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C24-107

MEMORANDUM TO: Ken Weatherill, Assistant Deputy Minister
Public Safety Division, Ministry of the Solicitor General

FROM: Dr. Dirk Huyer
Chief Coroner for Ontario

Dr. Michael Pollanen
Chief Forensic Pathologist for Ontario

DATE: July 31, 2024

RE: **Management of Found Skeletal Remains Procedure**

We are writing to request an All-Chiefs Memorandum to share a new procedure guiding management of found skeletal remains in Ontario that are apparently not of recent origin. The procedure has been finalized and is now operational.

The Management of Found Skeletal Remains (Apparently not recent) procedure outlines a stepwise approach when the Office of the Chief Coroner/Ontario Forensic Pathology Service (OCC/OFPS) is notified about the discovery of skeletal remains that considers overlapping interests and jurisdictions. Some key highlights of the procedure include:

- Process flows when police services are initially notified of the discovery of skeletal remains of unknown origin
 - Police will contact the **Provincial Dispatch Unit** in Toronto (**416-314-4100** or 1-855-299-4100) to report the discovery of skeletal remains. Provincial Dispatch will engage the forensic anthropologist on-call
- Responsibilities at the scene if there is no concern of foul play requiring further investigation by the OCC/OFPS
- OCC/OFPS step-by-step process for early notification of Indigenous communities

Found human skeletal remains have a profound impact on Indigenous communities. The OCC/OFPS will engage in early notification of Indigenous communities to ensure timely

involvement with discovery of their Ancestors. The Indigenous representatives will provide input into consideration/involvement of cultural traditions, practices and ceremony. Collaborative and respectful discussion between the OCC/OFPS and communities will inform the approach followed when human skeletal remains, potentially of Indigenous ancestry, are discovered.

The procedure document is attached for your information. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of the Chief Coroner at occ.inquiries@ontario.ca or 416-314-4000.

Sincerely,



Dirk Huyer
Chief Coroner for Ontario



Michael S. Pollanen
Chief Forensic Pathologist for Ontario

c: Mario Di Tommaso, O.O.M.
Deputy Solicitor General, Community Safety