

Tennessee Office of the State Chief Medical Examiner
Nashville, Tennessee
Is
Seeking to Hire
A Medicolegal Death Investigator

The Tennessee Office of the State Chief Medical Examiner is seeking a highly qualified, experienced medicolegal death investigator to fill a vacancy.

The office is charged with providing guidelines, education and training for county medical examiners, county medical investigators, law enforcement and others in death investigation and maintaining complete records of deaths investigated throughout the state.

The medicolegal death investigator would work with one other medicolegal death investigator to assist with these duties. Other duties would include investigating "certain types of deaths that are in the interests of the state, including mass fatality incidents, for the identification, examination and disposition of victims' remains, and instances that represent a threat to the public health or safety, or both" (TCA 38-7-103), assisting with collecting, reviewing and maintaining reports of investigation, the implementation of a statewide case management system, and providing an annual report on deaths reported to the medical examiner.

Position Title

Medicolegal Death Investigator

General Job Description

The position of the medicolegal death investigator exists within the Office of the State Chief Medical Examiner to provide investigative support to the state medical examiner, county medical examiners and their investigators. One of the main duties of this position is to assist in providing training to county medical examiners and their medicolegal death investigators, law enforcement personnel and others. The investigator will also assist with the collection, review and maintenance of reports of death and implementation of a statewide case management system. The medicolegal death investigator will assist in the investigation of sudden, unnatural, suspicious, or violent deaths; act as a liaison between the Office of the State Chief Medical Examiner and county medical examiner offices, law enforcement, and other investigative agencies, families of decedents, and the general public; and perform related work as required. The position reports directly to the state chief medical examiner.

Responsibilities:

- Provides medicolegal and/or forensic training, consultation, and education to county medical examiners, county medicolegal death investigators, law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, funeral home, legal, and other interested personnel/parties.
- Assists the chief state medical examiner with updating guidelines for death investigations for county medical examiners and medicolegal death investigators.
- Assists with collecting, maintaining and reviewing medical examiner records and data and implementation of statewide case management system.
- Assists counties with properly implementing and managing new or revised medical examiner offices, medical examiner personnel, and instituting operational procedures.
- Provides consultation and assistance to county medical examiner personnel in matters of legal relevance pertaining to the Tennessee Code Annotated and death investigation.
- Develops, cultivates, and maintains professional relationships with law enforcement, educational institutions, and other investigative agencies statewide and nationally.
- Receives and handles complaints and requests for information from county medical examiners, pathologists, funeral homes, law enforcement, insurance companies, media, and family members and with minimal supervision; provides correct information to address concerns of the same while maintaining a high level of confidentiality.
- Assists with creating, updating and implementing of standard operational procedures for safe and efficient functioning of the Office of the State Chief Medical Examiner.

- Works with other divisions within the health department to improve death investigation, certification and the collection of death statistics.
- Prepares detailed reports regarding inquiries, circumstances of death and completes follow-up reports as necessary.
- Assists with updating the mass fatality plan and ensuring immediate availability of supplies needed for mass disaster/emergency circumstances.
- Performs death scene recreations when necessary, including doll re-enactments, to help clarify the circumstances of death and gather information to complete death investigations.
- Attends meetings and workshops, and participates on committees, as assigned.
- Gathers information to advise county medical examiners and county medicolegal death investigators whether to accept or decline jurisdiction in cases of death.

As Necessary:

- Performs thorough and competent medicolegal death investigations, especially those in a complex and high profile context and gathers information to assist the forensic pathologist with identification of decedents through use of visual, circumstantial, or scientific methods.
- Collects evidence at the death/crime scene, including medical history, medications, psychological state at the time of death, etc. to help determine cause and manner of death; secures photographs of scene, interviews family members, friends, and witnesses of the deceased.
- Provides testimony during depositions and/or in criminal and civil courts of law when subpoenaed.
- Maintains proper documentation and chain of custody of evidence, clothing, personal effects, of the deceased individuals.
- Provides autopsy assistance by performing external examinations, collection of evidence, and documentation under the supervision of a forensic pathologist.
- Performs miscellaneous job-related duties as assigned.

Prerequisites:

- Knowledge of the principles and practices of forensic death investigation.
- Knowledge of the legal provisions concerning collection and admission of evidence in court.
- Knowledge of Tennessee laws as they pertain to the state medical examiner system.
- Working knowledge of medical terminology and medicine as it pertains to death and varying forms of trauma and common diseases and procedures.
- Knowledge of all federal and state laws, regulations, guidelines, and standards pertaining to the conduct of forensic/medical investigations.
- Strong oral and written communication skills.
- Strong organizational skills.
- Strong teaching skills with ability to provide training by formal lectures, online and practical application.
- Strong computer skills with previous experience with medical examiner case management systems, Word, Excel, Access, and Outlook.
- Ability to prepare and present accurate, objective and thorough reports.
- Ability to work independently or as part of a team and interact appropriately with others.
- Ability to perform routine office/clerical functions (typing, photocopying, data entry, etc.).
- Ability to interview witnesses and family members and communicate with survivors of the decedent.
- Displays high standards of ethical conduct, exhibiting honesty and integrity.
- Works with minimal supervision.
- Demonstrates responsible behavior and attention to detail.
- Ability to interpret a death scene, identify items of evidence and assess the condition of the body.
- Ability to take proper photographs of scene, body and evidence for documentation.
- Ability to secure facts through investigation and inspections and to analyze and interpret these facts effectively and objectively.
- Must be able to tolerate and work in hazardous environments, handle unpleasant sights, sounds, and odors in a sometimes stressful environment.
- Aligns behavior with the needs, priorities, and goals of the office.

Education, experience, and special requirements:

- Licensed as an emergency medical technician, paramedic, registered nurse or physician's assistant with the State of Tennessee OR be registered by or a diplomate of the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators.

- A bachelor's degree and at least two years of experience providing medicolegal death investigations is required. A master's degree and ABMDI certification is preferred.
- Employment is contingent upon satisfactory results of a criminal history background check and employment reference check.

Notes:

- The incumbent must have or be able to obtain within a month a valid Tennessee driver's license without restrictions.
- May work with blood or blood-borne pathogens and will require OSHA training.
- Work may require following extensive safety precautions and may include the use of protective equipment.
- Must be able to move approximately 100 pounds alone and must be able to assist in moving heavier objects/bodies.
- At the discretion of the State Chief Medical Examiner, work may be necessary outside of regular working hours, including extensive travel throughout Tennessee.
- Must be willing to share holiday, evening and weekend on-call status as required.

Salary Range: \$4,542-\$8,176 per month

Instructions for interested applicants:

Send letter of interest, resume and three references to:

Dr. Julia C. Goodin
State Chief Medical Examiner
Andrew Johnson Tower—7th Floor
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243
Julia.goodin@tn.gov

For best consideration, apply by June 30, 2018. Posting will be open until filled.

The State of Tennessee is an Equal Opportunity Employer.