The following checklist is to ensure that all legal duties are fulfilled prior to releasing remains to an agency outside of the county for any analyses or long-term storage

* Pronounce the death
* Collect GPS coordinates of the death scene (optional if the sheriff’s office collects this)
* Ensure Sheriff’s Office searches personal effects and surrounding area for ID cards or similar documentation **\*\*\*If an ID card is located a scientific ID (i.e., Fingerprint, dental, DNA, or medical comparison) is still necessary\*\*\***
	+ Check pockets
	+ Check inside shoes
	+ Check in lining of clothing or waistbands
* Obtain Sheriff’s Office case number for tracking purposes
* Create own tracking number (optional if the sheriff’s case number is maintained in your records)
* Ensure remains are labeled with case number on a weatherproof morgue tag
* Provide Funeral Home with proper transport paperwork
* Obtain copy of Sheriff’s Office recovery report (with GPS recovery coordinates)
* Add case to a digital tracking spreadsheet for centralized, searchable tracking and record redundancy (paper and digital). Include:
	+ Case number
	+ Recovery Date
	+ Condition of remains
	+ GPS recovery location
	+ Personal effects brief description
	+ Additional notes regarding actions taken (i.e., fingerprints taken, DNA sample taken/submitted, request for additional analyses such as autopsy, anthropological or dental examination)
* If an ID card (or similar documentation) is located, initiate contact with appropriate agencies (Consulate, DPS, MMP, Family Associations)
* Verify that fingerprints have been taken
	+ Taken by Sheriff’s Office (or)
	+ Taken by local CBP Missing Migrant Program (MMP) Agents (if applicable)
* Verify that fingerprints have been submitted for cross-referencing in relevant databases
	+ TX DPS, Local sheriff, FBI and MMP
* Determine cause and manner of death
	+ If needed, request an autopsy be performed
* Initiate and/or medically certify a death certificate (even if the individual is unidentified)
* Follow up with appropriate agencies regarding fingerprint analysis
* Regularly update digital tracking spreadsheet

**If fingerprints do not yield a match (i.e., the individual remains unidentified)**

* Upload case information to National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs)
	+ Ensure fingerprint card is uploaded to NamUs
* If needed, solicit (and authorize) anthropological and/or dental analysis
* Ensure DNA sample is collected and submitted to UNTCHI (Local, Forensic Pathologist, TX State/OpID, UNTCHI Anthropology)
* Ensure traceability of remains (remains still tagged with weatherproof morgue tag and body bag/container are labeled with case number using weatherproof tag)
* Record disposition
	+ Short/Medium-term = refrigerated storage (record storage location and shelf designation)
	+ Short/Medium-term = transfer remains to outside agency for additional analyses
		- Maintain chain of custody of remains (and any personal effects transferred)
		- Update digital tracking log
	+ Long-term = burial (record cemetery, section, lot, plot and GPS coordinates of burial
		- Ensure a burial marker with accurate case information is placed in correct burial location
	+ Long-term (2) = Archival storage of skeletal remains by TX State/OpID or UNTCHI (Provide JP Authorization for analysis and archival storage)
* Periodically follow up with outside agencies regarding case progress and update digital tracking spreadsheet accordingly

**If identification is confirmed**:

* Ensure family is notified in a timely and dignified manner
	+ Notify consulate and/or NGO for family contact when decedent is transnational
* Initiate a name change on the death certificate for legal identification
* Sign other institutional paperwork that confirms identification (if appropriate/applicable)
* Notify agency with remains (mobile morgue, funeral home, OpID/UNTCHI, cemetery)
	+ Communicate with agencies about transfer of remains, including the Sheriff’s Department and Funeral Home
* Verify remains are still accurately labeled prior to release