Obvious death is confirmed by:

1. Evidence of significant time lapse:
   a. Dependent lividity
   b. Rigor mortis
   c. Generalized tissue decomposition / putrefaction
   d. Torso freezing (chest cannot be compressed)

2. Injuries incompatible with life
   a. Decapitation
   b. Incineration
   c. Transection
   d. Open head wound and
      i. Separation of the entire brain from the skull, or
      ii. Visible total destruction of the brain
   e. Open torso wound and
      i. Separation of the entire heart from the thorax, or
      ii. Visible total destruction of the heart, or
      iii. Separation of both lungs from the thorax, or
      iv. Visible total destruction of both lungs

NOTES:

1. All EMS providers who encounter a patient with any of the above conditions should not initiate life
   saving interventions and should not initiate emergent or urgent transport. However, in some
   circumstances EMS personnel may be required to assist with transporting the deceased to an
   appropriate facility.

2. All EMS providers must comply with their Regional / Service protocols & procedures for reporting of
   deaths and for care of the deceased.

3. In many cases of obvious death (eg. decapitation) formal assessment for absent pulse and / or
   respirations will not be required.