Kitsap County Coroner’s Office
Reserve Investigative Assistant Program

Position Description

Title: Reserve Investigative Assistant Coroner
Department: Coroner’s Office
Reports To: Chief Deputy Coroner and Coroner

Major Function and Purpose
A Reserve’s primary purpose is to augment the Kitsap County Coroner’s Office in death investigations, promote public health and safety, and participate in community education.

Supervision Responsibilities
This is a non-supervisory position.

Responsibilities
The responsibilities described below in no way imply that these are the only duties to be performed. Reserves will be required to follow any other position-related instructions and perform any other position-related duties requested by a supervisor. This position description reflects general details to describe the principal functions of the position, the level of knowledge and skill typically required, and scope of responsibility. The position description should not be considered an all-inclusive listing of work requirements.

Reserves are expected to augment Deputy Coroners in scene management and documentation. Reserves will be held to the highest standards and traditions of Medicolegal Death Investigations.

A Reserve must honor and observe the importance of maintaining confidentiality of all information acquired from his/her contact with the Coroner’s Office and other agencies involved in investigations.

Reserve will be required to attend meetings beyond regular duty work hours and may also be available for emergency call-ups when the need arises. Duty work hours are to be pre-arranged with the Chief Deputy Coroner, and may be subject to change at any time at the discretion of the Chief Deputy Coroner.

All Reserves will be required to attain and demonstrate a thorough working knowledge of office procedures related to the Coroner’s Office.

Duties include but are not limited to: answering and routing phone calls, managing paperwork, performing next-of-kin searches, obtaining medical records, and other duties as assigned.
Once Reserves have learned all office procedures previously listed (and demonstrated these skills to the Chief Deputy Coroner or appointed designee), they will be allowed to assist Deputy Coroners on field calls. Reserves will be trained to assist in death scene recovery, removal and transport of human remains, assist in scene photography and collection of medical history. Reserves are to attend monthly Reserve meetings. A minimum of nine Reserve meetings must be attended per calendar year.

Reserves will be required to perform 16 hours of service per calendar month. This time commitment does not include attendance at meetings or training.

All duties will be performed in accordance with departmental and County rules and regulations in conformance with assignments and instructions received from Deputy Coroners, the Chief Deputy Coroner, and the Coroner. The only exception to this concerns issues related to Union matters, representation, and grievance procedures. Performance standards are to meet and/or exceed the requirements of the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Department of Justice as defined in the National Guidelines for Death Investigations.

Reserves are responsible for following the Chain of Command. The Chain of Command is as follows: 1) Chief Deputy Coroner; and 2) Coroner. If any disciplinary issues arise they will be handled using the Chain of Command.

A Reserve must possess excellent interpersonal relationship and communication skills. A high level of maturity, emotional stability, and the ability to exercise sound judgment under stress, particularly in crisis situations, is essential to the performance of duties. He/she must be able to respond to varying situations with tact and diplomacy. Furthermore, he/she must be able to handle stressed, hostile, or irrational persons – whether due to grief, mental disability, drugs, socio-economic barriers, or other factors.

A Reserve Investigative Assistant Coroner must display a pleasant and professional demeanor when in contact with Coroner’s Office staff, the public, and other agencies.

Reserves are responsible for maintaining good personal health, practicing preventive medicine, and using universal precautions in connection with all potentially bio-hazardous materials.

Reserves will receive training in the use of a variety of duty-related equipment and be expected to utilize all apparatus and equipment proficiently, appropriately, and safely.

In the event of local emergency situations, Reserves may be called to assist Coroner’s staff.

**Working Conditions**

Work will be performed both indoors and outdoors, and Reserves may be required to perform normal duties in all weather conditions.

Physical exertion is required for lifting, which may often be up to 50 pounds unassisted, and in excess of 50 pounds with assistance.

Reserves may be exposed to biohazards such as blood and potentially infectious materials.
Requirements
To be eligible for a Reserve position, at the time of filing an application, an applicant must:

- Be at least 21 years of age, with no felony convictions, domestic violence, or child abuse convictions.
- Have a valid Washington State driver’s license and an acceptable driving record at the time of appointment.
- Have the ability to read, write, and communicate fluently in English.
- Have the willingness and ability to maintain strict confidentiality.
- Possess a high school diploma or GED.
- Be in good mental and physical health, with no major health problems, including back or joint defects. Applicants will be requested to provide a doctor’s written documentation of a physical examination: the physical will be at the applicant’s expense.
- Be capable of passing applicable testing, such as, but not limited to, an oral board, FBI fingerprint check, criminal background check, psychological tests, and medical and drug examinations.
- Be capable of satisfactorily passing prescribed courses of training pertinent to assigned duties.

Application Process
Applicants desiring to become Reserve Investigative Assistants shall agree to the following:

A. Oral board/written examination.
B. Personal History/background check including criminal history.
C. FBI fingerprint check.
D. Medical examination.

The application process is multi-phase, and all applicants must successfully pass one phase before moving on to the next. Only qualified applicants will be invited to participate in the next step.

Phase I Kitsap County Volunteer Application
All applicants are required to complete the Kitsap County Volunteer Application.

Phase II Screening
The Kitsap County Volunteer Coordinator will interview and screen potential candidates. The Volunteer Coordinator will ensure that the potential candidate meets minimum standards and will obtain permission to conduct a background check. Failure to pass the background investigation shall be cause of disqualification.

Phase III Supplemental Application
A supplemental application will be requested from those who successfully pass Phase I and Phase II of the selection process. The supplemental application will address employment history and motivation for joining the Kitsap County Reserve program.

Phase IV Written Test
A written test MAY be administered and will include comprehension of English, technical data, math, and vocabulary. The tests will be scored and ranked. A score of 75 percent is considered a passing score.

**Phase V  Presentation and Tour**
After successfully completing the written test, a presentation and tour of the Coroner’s Office and morgue facility will be scheduled.

**Phase VI  Oral Boards**
Kitsap County Coroner’s Office staff will comprise the panel of interviewers. Applicants will be scored and ranked following completion of the oral boards.

**Application Evaluation**
The Kitsap County Coroner’s Office will evaluate each applicant’s performance on all phases of the application. Evaluations will be used to determine the final list of applicants for appointment. The Chief Deputy Coroner and the Coroner will select the most qualified candidates for appointment.

**Training and Classifications**
All selected applicants will be scheduled for training in the Kitsap County Coroner’s Office Reserve Program. The training courses will include:

- **Classroom Training – 30 Hours of Instruction**
  Classroom Training must be completed before any duty hours are logged. An introduction to the Coroner’s Office and its role in the community will be presented. Following this instruction, 30 hours of Death Scene Management Training classes will be provided. A further 10 hours of training will be devoted to CPR and Bloodborne Pathogen Training. All classes will conclude with a test on the material presented. A score of at least 80% is required to pass. Each test may be taken no more than two times to achieve a passing score. Failure to pass any test on the second attempt will result in dismissal from the program. Successful completion of the classroom training will result in the candidate being awarded the designation of **Reserve Investigative Assistant**. A Reserve will be tasked with learning and performing duties within the Coroner’s Office. Duties will include, but are not limited to: answering and routing phone calls, managing paperwork, performing next-of-kin searches, obtaining medical records, and other duties as assigned.

- **Field Training – 40 Hours of Instruction**
  Once a Reserve has completed the Classroom Training and appropriate office exposure, usually 80 hours (where Reserves will attain and demonstrate a thorough working knowledge of office procedures), he or she will be eligible to undertake Field Training. Field Training will take place in the company of a Deputy Coroner and will consist of attending death scene investigations and attending to the associated investigative duties. Written assignments and tests will continue during the Field Training at the discretion of the supervising Deputy Coroner. Deputy Coroner conducting the Field Training or the Chief Deputy Coroner will preside over evaluations. Results of all tests and evaluations will be forwarded to the Chief Deputy Coroner for inclusion in the Reserve’s...
Successful completion of the Field Training will result in the Reserve being awarded the designation of Reserve Investigative Assistant. This designation will enable the Reserve to attend death scene investigations under the guidance of Deputy Coroners and partake in other Coroner’s Office duties at the discretion of the Chief Deputy Coroner and the Deputy Coroners.

To progress from Applicant to Reserve Investigative Assistant, the Reserve must demonstrate a sound understanding of the operations and duties of the Coroner’s Office. He or she must be thoroughly familiar and comfortable with assisting in both administrative and death scene investigations. Good performance evaluations, a high level of motivation, and outstanding attendance are necessary to progress to the designation of Reserve Investigative Assistant. Following the promotion to Reserve Investigative Assistant, the Reserve will be given the opportunity to play a more active role in death investigations at the discretion of the Chief Deputy Coroner and the Deputy Coroners.

**Dress Code**
Appropriate clothing, which conforms to the Coroner’s Office Dress Code, shall be the responsibility of each Reserve Investigative Assistant. Equipment deemed necessary to perform duties safely by the Coroner or Chief Deputy Coroner will be provided by the Kitsap County Coroner’s Office.

All Reserve Investigative Assistants are responsible for appearing neat and clean when on duty or representing the Coroner’s Office. The dress code consists of the following:

- “Business-Casual”-style pants for both males and females. Colors may vary.
- Polo style shirts, either long sleeve or short sleeve. Colors may vary.
- Appropriate footwear – boots or fully enclosed shoes that are appropriate with the above-mentioned clothing. Colors selected must be appropriate with clothing combinations, and be chosen with a strong consideration for safety. Appropriate styles shall be chosen according to specific assignments. Fire boots will be worn when necessary.

The Coroner or Chief Deputy Coroner must approve any embroidered or embossed logos, badges, emblems, shields, lettering, or name displayed on any articles of clothing worn on duty by a Reserve.

Furthermore, the purchase and maintenance of clothing worn while on duty shall be the responsibility of the Reserve. All department-issued equipment and material shall be returned immediately upon leaving or taking a leave of absence from the Reserve Program. All department-issued equipment shall be returned in good working condition.

**Leave of Absence**
Leave shall be granted for reasonable grounds and exigent circumstances. Requests must be made in writing and submitted to the Chief Deputy Coroner.
**Reserve Identification Cards**
Identification cards should not be displayed at any time while off duty unless necessary for authorized Kitsap County Coroner’s Office Reserve business.

Identification cards shall not be used in conjunction with any other type of employment.

Reserves shall be bound by the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures, and will adhere to relevant sections of this Department’s Code of Ethics while on or off duty.

This is a voluntary position and there is no compensation for services rendered. All Reserves serve at the pleasure and discretion of the Coroner and may be dismissed at any time with or without cause. Discipline shall also be totally within the discretion of the Coroner or his or her designee.