

Zachery Tims' Cause of Death Hearing Set for Wednesday

Madeline Tims will stand before a Manhattan State Supreme Court justice on Wednesday in her move to keep New York Medical Examiner officials from releasing the cause of death of her son, Zachery Tims.

Zachery Tims was found dead on the floor of a W Hotel room in New York City Aug. 12. More than three months later, the cause of death remains a secret. The Florida megachurch pastor's mother wants to keep it that way as the church he launched, New Destiny Christian Center, tries to move on.

"We are challenging what has never been challenged before, which is the medical examiner's practice of disclosing manner and cause of death," Tims' attorney Ricardo Oquendo, told the *Orlando Sentinel* in October. "The cause of death of any person who may be subject to an autopsy or toxicology should not be made public."

News reports indicate Tims, who died at the age of 42, had a plastic bag filled with white powder in his pocket, leading many to believe his death was associated with a drug overdose. By Tims' own testimony, he was instantly delivered from drug addiction when he was saved.

When the autopsy was inconclusive, toxicology reports were ordered. Although the results are in, they may never be released.

According to the *Sentinel*, Oquendo is arguing that the medical examiner's autopsy and toxicology reports are medical records and should not be released without permission from the family.

"If he [Tims] had just died of natural causes—which might be indicated in the medical examiner's report—that is not freely

disclosable to the public so why should a medical examiner's death certificate be?" he said.

Do you think the public has a right to know why Tims died?