complete and the identity of the deceased has been formally established.

Collecting the Body

Anyone related to the deceased may legally claim the body. However, steps must first be taken to check whether there are any legal documents, such as a will, that stipulate special conditions concerning disposal of the remains.

The family member must then contact a funeral services company. Your assigned investigator can advise you on how to recover the deceased's body.

Collecting the Deceased's Personal Effects

The deceased's personal effects remain in BEI's custody. Certain effects may be kept for expert evaluation and used as exhibits in court if a lawsuit is filed. This property will be kept until it is released by the judge. Any effects not kept as evidence may be surrendered to the designated family member by the assigned investigator.

THE EVENT AND THE NEWS MEDIA

When an event occurs, it is often covered in the news media. Journalists will want information to relay to the public and will try to get your version of what happened. They may want information on your loved one and the circumstances surrounding the event.

You have the right to decide whether or not you wish to answer their questions. Keep in mind, however, that any sensitive information you disclose may have an impact on the ongoing investigation and its outcome.

DOES BEI HAVE TO ANSWER ALL MY QUESTIONS?

As soon as BEI takes charge of an investigation, it has the responsibility to not reveal any information that may hinder the investigation. Names and personal or sensitive information therefore cannot be divulged. BEI is committed to keeping the individual's loved ones abreast of the investigation and answering their questions to the best of its ability, and it assigns an investigator to the family for this very purpose.

SUPPORT FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

As soon as it is assigned to an investigation and throughout the course of its work, BEI may refer family members to organizations that can provide them with psychological and/or post-trauma support. Certain criteria apply, however.

FILING A COMPLAINT WITH THE COMMISSAIRE À LA DÉONTOLOGIE POLICIÈRE

If you believe that the police officer(s) involved in the event committed an act that violated the Code of Ethics of Québec Police Officers, you may file a complaint with the Commissaire à la déontologie policière. Your complaint must be filed no later than one year after the event or the discovery of the event. The investigator assigned to the family can provide you with the relevant documents and assist you.

END OF THE INVESTIGATION AND DECISION BY DPCP

Once BEI has completed its independent investigation, it files its report with Directeur des poursuites criminelles et pénales (DPCP). DPCP reviews the report and determines whether there is reasonable cause to lay charges against one or more of the police officers involved.

If DPCP decides not to prosecute the police officer(s), the prosecutor in charge of the case will inform you of the reasons for the decision.

If someone dies, BEI also files an investigation report with Bureau du coroner.

Bureau du coroner writes a report on the causes and circumstances of death, which it will make public after sending it to you.



**IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION,
DON'T HESITATE TO CONTACT YOUR ASSIGNED INVESTIGATOR.**

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Québec 