



# Skagit County Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I

<b>SALARY</b>	See Position Description	<b>LOCATION</b>	Mount Vernon, WA
<b>JOB TYPE</b>	Regular Full-Time	<b>JOB NUMBER</b>	DCMDI-1024
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	Coroner's Office	<b>OPENING DATE</b>	10/11/2024
<b>CLOSING DATE</b>	10/18/2024 5:00 PM Pacific		

## Summary

**NOTE: The Coroner's Office is Recruiting for a Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I only for this recruitment.**

The Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I and II is responsible for conducting death investigations occurring within Skagit County per Washington State Law (RCW 68.50.010). This includes ascertaining the cause and manner of death of individuals who die under the jurisdiction of the Coroner, responding to scenes and conducting thorough scene investigations, removing and transporting human remains, preparing comprehensive case reports, establishing the identity of the deceased, locating and notifying the decedent's next of kin of the death, and performing body examinations including sample collection.

Work is characterized by independent planning and decision making, logical reasoning, and problem solving, with considerable independence and is reviewed through meetings, status reports and results obtained. This position will be under the general supervision of the Coroner.

## Distinction between the Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I and II

### Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I

The Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I is the entry-level in this promotional classification series. The Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I is responsible for conducting death investigations occurring in Skagit County per Washington State Law (RCW 68.50.010) and perform the essential functions listed above.

- This is a Progression Promotion position that may be promoted to Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator II from Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I after meeting the below Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator II criteria, achieving a satisfactory evaluation, receiving a recommendation from the Coroner for promotion and sufficient budget availability for the position.

### Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator II

The Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator II is the second step in this promotional classification series based on years of experience, Washington State Medicolegal Forensic Investigation Certification, and American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators Certification (ABMDI). The Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator II serves as a lead Deputy Coroner/ Medicolegal Death Investigators and will perform the Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I duties along with assisting the Coroner with formal review of cases, scheduling and coordination of Medicolegal Investigator work assignments, vacations, sick leave, technical training, guidance and direction. This position will also be involved in training subordinate staff including Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I.

**- Salary upon hire is \$33.10 to \$35.46 per hour (step 1 through 3) depending upon qualifications.**

**- Progressive increases are based upon years of service with Skagit County, up to step 10 (top step is \$44.03/hr.). The Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I is Range 15 of the Non-Rep salary schedule.**

## Essential Functions

- Receives notification of deaths, determines jurisdiction within the Skagit County Coroner's Office standard guidelines.
- Responds to scene of death. Directs/conducts initial cause of death investigation. Examines body to determine and verify identification, physical description(s), injuries, conditions, and placement.
- Coordinates with law enforcement agencies in the preservation and collection of evidence, maintenance of chain of custody, and processing of the death scene.
- Gathers, secures, and transports human remains; collects, preserves and transports evidence relevant to the cause and manner of death from death scenes and autopsies.
- Interviews family, friends, witnesses, professionals, and other contacts associated with the deceased. Obtains statements, documents, and related factual evidence. Confers with medical, social and law enforcement agencies related to investigations. Consequence of error may result in incomplete investigations and improper handling of death scene evidence that could impact civil or criminal investigation.
- Locates and notifies next-of-kin; collects, secures and releases personal property to next-of-kin; releases human remains to funeral homes. Transfers evidence via chain-of-custody to law enforcement agencies.
- Writes complete, accurate and comprehensive death investigation reports, describing the scene and circumstances of the death to assist in the determination of cause and manner, of death.
- Administers proper procedures for collection of personal property, medications and evidence.
- Prepares decedent's for autopsy including obtaining weights and measurements, fingerprints, photographs, and radiographs.
- Draws and prepares toxicological samples for processing by laboratory.
- Assists with examinations as assigned including but not limited to completing external examinations of the body, performing eviscerations, collecting and preserving toxicology samples and evidence, maintaining detailed records, suturing and cleaning the body for release.
- Serves as backup to the autopsy assistant during peak workloads or mass disaster, including body preparation, evidence collection, and evidence release.
- Arranges for release of deceased to funeral home and assists with release of decedent's when requested.
- Maintains and inventories investigative equipment and supplies including transport vehicles.
- Operates and maintains office, scene, morgue, and autopsy equipment.
- Works with bereaved families with respect and compassion, provides courteous, high-quality service to members of the public and co-workers.
- Instructs and directs interns and volunteers.

- May be required to provide testimony in court.

### **Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator II**

- Performs all duties as the Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I.
- Provides training for Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I.
- Acts as point of contact for the office in the absence of the Coroner.
- Assists the Coroner with formal review of cases, certification of death certificates, scheduling and coordination of Medicolegal Investigator work assignments, vacations, sick leave, technical training, guidance and direction, and special assigned projects by the Coroner.

#### ***Supervisory:***

Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator II's serve as leads in the office.

#### **OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS:**

- Performs related duties as assigned. Related duties as required are duties that may not be specifically listed in the Position Description but are within the general occupational series and responsibility level typically associated with the employee's classification of work.
- Shifts may include days, nights, and weekends as assigned by the Coroner.
- Maintain regular scheduled office hours and handle requests from individuals and agencies regarding deaths.

### **Minimum Qualifications**

**Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills and abilities is qualifying. A typical path to obtain the required qualifications would be:**

#### **The Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator I**

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution in biology, chemistry, clinical pathology, medicine, or forensic science with course work in anatomy or physiology- **OR**
- An Associate's degree in biology, chemistry, clinical pathology, medicine, or forensic science with course work in anatomy or physiology **AND** two years of experience directly related to specific job assignment (death investigation or autopsy assistance)- **OR**.
- Four years of progressively responsible death investigation experience without a degree.
- **Must be at least 21 years of age.**

#### **The Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator II**

- Candidates for Deputy Coroner/Medicolegal Death Investigator II must meet the above requirements with a Bachelor's degree **AND** three years of experience directly related to specific job assignment (death investigation or autopsy assistance) -**OR**
- An Associates degree **AND** five years of experience directly related to specific job assignment (death investigation or autopsy assistance) -**OR**
- Seven years of progressively responsible death investigation experience without a degree.

- American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators (ABMDI) Certification.
- Washington State Medicolegal Forensic Investigation Certification.

### **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

- Required to successfully pass the registration examination of the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators (ABMDI) within (1) year of hire date.
- Required to obtain the Washington State Medicolegal Forensic Investigation Certification within (1) year of hire date.
- Required to successfully pass a background check.
- Required to carry an employee-issued cell phone while on and off shift for contact and communication.
- Required to work as a team member and must be able to independently utilize strong decision making and critical thinking skills that are within the scope of this position.

#### ***Requires knowledge of:***

- Applicable State and local laws pertaining to the Coroner investigations.
- Applicable State, local laws and standard practices related to the duties of the Coroner's Office including judicial requirements regarding the chain of custody for evidence collection, handling and preservation.
- Laws and standards of medicolegal death investigative practices and techniques..
- Medical terminology and their abbreviations, human anatomy and physiological functions of the human body.
- Death investigative interview techniques.
- Photography, x-ray, and autopsy techniques.
- Blood/airborne pathogens and universal precautions for personnel safety.
- Appropriate procedures for handling contaminated or infectious specimens or bodies.

#### ***Requires the ability to:***

- Communicate effectively with a variety of individuals representing diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds and function calmly in stressful situations, which require a high degree of sensitivity, tact, and diplomacy
- Possess a high level of attention to detail, initiative, and organizational skills
- Gather relevant factual information as to circumstances surrounding death
- Read, understand and gather pertinent information from medical records and other documentation
- Work with bodies exhibiting various degrees of decay, mutilation, infestation, and disease (including communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, AIDS, and hepatitis)
- Lift bodies of various weights in various environmental locations as a regular part of the job
- Research and prioritize information; prepare accurate, complete and concise reports
- Photograph decedent's and evidence, take x-rays, collect and label specimens, and assist in the performance of autopsies
- Manage multiple tasks.
- Effectively maintain good working relationships with management, co-workers, public and private officials, and the general public
- Work independent and as a part of a team; ability to delegate appropriately.
- Execute and follow policies, procedures, and oral/written directives.
- Anticipate and initiate collection of needed follow-up information and case progress.
- Maintain confidentiality and handle sensitive and confidential material.
- Maintain regular punctual attendance.
- Drive county vehicles in adverse conditions.
- Testify in a Court of Law when required.
- Learn methods of identifying bodies otherwise unrecognizable (Due to decomposition and fire related deaths), including, but not limited to, photography, fingerprinting, dental examination, x-ray and DNA comparison.

#### **Licenses and/or Certifications:**

- Valid Washington State driver's license.
- **National Death Investigators Certification** through American Board of Medico-legal Death Investigation (ABMDI) or become certified as a medicolegal death investigator with the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators **within 1 year of hire.**
- **Washington State Medicolegal Forensic Investigation Certification** offered through the Criminal Justice Training Commission **within 1 year of hire.**

## Supplemental Information

### WORKING CONDITIONS/PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

- The employee must regularly lift and/or move over 100 pounds on a routine basis.
- Specific vision abilities required by this job include the ability to adjust focus.
- The employee may be required to work in office and/or on call hours longer than an anticipated "normal" workday. There may even be times when employees will be required to start earlier than scheduled and work later than scheduled.
- 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.
- Must observe, abide and set example of all county and department policies, goals, and objectives.
- Be able to work well and complete duties under stress, and deadlines, while attending to multiple duties simultaneously.

Physical Requirements	N/A	Rarely (1-12%)	Occasionally (13-33%)	Frequently (34-66%)	Regularly (67-100%)
Standing				X	
Walking				X	
Climbing		X			
Sitting				X	
Stooping / Kneeling			X		
Lift/Carry up to 15 lbs.					X
Lift/Carry up to 30 lbs.					X
Lift/Carry up to 50 lbs.					X
Push/Pull up to 25 lbs. of exertion					X
Push/Pull up to 50 lbs. of exertion					X
Work below waist level					X
Work at waist to shoulder level					X
Work above shoulder level			X		
Reach further than arm's length				X	
Fingering				X	
Grasping / Holding				X	
Talking					X

Hearing				X
Seeing				X
Work in confined spaces	X			
Exposure to extreme temperatures	X			
Operate tools or machinery (incl. office equip.)			X	
Operate motorized vehicles/equipment				X
Work at heights/balancing		X		
Use/exposure to hazardous substances		X		

**Hazards:**

- May be exposed to the elements, weather conditions, fumes or airborne particles, toxic or caustic chemicals during a scene investigation and other physical hazards or obstacles to reach the death scenes.
- Must be able to tolerate working with a formalin fixative and or chemicals such as this.
- May have exposure at death scenes to; decomposed bodies, contagious diseases, vermin, and other difficult exposures common to death scenes
- May have exposure to blood borne pathogens and infectious diseases.
- Protective equipment shall be issued to the employee, and is required to be with the employee for use at all times.

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The statements contained herein reflect general details as necessary to describe the essential functions of this position, the level of knowledge and skill typically required, and the scope of responsibility, but should not be considered an all-inclusive listing of work requirements. Individuals may perform other duties as assigned, including work in other functional areas to cover absences or relief, to equalize peak work periods, or otherwise to balance the workload. Changes to the position description may be made at the discretion of the employer.

Skagit County, as an equal employment opportunity employer, encourages applicants from diverse backgrounds to apply.

It is the policy of Skagit County to follow all federal and state laws to ensure non-discrimination with regard to race, color religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status and/or physical or mental disability in its employment practices.

**Agency**

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