



Whatcom County Medical Examiner's Office  
1500 North State Street, Suite 200  
Bellingham, Washington 98225

Phone: (360) 738-4557  
Fax: (360) 922-7054

## Medicolegal Death Investigator

**Compensation:** Dependent on Experience

### Summary

Under indirect supervision, on an on-call and/or scheduled basis, responds to and participates in the on-scene investigation of unnatural and/or unattended deaths, requests medical records, and prepares reports of death for the Whatcom County Medical Examiner as required. The Medical Examiner's Office is a 24 hour, 7 days a week, 365 days a year operation. The on-call investigator will remain available to respond to reportable deaths on a 24-hour basis, as per call schedule.

**Pay: Dependent on Experience**

### Duties and Responsibilities

1. Travels to the scene of homicides, suicides, accidental, questionable, and/or unattended deaths as required, on behalf of the Whatcom County Medical Examiner, in accordance with established call schedule.
2. Takes custody of remains in accordance with prescribed protocol and procedure; performs initial on-scene examination of remains; takes photographs and collects information relevant or related to cause and manner of death.
3. Conducts joint investigations of cause of death in association with law enforcement officials attending the scene.
4. Occasionally conducts external examination of bodies and collects bodily fluids, as directed.
5. Collects information and data and prepares reports on death investigations, in accordance with pre-established policy and procedure, ensuring accuracy and completeness of information.
6. Conducts follow up investigations as required.
7. Occasionally attends and provides evidence/testimony as required at pre-trial and/or court hearings, as may be required in individual cases.
8. Practices appropriate safety, environmental, and/or infection control methods.
9. Performs miscellaneous job-related duties as assigned.

### Minimum Job Requirements

- High School Diploma or GED
- Completed degree(s) from an accredited institution that are above the minimum education requirement may be substituted for experience on a year for year basis.



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## **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required**

- Knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and/or kinesiology.
- Ability to maintain quality, safety, and/or infection control standards.
- Ability to manipulate heavy objects.
- Ability to write reports containing technical data.
- Skill in the use of personal computers and related software applications.
- Ability to operate a motor vehicle by day and by night.
- Knowledge of death investigation protocol and procedure.
- Ability to investigate and analyze information.
- Ability to maintain emotional stability to cope with human suffering, emergencies, and other stresses.
- Skill in fingerprinting decedents and identifying trauma wounds.
- Knowledge of cameras and photographic procedures.
- Ability to work with stressful and/or unpleasant odors, procedures, and circumstances.
- Ability to understand and follow complex, detailed technical instructions.
- Ability to understand medical/forensic information and terminology.
- Ability to operate on a scheduled 24-hour on-call basis.
- Ability to provide legal depositions and testimony.

## **Conditions of Employment**

- A valid Washington State driver license is a requirement for this job.
- Successful candidate must submit to post-offer, pre-employment physical examination and medical history check.
- Pre-employment background investigation required.
- Required to follow the Whatcom County's influenza vaccination requirement.
- Must pass a drug test
- Must be come ABMDI Certified within 2 years from date of hire

## **Working Conditions and Physical Effort**

- Work may, on occasion, involve exposure to unusual elements, such as extreme temperatures, dirt, dust, fumes, smoke, unpleasant odors, and/or loud noises.
- Requires heavy physical activity. Must be able to physically lift, roll and move bodies as necessary in preparation for transportation.



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- Work may be performed on scenes that are often in tight, cramped, burned, or difficult locations.
- Work may on occasion involve exposure to potentially dangerous materials and situations that may require following extensive safety precautions and may include the use of protective equipment.
- Will work in a death environment with occasional noxious odors.
- Will work with blood or blood-borne pathogens and will require OSHA training.
- The employee may be required to work in an office/ or on call hours longer than an anticipated workday. There will also be times when the employee may be required to start earlier than scheduled and work later than scheduled.
- On-call status 24 hours per day when on duty. Must be able to work various shifts, to include days, evenings, overnight, weekends, and on call throughout the same periods.
- May require travel for training, commute to other agencies, investigation sites, which may include remote areas.

**Implemented Date: 12/05/2022**

**Revised Date:**