

# How-to guide

## Event dates and times coding tips

This advice relates to entering date and time coding to provide users with the sequence of events as they relate to death.

It is necessary to enter dates and times for at least three, and up to, five events.

NCIS coding queries should be emailed to the NCIS Unit - [ncis@ncis.org.au](mailto:ncis@ncis.org.au)

Event	Screen	Requirement	Date and time that the...
Notification	Case details	Mandatory	death was reported to the Coroner
Incident	Time location	Mandatory	incident, resulting in death, occurred
Death	Time location	Mandatory	death occurred or was noted
Last known alive	Time location	Optional	deceased was last known to be alive
Body found	Time location	Optional	body of deceased was located

### Why is it important to code this correctly?

The accurate reporting of the date and time for the events of the case is important as the address is used for various tasks, including:

- providing a clear representation of where the event occurred
- identification of cases based on specific date ranges
- monitoring movement of deceased throughout events related to death.

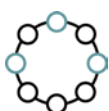
### Date and time sequencing

The usual sequencing of events for the five events is:

1. Last known alive (optional)
2. Incident
3. Death
4. Body found (optional)
5. Notification to Coroner

Movement of deceased between events, must be reflected in coding (adjusting time by one minute is enough – e.g. fell from balcony @ 09:53, landed on footpath @ 09.54).

The location and address coding may also reflect the movement.



Date/time sequencing rules

Event	Rules
Notification of the death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cannot be made to Coroner before the death has occurred</li> </ul>
Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>must be before Notification</li> <li>can be equal to but not after Death, Body found</li> <li>can be before, after or equal to Last known alive</li> </ul>
Death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>must be before Notification</li> <li>can be equal to but not before Incident or Last known alive</li> <li>can be equal to but not after Body Found</li> </ul>
Last known alive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>must be before Notification</li> <li>can be before, after or equal to Incident</li> <li>can be equal to but not after Death or Body found</li> </ul>
Body found	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>must be before Notification</li> <li>can be equal to but not before Incident, Death, Last known alive</li> </ul>

Entering dates and time

**Witnessed events**

Where possible the **exact** date/time for the event should be coded.

**Non witnessed events**

If an exact date and time cannot be determined, a range may be used to specify the dates or times between which the event likely occurred, for example, between 01/01/2009 08:30 and 06/01/2009 11:00

Common scenarios where a date and time range is appropriate include:

- asphyxia
- choking or inhalation of substance including food and drink
- drowning
- falls
- firearm
- hanging
- hospital deaths
- hyperthermia/hypothermia
- natural deaths where deceased collapses alone
- poisoning – pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical
- suffocation
- transport injury events (MVA's)

## Coding examples

Scenario	Event	How to code Date/Time	Advice
Death occurred as a result of a homicide on or about 23 September 2020. Last known to be alive at 01:16 on 23 September 2020, not seen since	Last known	23/09/2020 01:16	The date and time that the deceased was last known to be alive can be coded based on the available information.
	Incident	23/09/2020 01:17 and 23/09/2020 23:59	
	Death	23/09/2020 01:17 and 23/09/2020 23:59	As there is no information as to the precise time of death, the coding can be based on the information provided by the coroner – on or about 23 September
	Body found	-	
Deceased has been at home eating dinner on 28 August 2019 at 17:00 when felt pain in her chest and collapsed. Taken to hospital where she suffered a cardiac arrest at 19:12. Resuscitation was unsuccessful, and death was declared at 19:48	Last known	-	The initial event occurred whilst the deceased was eating dinner at home so the incident coding should reflect this date and time, location and activity.
	Incident	28/08/2019 17:00	
	Death	28/08/2019 19:48	As the deceased was taken to and treated at hospital the <i>Death</i> coding should reflect this. <i>Last known</i> and <i>Body found</i> is not required.
	Body found	-	
Deceased was located hanging at home on 7 June 2020 when wife arrive home from shopping at 17:55. Had last known to be alive when speaking to wife on the phone at 17:35	Last known	07/06/2020 17:35	The sequencing of the events is quite clear – the deceased was last known to be alive when speaking to his wife at 17:35. In the time between completing the call and his wife returning home, the individual died. As there is no witness to provide the precise time, a range is used.
	Incident	07/06/2020 17:35 and 07/06/2020 17:55	
	Death	07/06/2020 17:35 and 07/06/2020 17:55	
	Body found	07/06/2020 17:55	
		07/06/2020 17:55	

## Coding unknown times

Unfortunately, for many cases the exact time of the event is not recorded in the documentation of the coronial case file. In these cases, it is necessary to enter the *unknown* time of 00:00.

An alternative is to use the *Between* data fields to stipulate the entire day. For example, between 01/01/2009 00:01 and 01/01/2009 23:59.

If this option is selected it is vital that the range be entered into the between date and time fields. Failure to do so will result in the case being rejected during the NCIS Quality review process.