



**FY 2013 PERFORMANCE PLAN
D.C. Office of the Chief Medical Examiner**

MISSION

The Mission of the Office of Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) is to ensure that justice is served and that the health and safety of the public is improved by conducting quality death investigations and certification, and providing forensic services for government agencies, health care entities and grieving families.

SUMMARY OF SERVICES

OCME provides forensic services to local and federal government agencies, health care providers, institutions of higher learning and citizens in the District and metropolitan area. Forensic services include: forensic investigation and certification of certain deaths (i.e., deaths occurring as a result of violence (injury) as well as those that occur unexpectedly, without medical attention, in custody, or pose a threat to public health); review of deaths of specific populations; grief counseling; performance of a full range of toxicological examinations; cremation approvals; and public dispositions of unclaimed remains.

PERFORMANCE PLAN DIVISIONS

- Offices of the Chief & Administration
- Death Investigation
- Forensic Toxicology
- Fatality Review

AGENCY WORKLOAD MEASURES

Metrics	FY 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual
Number of Postmortem Examinations performed: Full/Partial	1219	1078	1061
Number of Deaths Due to Traffic Accidents (i.e., cars, Metro, motorcycles)	47	53	36
Number of deaths due to hypertensive cardiovascular disease	328	325	288
*Number of fire deaths due to cigarette smoking	N/A	N/A	N/A ¹
*Number of deaths due to obesity	N/A	N/A	N/A
*Number of deaths due to jumping suicides (bridges)	N/A	N/A	N/A
*Number of deaths due to jumping suicides (Metrotrain)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of Court-related Activities – Death Investigation: Forensic Pathology (i.e., pre-trial conferences, depositions, testimony)	87	89	49
Number of DUI cases performed	415	915	927
Number of Court-related Activities – Forensic Toxicology (i.e., pre-trial conferences, depositions, testimony)	575	783	1140
Number of child deaths due to inappropriate bedding (with or without crib in the dwelling)	5	4	7
*Number of youth deaths due to homicide where youth education level is not age-appropriate	N/A	N/A	N/A

¹ Those measures with N/A in the data fields are measures to be evaluated beginning in FY2013. As such, data will be reported Year-to-Date on a quarterly basis during FY2013 and Actual at the end of FY2013.



Offices of the Chief & Administration

SUMMARY OF SERVICES

The Office of the Chief is responsible for oversight of the operational and programmatic functions of the OCME. The Office of Administration program provides administrative services and support to the staff of the OCME. These services include personnel management (timekeeping, training and educational development, and labor relations); contracting and procurement; risk, fleet, property and financial management; information technology and legal services; communications; and agency performance management.

OBJECTIVE 1: Maintain high quality office and system operations to support effective medicolegal death investigation, efficient and quality autopsy reporting, and accurate certification of deaths.

INITIATIVE 1.1: Modification of policies and procedures, training of staff and outreach to customers as a result of a transition to the Consolidated Forensic Laboratory.

During the first quarter of FY2013, the agency will move to its new location – the Consolidated Forensic Laboratory. As such, the first quarter will be spent preparing for the move and adjusting to the new facility. During the remainder of the fiscal year, the agency will review workflows and processes, as well as policies and procedures based on real-time operations and make required modifications. The new facility has a significantly different layout and involves the agency work located on the first, fifth and sixth floors, the loading dock and the parking garage of the facility. Staff training will be required to acclimate them the new policies and procedures and use of new equipment in the facility. There will also be a focus on outreach to the agency customers to ensure their awareness of the new location and new procedures, particularly next of kin (i.e., informational materials) and funeral directors (i.e., meeting/workshop with funeral directors). Completion Date: 9/30/13

INITIATIVE 1.2: OCME Website Enhancement.

The agency will conduct a website enhancement project throughout fiscal year 2013. The website is utilized to provide information to customers and the general public about the agency's programs and services. The enhancement project will include the implementation of a system where customers (i.e., funeral directors) can make online payments for services (i.e., cremation approvals). Because payment is required prior to rendering the service, online payment eliminates the necessity to come to the facility to pay and then come back when the service is complete. (The agency is evaluating the expansion of online payment for services to next of kin to obtain records.) In addition to providing services, the website is also utilized as an educational tool regarding the agency's programs and items considered to be in the public interest. The following sections and items will be added to the website:

- Credit Card Payment System Implementation (w/OCTO)
- Include a Statistics Section
- Possible links to NAMus



- Training & Seminars Section
- Internship Program Section
- Organ & Tissue Donations Section (possible links to NIH, WRTC)
- Public Health Corner/ME Injury Surveillance Reports (violent deaths, poisoning, trends in injury deaths in children, suicide, drowning etc.)
- Scientific Presentations
- Academic Affiliations
- Major Pamphlet (FAQs) in Spanish
- How to Become a Medical Examiner/Investigator??
- Virtual Tour of Facility

Completion Date: 9/12/13

[NO KPIs FOR THIS DIVISION]



Death Investigation

SUMMARY OF SERVICES

The Death Investigation and Certification Division is responsible for forensic pathology, forensic investigation and mortuary services. Forensic pathology involves conducting decedent examination, certifying the cause and manner of death and providing that information to next of kin and law enforcement, as well as designated government entities and interested parties. Forensic investigation includes evidence gathering, medical interpretation and provision of information to aid in the determination of the cause and manner of death. The purpose of mortuary services is to provide body disposition and autopsy support to forensic pathology staff and the funeral industry.

OBJECTIVE 1: Provide efficient, timely and accurate death investigation and certification of cases within the jurisdiction of the agency as statutorily mandated.

INITIATIVE 1.1: Meet National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) industry standards for autopsy and postmortem examination reporting.

After overcoming a large backlog and hiring challenges, for the first time in years, OCME met NAME standards for postmortem examination (autopsy) reporting during FY10. FY2010 was the first year that the agency had a full staff of medical examiners that remained steady. For FY2011, NAME standards required that 90 percent of reports of all postmortem examinations be completed within 60 calendar days from the time of autopsy. In FY2011, the agency fell slightly short of the target at 88.31 percent. However, NAME has since modified the standard to require that 90 percent of homicide cases be completed in 90 days and non-homicide in 60 days. In FY2012, the agency completed 80% of homicide cases in 90 days and 74% of non-homicide cases in 60 days. The agency continues to implement procedural and technological modifications to workflow process to improve effectiveness in this area. Completion Date: 9/30/13.

INITIATIVE 1.2: Conduct a Death Investigation and Certification Public Service Announcement Campaign focusing on various aspects of the death investigation and certification process.

The OCME will conduct a Death Investigation and Certification Public Service Announcement Campaign focusing on various aspects of the death investigation and certification process for the purpose of educating next of kin, District residents, other government agencies and the general public about medical examiner office procedures, such as: DNA processing; identification procedures; autopsy reporting; public disposition; cremation approvals; records requests; and toxicology testing and reporting, amongst other issues. The announcements will be in the form of pamphlets or one page FAQ sheets that will be placed in the agency lobby areas and on the website. Completion Date: 9/30/13.

INITIATIVE 1.3: Mass Fatality and Emergency Incident Planning – Guidelines.

The agency will develop a guideline focused on procedures to be followed during a mass fatality or emergency incident involving the medical examiner office. The pamphlet



would be targeted toward other District agencies or entities that would interact with the agency during such incidents and provide information on what the agency's role is and "what to do" in response to the incidents. The guideline would include the agency's jurisdiction, how to contact the agency and what to report and how the agency would typically respond. Completion Date: 9/30/13.

INITIATIVE 1.4: Promotion of the Field of Forensic Pathology.

Conduct a session for students at new CFL on "How to Become a Medical Examiner" and what are the duties. The new training facility within the CFL will be utilized for the training session. The agency previously conducted such sessions but can now train in-house and bring students to the new facility where the work actually occurs. This enhances the educational experience for the students. There is currently a shortage of medical examiners throughout the country which impacts the agency's hiring ability. The training also allows the agency to conduct educational outreach toward the promotion of the field of forensic pathology. Completion Date: 9/30/13



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - *Death Investigation*

Measures	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Target	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Projection	FY 2014 Projection	FY 2015 Projection
Objective #1						
Percent of reports of all postmortem examinations completed within 60 calendar days from time of autopsy* ELIMINATED in FY2012 AND REPLACED WITH THE TWO INDICATORS BELOW.	88.31	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percent of all postmortem examinations completed within 90 calendar days from the time of autopsy in homicide cases	N/A**	90	80	90	90	90
Percent of all postmortem examinations completed within 60 calendar days from the time of autopsy in all cases (homicides excluded)	N/A**	90	74	90	90	90
Percent of positively identified bodies ready for release within 48 hours	93.04	95	87.24	95	95	95
Percent of primary contacts (case decision for jurisdiction) made within 8 hours of case assignment to investigator. ELIMINATED IN FY2012 AND REPLACED WITH THE INDICATOR BELOW.	92.29	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percent of preliminary investigative reports complete for utilization in the daily case review morning meetings	N/A	95	90	95	95	95
Percentage of unclaimed cases where the public disposition process is initiated three days after positive identification	N/A	N/A	N/A	90 (Baseline)	90	90
Percent of mortuary scene response within one hour of transport notification by an investigator or medical examiner of an accepted case	91.50	95	86	95	95	95

*This measure is an industry standard, adopted in September 2009, by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) within its accreditation guidelines. The previous standard, which set forth a different percentage for completion of cases and varied deadlines for homicide and non-homicide cases, was used by the agency as a measure for FY09 and previous fiscal years.

**This measure is an industry standard adopted by NAME after the September 2009 revision in the recent year. The agency will work toward meeting this adopted measure.



Forensic Toxicology

SUMMARY OF SERVICES

The OCME Forensic Toxicology Laboratory maintains standards of practice for the detection, identification and quantitation of alcohol, drugs and other toxins in biological specimens. The Laboratory provides scientific support services to OCME in order that the agency may provide accurate death investigation and certification information in a timely manner to next of kin, law enforcement agencies, legal counsel and the community when required.

OBJECTIVE 1: Implementation of FACTS Forensic Toxicology Module

INITIATIVE 1.1: Implementation of Toxicology Case Management Module and full integration into the Agency's Case Management System (F.A.C.T.S).

The Forensic Toxicology Laboratory will procure, modify, test, and implement a new computer based case management system in order to improve overall work flow. The new database module will be interfaced with the Medical Examiner's current system and will enhance daily communication as well as statistical reporting. Completion Date: 9/30/13.

OBJECTIVE 2: Provision of Statistical Reporting of Public Interest

INITIATIVE 2.2: Contribute to the scientific community through academic presentation/publication of toxicological findings.

As part of its function to contribute to the scientific community specifically, the forensic toxicology laboratory will assess toxicological findings, conduct trend analyses and present at least one specified study to key stakeholders (i.e., scientific community, health care entities, law enforcement and academic community). The goals are to: 1) highlight data findings and trends relevant to stakeholders; 2) provide training for staff in analyzing findings and trends and presenting such information in an academic setting; and 3) provide visibility to the District's forensic toxicology laboratory. Completion Date: 9/30/13/



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – *Forensic Toxicology*

Measures	FY2011 Actual	FY2012 Target	FY2012 Actual	FY2013 Projection	FY2014 Projection	FY2015 Projection
Objective #1						
Percent of toxicology examinations completed within 90 calendar days of case submission*** TO BE ELIMINATED AND REPLACED BY THE TWO INDICATORS BELOW.	99.62	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percent of negative toxicology examinations completed within 30 calendar days of case submission	N/A	90	88	90	90	90
Percent of positive toxicology examinations completed within 60 calendar days of case submission	N/A	90	98	90	90	90

***This measure is an industry standard, adopted in September 2009, by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) within its accreditation guidelines. The previous standard, which set forth a different percentage for completion of cases and varied deadlines for negative and positive cases, was used by the agency as a measure for FY09 and previous fiscal years.



Fatality Review

SUMMARY OF SERVICES

The Fatality Review program reviews the circumstances of the deaths of individuals within certain populations, including their interaction with District government services. The purpose of the reviews is to provide analysis and recommendations to the public and District entities serving defined populations, so they can address systemic problems, provide better services and be held accountable. The current Fatality Reviews include the Child Fatality Review Committee (CFRC) and Mental Retardation & Development Disability Fatality Review Committee (MRDD FRC).

OBJECTIVE 1: Provide analysis and make recommendations that result in improved services and outcomes for those populations served by the Fatality Review Unit.

INITIATIVE 1.1 Enhanced Reporting of Key Factors Recognized in Deaths Reviewed by the Fatality Review Division.

The Fatality Review Unit will enhance reporting of factors recognized during deaths of the three populations regularly reviewed: children developmentally disabled and persons involved in domestic violence. For example, statistical reports will be provided on the following: 1) the educational level of child deaths with the manner of death as homicide; 2) the number of domestic violence incidents a person is involved in preceding their death where domestic violence is a contributing factor; and 3) a comparison of the deaths of the developmentally disabled population with OCME's general death population. Completion Date: 9/30/13.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – *Fatality Review*

Measures	FY2011 Actual	FY2012 Target	FY2012 Actual	FY 2013 Projection	FY 2014 Projection	FY2015 Projection
Objective #1						
Percent of CFRC fatality reviews held within six months of notification of the death	88	75	45	80	80	80
Percent of MRRD fatality reviews held within three months of receipt of the investigative report from DHS/DDS and determination of the cause and manner of death	78	75	100	80	80	80