

State of Alaska FY2006 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Health and Social Services State Medical Examiner Component Budget Summary

Component: State Medical Examiner

Contribution to Department's Mission

The Department's mission is to promote and protect the health and well-being of Alaskans. In support of this mission, the State Medical Examiner's Office provides a statewide system for the medical-legal investigation of unanticipated, sudden, and violent deaths in order to provide accurate, legally defensible determinations of the cause of death and information to ensure appropriate follow-up on all child deaths in the state.

Core Services

As required by law, investigate and certify all deaths that occur within the state of Alaska that are a result of violence, suspected violence, deaths due to accidental causes, deaths that occur during incarceration, deaths that are associated with conditions that pose a hazard to public safety or health, and all unattended or unexplained deaths. The central facility in Anchorage provides post mortem examinations appropriate for each case referred and includes access to state-of-the-art forensic medical services, including forensic pathology and radiology, odontology, anthropology and the services of the Department of Public Safety Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory.

For those deaths that are investigated, establish identity of deceased if necessary, maintain records and evidence, provide legally defensible determinations of the cause and manner of death, and present findings of the investigation to courts, law enforcement agencies, and other parties with legitimate interests in the death.

Examine living persons to collect evidence as a result of previous injuries.

Participate in training personnel involved in death investigations, including forensic medico legal investigators, local physicians, state and local police, village public safety officers and other authorities.

FY2006 Resources Allocated to Achieve Results

FY2006 Component Budget: \$1,337,800	Personnel:	
	Full time	13
	Part time	0
	Total	13

Key Component Challenges

Increasing numbers of statewide autopsies, consults and teaching affect the ability for SME to maintain and perform the increased workload each year.

We will continue to bring the autopsy suite and embalming/decomp suite into compliance with OSHA regulations and standards.

There is a nationwide push for the development of a federally mandated Professional Standards of Practice law, which if adopted, would require all states to become National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) accredited. We will initiate a site review with NAME for 2005.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2006

Additional staff will allow work in the area of public health surveillance to detect new or unexpected infectious diseases and to provide information about preventable causes of death.

Major Component Accomplishments in 2004

2004 Caseload

Cases reported:	2,501
Cases autopsied:	144
Cases with consult:	739
Cases with inspection:	52

Appointed the Acting Chief Medical Examiner to Chief Medical Examiner.

Continued to develop and implement a quality assurance system for the State Medical Examiner's Office.

Continued to improve the quality of performance of the Child Fatality Review Committee. The committee added one new member from outside the Anchorage area.

Continued to support development of the Bone Committee, financially and with staffing.

Continued to improve the quality of statistical information by comparing previous years' case files processed to the current-year case files processed.

10 percent of old case files have been archived to magnetic media storage.

Three additional staff have attended training and are registered Medicolegal Death Investigators. The entire staff continues with CME training and certifications.

SME began implementation of a nationally recognized database system for the Medical Examiner's Office. We were able to purchase this system with Bioterrorism funding.

Statutory and Regulatory Authority

AS 12.65	Death Investigations and Medical Examinations
7 AAC 35	Embalming

Contact Information

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**State Medical Examiner
Component Financial Summary**

All dollars shown in thousands

	FY2004 Actuals	FY2005 Management Plan	FY2006 Governor
Non-Formula Program:			
Component Expenditures:			
71000 Personal Services	954.8	1,004.5	1,075.5
72000 Travel	9.6	8.5	8.5
73000 Services	205.5	205.5	199.9
74000 Commodities	37.5	43.5	53.9
75000 Capital Outlay	17.6	10.4	0.0
77000 Grants, Benefits	0.0	0.0	0.0
78000 Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0
Expenditure Totals	1,225.0	1,272.4	1,337.8
Funding Sources:			
1004 General Fund Receipts	1,225.0	1,272.4	1,337.8
Funding Totals	1,225.0	1,272.4	1,337.8

**Summary of Component Budget Changes
From FY2005 Management Plan to FY2006 Governor**

All dollars shown in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2005 Management Plan	1,272.4	0.0	0.0	1,272.4
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:				
-FY 05 Bargaining Unit Contract Terms: GGU	7.1	0.0	0.0	7.1
-Transfer Administrative Assistant to Admin Support Services	-62.2	0.0	0.0	-62.2
-FY06 Cost Increases for Bargaining Units and Non-Covered Employees	20.5	0.0	0.0	20.5
Proposed budget increases:				
-Expand work to include surveillance through death investigations	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
FY2006 Governor	1,337.8	0.0	0.0	1,337.8

**State Medical Examiner
Personal Services Information**

Authorized Positions		Personal Services Costs		
	FY2005 Management Plan	FY2006 Governor		
Full-time	13	13	Annual Salaries	734,217
Part-time	0	0	COLA	8,300
Nonpermanent	1	1	Premium Pay	39,850
			Annual Benefits	374,281
			<i>Less 3.92% Vacancy Factor</i>	(45,348)
			Lump Sum Premium Pay	0
Totals	14	14	Total Personal Services	1,111,300

Position Classification Summary

Job Class Title	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Juneau	Others	Total
Administrative Clerk II	1	0	0	0	1
Administrative Clerk III	1	0	0	0	1
Autopsy Assistant	3	0	0	0	3
Embalmer	2	0	0	0	2
Investigator I	3	0	0	0	3
Investigator II	1	0	0	0	1
Staff Physician	2	0	0	0	2
State Medical Examiner/Chief	1	0	0	0	1
Totals	14	0	0	0	14