



## Prosecuting Attorney - Coroner 00100.843.

### Mission Statement

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To accurately determine the cause, manner, and mechanism of death for all cases that fall under the jurisdiction of the coroner by conducting the highest level of professional medico legal death investigation services.

### Function

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The Coroner is responsible for investigating and certifying the manner and cause of death for certain types of death occurring within the county. The Coroner relies on assistance from law enforcement, doctors, medical staff, hospice workers, forensic pathologists, forensic anthropologists, forensic odontologists, regional medical examiners, investigators, family members, biohazard and crime scene clean up companies, and next of kin to accomplish this work.

### Trends/Events

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#### Trends

- As the county's population increases, there have been more calls for service on an annual basis.
- Overdose deaths greatly increased in 2021 (34 total overdose deaths), doubling our previous 10 year peak (2016).
- Suicides deaths slightly decreased in 2021 but the overall 10 year trend is increasing.
- Accidental deaths (excluding drug overdoses) exceeded the 10 year peak with 24 deaths.
- Increasingly complex death scenes are requiring more time spent out of the office and on scene assisting with death investigations.
- State law now requires most county coroner offices to be accredited by 2025. In addition, coroners office employees are required to complete Death Investigator Certification.

#### Events (first six months of 2022)

- Coordinated 27 autopsies - 5 for 2021 death and 22 for 2022 deaths.
- Coordinated four of those autopsies with the King County Medical Examiner's Office.
- Coordinated three of those autopsies for victims of homicide.
- Hired a Deputy Coroner Medico legal Death Investigative Manager to oversee the Coroner Division.
- Continued COVID testing on deceased individuals with possible COVID-19 symptoms or exposure prior to death.

## Goals

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- Improve the professional development of all staff through training that comports with the requirements of the law.
- Collaborate with community stake holders to identify and respond to issues and concerns related to death investigations.
- Continue improving processes for monitoring and reporting statistics using MDI Log.
- Complete Death Investigator Certification for at least six staff as part of the continued effort to provide coroner services at a higher level to our community.
- Participate in all county-led Emergency Management Meetings that implicate the work of the Coroner’s Office.
- Purchase supplies, assemble emergency kits, and distribute the same across the county.
  
- Update policies and procedures as necessary to achieve accreditation.
- Hire part time Deputy Coroner Death Investigators to receive and respond to death calls during non-business hours.

## Challenges

- Lack of staff dedicated solely to the Coroner function increases the magnitude and severity of the present office resource challenge and limits the provision of service to the community.
  
- Limited availability of forensic pathologists create a challenge in scheduling autopsies and now necessitate autopsies to be hosted out-of-county.

## Workload Indicators

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	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	6/30/22 Actual
Total Coroner Cases	291	321	146
Autopsies	72	87	22
No Autopsies	219	234	122

## Grant Funding Sources

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This fund does not receive any grant revenue. State reimburses 40% of pathologist costs for autopsies. The state reimburses 100% of costs relative to the death of a child under 3 years of age.

## Revenues

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	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	6/30/22 Actual	2023 Budget
Taxes	0	0	0	0
Licenses and Permits	0	0	0	0
Intergovernmental Revenues	36,960	47,040	28,840	40,000
Charges for Goods and Services	0	0	0	0

Fines and Forfeits	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous Revenues	0	0	1,441	1
Other Financing Sources	0	0	0	0
Transfers In	0	0	0	0
General Tax Support	141,259	153,350	90,241	369,200
Total	178,219	200,390	120,522	409,201

## Expenditures

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	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	6/30/22 Actual	2023 Budget
Salaries and Wages	0	0	0	164,216
Personnel Benefits	0	0	0	39,885
Supplies	0	0	0	10,000
Other Services and Charges	178,219	200,390	120,522	195,100
Intergovernmental Services	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlays	0	0	0	0
Interfund Payments for Services	0	0	0	0
Transfers Out	0	0	0	0
Total	178,219	200,390	120,522	409,201

## Staffing

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	2020 Budget	2021 Budget	2022 Budget	2023 Budget
Full Time Equivalents	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00