Process Flow in Medicolegal Death Investigations of Infants and Children

1. **Sudden Unexpected Death of Infant/Child Occurs**
   - Death Reported to ME/C and jurisdiction accepted

2. **Death and Location of Incident Investigated by LE and MDI**
   - Performed within 24 hours (Ch12) by certified MDI (Ch4) and LE
   - Complete Infant/Child Death Scene Investigation form (Appendix 3/4)
   - Doll reenactment as indicated (Ch4)
   - Medical records obtained
   - If death in hospital, admission blood and urine samples obtained
   - MDI, and other agencies involved, provide information to NOK on grief support resources available
   - Communication with NOK is unbiased and nonaccusatory (Ch12)
   - Information about death investigation process given to NOK, verbally and in writing
   - NOK is provided one point of contact for ME/C office

3. **Infant/Child Transported to Morgue**
   - Remove decedent from scene with care and compassion.
   - When practical, place in body bag once in transport vehicle away from view of NOK.
   - Preservation of personal property, evidence, and chain of custody

4. **Post Mortem Examination Performed (Ch5)**
   - Perform as soon as possible
   - Radiographic skeletal survey
   - Autopsy (Ch5)
   - Histology and toxicology
   - Microbiologic and vitreous testing on cases unexplained after gross exam (Ch6)
   - Metabolic studies when indicated (Ch9)
   - Consider consultants for neuropathologic exam (Ch8) and heart exam (Ch7)
   - Additional ancillary studies as indicated
   - Collect and safeguard preservation of samples for genetic testing (Ch6)

5. **Preliminary Findings Communicated to NOK and Appropriate Stakeholders**
   - Within 48 hours

6. **Ancillary Testing and Consultations Complete**
   - Death Certificate (Ch10) and Synoptic Report (Ch11) Completed

7. **Follow-up Communication**
   - Report Disseminated to NOK and Appropriate Agencies and Stakeholders
   - Final results discussed with NOK and related stakeholders
   - ME/C provides opportunity for NOK to ask questions of pathologist and participate with other stakeholders in post-autopsy conference when requested

8. **Investigation Complete**
   - Case reviewed by local Child Fatality Review Team

**Key:** Law Enforcement (LE), Medical Examiner/Coroner (ME/C), Medicolegal Death Investigator (MDI), Next of Kin (NOK)

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