

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY
POSITION DESCRIPTION**

July 2026

POSITION TITLE: **Medical Examiner**

DEPARTMENT: Medical Examiner

PAY BASIS: Salaried

PURPOSE AND SUMMARY:

Conducts medical and legal investigations into deaths occurring within Winnebago County in accordance with Wisconsin statutes, regulations, case law, and County ordinances. Provides leadership for the County's death investigation system, ensuring accurate evaluation of cause and manner of death, effective coordination with partner agencies, and consistent application of investigative standards. Conducts analytical review of case patterns and trends to support public safety, health initiatives, and departmental decision-making.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Provides comprehensive medicolegal death investigation services in Winnebago County and ensures investigations are conducted in a timely, objective, professional, and legally defensible manner. Determines cause, manner, and contributing factors pertaining to each death. Classifies deaths as homicide, suicide, accidental, or due to natural causes.
2. Provides strategic and operational leadership for Medical Examiner's Office, including oversight of the contracted services, records management, budget administration, and continuous improvement of investigation practices. Uses case findings, mortality trends, and interagency collaboration to help identify emerging issues and inform county prevention and response efforts related to overdose deaths, suicide, and other preventable fatalities, while maintaining the independence and integrity of the Medical Examiner function.
3. Organizes, distributes, and delegates work to subordinates fairly and impartially. Provides clear and appropriate direction to employees. Provides training and coaching to subordinates. Ensures that staff has the resources and flexibility to perform, improve, and learn in their jobs. Keeps open communication with subordinates, listens to them, and provides feedback. Positively motivates, mentors, and leads employees. Provides appropriate and timely performance evaluations for all subordinates.

ADDITIONAL ESSENTIAL DUTIES:

1. Conducts or directs that autopsies be performed as may be required to determine cause of death.
2. Reviews and evaluates scene findings, medical history, witness statements, law enforcement reports, toxicology results, autopsy findings, and other relevant evidence to support accurate death certification and case determination.
3. Identifies patterns, trends, and emerging concerns related to overdose deaths, suicides, violence, accidental injury, and other preventable fatalities, and communicates appropriate findings to County leadership and partner agencies consistent with applicable law, confidentiality requirements, and the independent role of the Medical Examiner.

4. Leads the daily operations and long-range planning of the Medical Examiner's Office, including staffing, scheduling, operational readiness, records practices, contracted services, and service delivery improvements.
5. Builds and maintains effective working relationships with public safety, healthcare, behavioral health, forensic, court, and community partners to support effective death investigation, lawful information-sharing, and coordinated response to county mortality issues.
6. Performs physical examinations and tests incident to any manner of a criminal nature up for consideration before either a court or the district attorney's office, upon request.
7. Performs cremation examinations and approves cremation permits.
8. Testifies in court and at related proceedings regarding investigative findings, autopsy-related facts, cause and manner determinations, and other matters within the scope of the position.
9. Investigates all deaths in hospitals which occur within 24 hours of admittance and any other deaths falling within the jurisdiction of the Medical Examiner under Wisconsin law.
10. Maintains files and security of confidential information.
11. Participates and supports community groups that focus on preserving life.
12. Makes death notifications to family members or next-of-kin.
13. Requests and reviews all necessary medical records and law enforcement reports to assist in the determination as to cause and manner of death.
14. Prepares an annual departmental budget and oversees and monitors compliance with budget targets. Develops and monitors contracted services for department.
15. Manages all administrative, operational, and professional aspects of the Medical Examiner's Department, including policy implementation, workflow oversight, compliance, interagency coordination, records management, and service improvement.
16. Maintains flexibility to work day, evening, night, and weekend hours as necessary. This includes being available both on call and to respond to calls and inquiries.
17. Performs other related duties as may be assigned.

WORK RELATIONSHIPS:

1. Reports to County Executive.
2. Supervises Chief Deputy Medical Examiner, Deputy Medical Examiner, and Administrative Associate – Medical Examiner.
3. Works with other county departments, law enforcement agencies, attorneys, courts, healthcare providers, community organizations, survivors and family members of the deceased, and the public.

REQUIRED EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, TRAINING, AND CERTIFICATION:

1. Bachelor's degree in nursing, biology, emergency medicine, forensic science, criminal justice, or a related field.
2. Experience in medicolegal death investigation, emergency response, law enforcement, public health, or related analytical roles preferred.
3. Experience working with medical records, investigative documentation, evidence handling, court testimony, interagency coordination, or death scene response preferred.
4. Supervisory, lead worker, or department management experience preferred.
5. A combination of education and experience that provides the skills necessary to perform the job may be substituted for the specific education or experience requirements.
6. Certification by the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators, or ability to obtain such certification within two years of hire.
7. Possess a valid Wisconsin Driver's License and meet the Winnebago County policy for minimum automobile insurance requirements.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:

1. Knowledge of the principles and practices of medicolegal death investigation and the ability to apply them in a thorough, objective, and legally defensible manner.
2. Knowledge of, or ability to learn and apply, Wisconsin statutes, regulations, ordinances, and case law relevant to the duties of the Medical Examiner, including death investigation, documentation, records, and evidentiary responsibilities.
3. Ability to work effectively with the public, staff, healthcare providers, legal professionals, law enforcement, and other partners while demonstrating professionalism, courtesy, sound judgement, and a high level of courtesy and cooperation.
4. Ability to maintain confidentiality.
5. Ability to maintain emotional stability in stressful or confrontational situations.
6. Strong organizational skills and ability to meet deadlines.
7. Competence in computer applications including Microsoft Office and data systems.
8. Ability to review, interpret, and synthesize information from medical records, law enforcement reports, witness information, scene findings, autopsy reports, toxicology results, and other investigative materials.
9. Ability to identify, analyze, and communicate trends and emerging issues in overdose deaths, suicide, and other preventable fatalities, and to contribute meaningfully to multidisciplinary prevention and response efforts.
10. Knowledge of medical terminology preferred.
11. Ability to work with limited supervision.
12. Ability to demonstrate sensitivity and compassion when dealing with survivors.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. Ability to perform most work from a sedentary position.
2. Ability to function in situations encountered in a normal office setting.
3. Ability to use standard office equipment including telephone, computer, printer, photocopier, and scanner.
4. Ability to travel to other County departments and locations.
5. Ability to respond to death scenes when required, including varied environmental conditions.