



## MEDICAL EXAMINER OPERATIONS MANAGER

**Department:** Medical Examiner's Office  
**Job Class #:** 163200  
**Pay Range:** Professional 11

**FLSA:** Exempt  
**Represented:** No

Classification descriptions are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of duties performed by employees in this class and are not intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.

**GENERAL FUNCTION:** This is a highly specialized management and supervisory position in the Pierce County Medical Examiner's Office. The Medical Examiner Operations Manager is responsible for the operation, direct and indirect supervision of the Investigative and Technical Units, which are engaged in the investigation of deaths that fall under the jurisdiction of the Pierce County Medical Examiner. The quality of the Unit's work weighs heavily in properly investigating, examining, and collecting evidence for Medical Examiner cases to ensure successful and accurate certification of deaths in Pierce County which are of public and criminal concern. Successful prosecution of murder cases and the equitable resolution of civil matters depend on the integrity of the work produced by the Medical Examiner's Office.

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:**

- Manage, supervise, and coordinate activities of the medical investigator and autopsy technician units to include lead staff; determine work procedures, create and/or approve work schedules, leave requests, overtime, payroll, and assure adequate coverage during staffing absences; determine methods for expediting workflow; assign, review, and approve the work of subordinate staff; oversee and direct training of new investigative and technical employees by lead staff; oversee recruiting, hiring, training, staff development, and discipline.
- Investigate grievances involving subordinates and recommend resolution; ensure consistent interpretation and application of laws, rules, policies, and procedures.
- Conduct performance evaluations, establish and develop performance measures, create and track action plans and standards; counsel and direct employees to achieve improved performance and completion of action plans.
- Develop and maintain a formal training program designed to orient new medical investigators and autopsy technicians and to enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the existing staff; manage development of lead staff.
- Prepare investigative and technical staff for court appearances, testimony, and correspondence with prosecuting attorney and/or civil litigation to ensure professional and accurate testimony.
- Track certification, continuing education, and credits for compliance with County training requirements and maintaining the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators (ABMDI) registry certifications; manage training schedules and appointments, complete training certification books for ABMDI, create and manage all training requirements for the Department regarding safety, evidence, photography, annual training, Labor & Industries, and OSHA requirements.
- Perform a critical role as a subject matter expert in the identification and direction of business and functional requirements of software development; optimize database performance, troubleshoot, test, and recommend operational improvements; manage access and roles of users; configure complex reports, workflow, and other business needs; design and create training manuals for basic and advanced user activities; maintain business partnership with software development team and management.
- Serve as the Safety Officer for the Medical Examiner's Office; develop and maintain a health and safety program, track and maintain related records; perform related projects and research; serve as elected on the County Safety Committee; manage legal required postings on safety and right-to-know boards; maintain facility AED equipment, first aid kits, gurney maintenance program, and online MSDS for compliance with state and local regulations.

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- Manage, monitor, and research assigned annual budget areas; handle inventory, purchases, and maintain adequate supplies and equipment for investigative and technical units.
- Research, develop, implement, administer, and maintain policies, procedures, and programs related to all aspects of death investigation to encompass all duties performed by investigative and technical staff.
- Ensure that staff properly employ and update various computer systems managed by partner agencies, including but not limited to NamUs, WA State Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS), Rx Sentry Washington Prescription Review, Lexis Nexis and/or TLOxp, and Tacoma Pierce County Health Department Child Death Review (CDR).
- Serve as a liaison and manage relationships with agencies within and outside the County system for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of information, tracking requests, training, and handling difficult cases and issues to include, but not limited, to organ/tissue procurement agencies, local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, state and federal correctional facilities, Washington Homicide Investigator’s Association (WHIA), Washington Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (WACME), Pierce County Vital Records, the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD), the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators (ABMDI), National Crime Information Center (NCIC), Child Death Review (CDR) and the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME).
- Formulate, develop, and ensure implementation of and provide continuous review of Unit goals and objectives. Analyze, develop, recommend and/or determine improvements to ensure continued operation and system(s) effectiveness.
- Manage, track, and report “cold cases” to include unclaimed remains, unclaimed cremains, unidentified remains, and bones; work directly as liaison with the national database NamUs, the Washington State Patrol Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit (MUPU), Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), and NCIC to coordinate reporting and case updates; coordinate with the University of North Texas (UNT) for DNA analysis of cases.
- Manage files and casework for accuracy of content, appropriate grammar and spelling, and general thoroughness of casework output by investigative and technical staff.
- Manage in-house caseload to ensure decedents are examined and released per the policies and standards; deal with difficult situations with family members, bereaved family members, and complaints reported.
- Manage, oversee, and coordinate the PCME job shadowing program.
- Manage the Pierce County Indigent & Unclaimed program; review, direct for follow up, and approve cases for rotation funeral home assignment; manage personal property of unclaimed persons, follow guidelines of Budget & Finance regarding unclaimed property; create, implement, and update the Indigent & Unclaimed program as needed to comply with state regulations (RCW), write policies, and coordinate Request for Proposal (RFP) for contract funeral home; track attempts to identify and notify next-of-kin; approve payment for contract rotation funeral home and approve authorization of cremation; coordinate and report unclaimed decedents to the Veteran’s Affairs Missing in America Project (MIAP) and request reimbursement for disposition as necessary.
- Manage the personal property program to comply with state and local regulations; maintain policies; manage body sealing numbering system and assignment of numbers to employees.
- Maintain involvement in attending meetings, researching, and providing policies and feedback in emergency management and disaster planning to comply with County COOP and other requirements.
- Monitor and coordinate fleet vehicle repairs, maintenance, damage, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and other pertinent equipment to maintain ideal driving and use standards; maintain and update navigation systems.
- Monitor and report cases (MECAP) as needed to the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (USCPSC); maintain records of reports; monitor annual contract with the USCPSC; record cases reported and submit annual invoice for reimbursement consistent with the contract.

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- Organize and oversee facility maintenance, projects, and improvements.
- Create and update forms needed for casework documentation.
- Manage equipment custody records, assign, and track equipment for employee use; track Small & Attractive Equipment; monitor and report losses as necessary.
- Manage subordinates in Kofax scanning of records into the Electronic Records Management System (ERMS).
- Maintain effective communication with other County departments and staff to maintain systems, facilitate, and ensure adherence to policies and procedures.
- Provide support to upper management administrative and medical examiner staff.
- Maintain regular, predictable, and punctual attendance during regularly scheduled work hours at assigned worksites.
- Meet travel requirements of the position.
- Perform the physical requirements of the position; work within the established working conditions of the position.
- Work a flexible schedule, which may include evenings, weekends, and holidays.
- Direct and/or participate in complex or major death scene investigations; manage the correspondence between agencies to include law enforcement and prosecuting agencies.
- Attend continuing education and training opportunities; maintain ABMDI registry certification.

**OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS:**

- Perform other job functions as assigned.
- May take reports of death and perform death investigations.
- May train new medical investigators or technical staff.

**SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED:** The Medical Examiner Operations Manager is responsible for managing various programs, projects, administrative functions, and staff. Work is performed under general direction of the Medical Examiner and work assignments are carried out in accordance with objectives. Work is performed with latitude for independent action and judgment. In field situations the Operations Manager must be able to perform the job duties independent of direct supervision. Work is reviewed periodically for compliance with policies, procedures, regulations, legal requirements, and standards of performance. This position supervises subordinate staff.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT:** The work environment characteristics described herein are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of the position. The Medical Examiner Operations Manager works in a variety of working conditions, in inclement weather, and is required to safely drive a motor vehicle. Much of the work is performed in an office setting; however, the Operations Manager may perform work in the field at death scenes, and in a laboratory/morgue setting. Travel to various work sites is required on a daily basis as a routine part of the job. Incumbents are required to use considerable independent judgment and work under a stressful working environment. The Operations Manager is exposed to disease, illness, and bio-hazardous materials on a regular basis while in the field. There is exposure to and utilization of hazardous chemicals in the routine performance of the job duties on a daily basis. Prolonged periods of attention to detailed information is required. Work requires a flexible schedule including work on holidays, evenings, weekends, various shifts, and availability on-call.

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:** The physical demands described herein are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions. This position has a variety of physical requirements of varying degrees based on numerous differing work circumstances. A Medical

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Examiner Operations Manager may respond to a scene, which will require the employee to lift and transfer human remains to gurney and vehicle. Incumbents may need to work in tight quarters when examining a scene, climb rocks and other uneven terrain to access a scene, and drive long distances to various scenes for investigation. Required physical activities include walking, standing, sitting, digital dexterity, talking, hearing, seeing, balancing, climbing, crawling, kneeling, bending, stooping, twisting, crouching, reaching, lifting, carrying, dragging, pushing/pulling, and computer keyboarding/typing. An Operations Manager must be able to safely carry and lift heavy objects including dead bodies and safely drive a vehicle and operate other required equipment in a safe and lawful manner for the protection/safety of the public, self, and of other employees.

**KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES**

**Knowledge of:**

- Principles and practices of effective supervision.
- Principles of public administration and supervision.
- Administrative Guidelines, County and Department policies, procedures, and agreements.
- State and local laws regarding deaths and human remains.
- Methods, techniques, equipment, and practices of death investigation.
- Workplace safety standards including those by the Washington Department of Labor and Industries.
- Standard office practices and chain of custody procedures.

**Skill in:**

- Use of independent judgment and effective decision-making in the application of a wide variety of laws, policies, and procedures and in effective problem-solving.
- Project and program management, development, and implementation.
- Budget monitoring.
- Training staff and providing safety education.

**Ability to:**

- Plan, assign, and coordinate work of co-workers.
- Understand, interpret, and apply county, state, and federal regulations as related to the specific department.
- Analyze operations and take effective action to correct deficiencies and resolve problems.
- Work under stress and maintain composure when confronted with adverse situations.
- Explain clearly, verbally and in writing, information of a technical nature.
- Develop and write policies in a clear concise manner using appropriate grammar and punctuation.
- Conduct death investigations.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships, as necessitated, by the work of the position.
- Work effectively and productively with others.
- Communicate effectively verbally and in writing to audiences of various social, cultural, ethnic, educational, and economic backgrounds.
- Effectively coordinate, perform, and complete multiple duties and assignments concurrently and in a timely manner.
- Meet the travel requirements of the position, if any.
- Physically perform the essential job functions of the classification.

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY:**

Two or more years of college in a medical/legal discipline or related field; and five or more years of

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experience in death investigation including one year supervisory/lead experience is required. Registry Certification by the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigation (ABMDI) is required. Must maintain certification while employed in this classification. A four-year degree in a natural sciences discipline or a death investigation or health sciences-related field (e.g., nursing, forensic science, or criminal justice) is highly desirable. Additional experience/education which clearly indicates the ability to perform the work may substitute for the recruitment requirements.

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS AND/OR QUALIFICATIONS:** An employee in this position is subject to 24-hour availability and must be willing to work non-standard hours as required. Satisfactory physical condition, as evidenced by a County-approved physical examination, may be required as a condition of employment. Ability to successfully complete Pierce County background investigation which includes a criminal history check (Limited to the last 10 years) prior to starting employment. Possession of, or the ability to obtain, a valid Washington State Driver's License is required.