

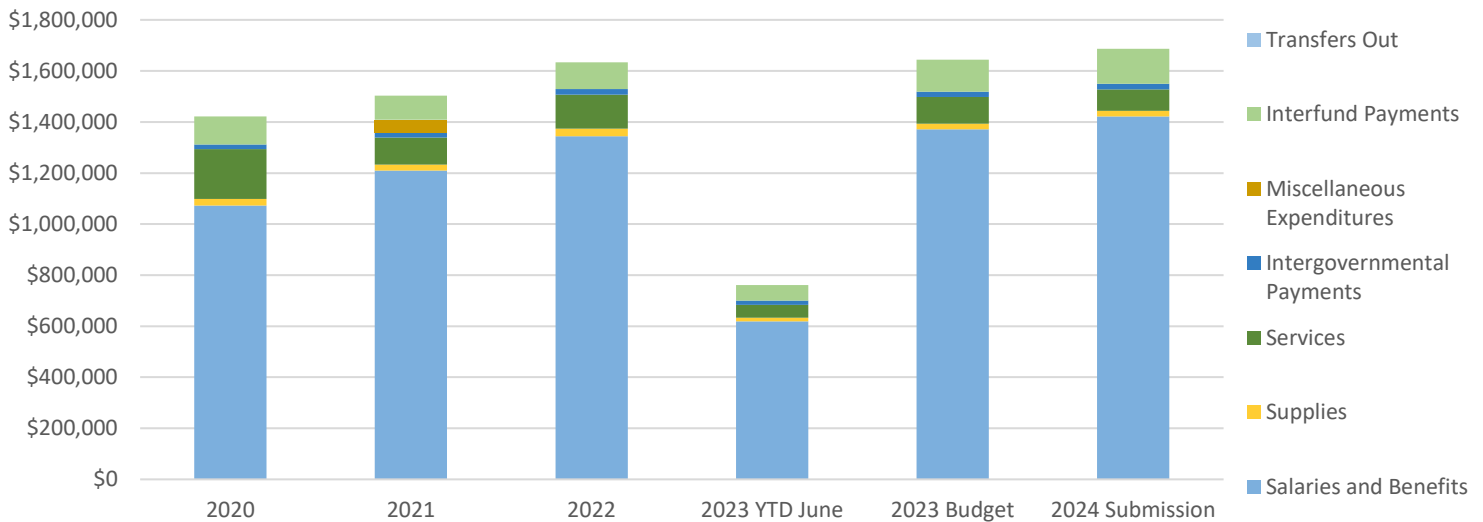
# Medical Examiner

Appointed Official: Dr. Lindsey Harle

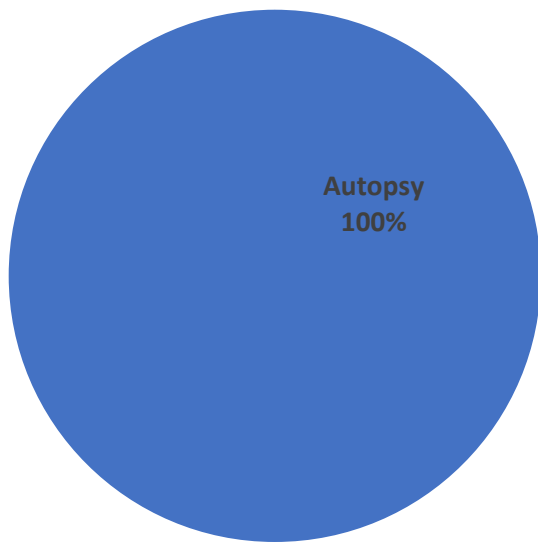
**Mission:** Provide medicolegal death investigation services to determine the manner and cause for jurisdictional deaths that occur within Kitsap County, as mandated by the Revised Code of Washington (RCW)68.50.010.

Total Revenue	\$0.07 M
Total Expense	\$1.69 M
Total Budget Change	\$0.04 M
Total FTE	10.40

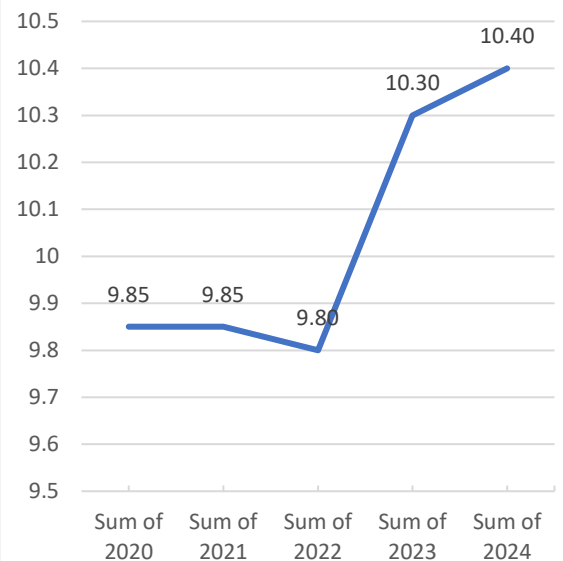
## Summary of Expenses



## Programs



## Total FTE



	2020	2021	2022	2023 YTD June	2023 Budget	2024 Submission	Change
Salaries and Benefits	\$1,072,811	\$1,209,144	\$1,344,149	\$619,082	\$1,371,086	\$1,421,280	\$50,194
Discretionary Spend	\$239,018	\$200,197	\$184,303	\$81,515	\$147,898	\$127,898	-\$20,000
Other	\$109,822	\$93,157	\$105,793	\$60,850	\$125,136	\$137,784	\$12,648

## Medical Examiner - Budget Request

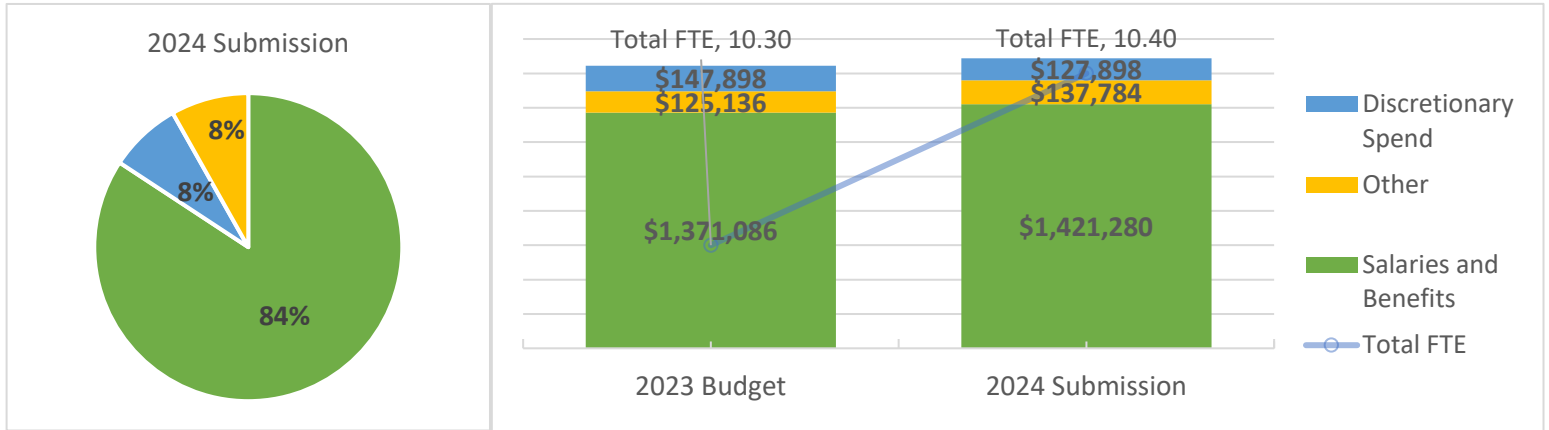
		2023	2024	
Summary	Type	Budget	Change	Submission Description
Salaries and Benefits	Salaries and Benefits	\$1,371,086		
			\$30,000	Shift from contract labor to extra help
			\$20,194	Steps and Attrition
			\$1,421,280	
Discretionary Spend	Supplies	\$22,500		
			\$22,500	
Discretionary Spend	Services	\$104,121		
			-\$30,000	Shift from contract labor to staff expense
			\$10,000	Increased travel for onsite training post Covid
			\$84,121	
Discretionary Spend	Intergovernmental Payments	\$21,277		
			\$21,277	
Discretionary Spend	Miscellaneous Expenditures	\$0		
			\$0	
Other	Interfund Payments	\$125,136		
			\$718	IS Rates
			\$4,731	Insurance Services
			\$7,199	ER&R
			\$137,784	
Other	Transfers Out	\$0		
			\$0	
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>\$1,644,120</b>	<b>\$42,842</b>	<b>\$1,686,962</b>

# Medical Examiner

Fund Type: General Fund **\$1.69 M**

## Autopsy

Budget Change: \$42,842



### Purpose

Provide medicolegal death investigation services to determine the manner and cause for jurisdictional deaths that occur within Kitsap County, as mandated by the Revised Code of Washington (RCW)68.50.010.  
 Assist grieving family members and friends with coping with the loss of their loved ones.  
 Provide regional autopsy and other forensic pathology services. Pursue having 100% of eligible organ and tissue donors having their wishes fulfilled.  
 Provide training, education, and data to other agencies and the public in an effort to minimize untimely deaths.

### Strategy

Promote a safe and healthy community by: providing accurate and timely statistical data, continual interaction with partnering agencies, and continued community outreach.  
 We will promote the service aspect of our office in providing professional and objective, yet compassionate services to our families and other stakeholders.  
 We will promote modern, up to date, services for our community by emphasizing continual training of our personnel, improvement of our capabilities, and maintenance of our facilities in a planned and financially responsible manner .

### Results

Participated in High School Mock Crashes in Kitsap County.  
 Provided facility tours and/or talks for schools, civic organizations, and the public.  
 Participated in "Cribs for Kids" program - providing cribs to families who can't afford one (at no cost to the public), and provided training on safe sleeping. Added on-site testing capabilities, through grant awards, to identify substances found at death scenes, and on site identification of potential overdose deaths, and the substances responsible. Automated reporting to Organ Procurement organizations .

	2020	2021	2022	2023 YTD June	2023 Budget	2024 Submission
<b>Revenue</b>	\$ 153,246	\$ 254,012	\$ 213,114	\$ 69,835	\$ 68,750	\$ 68,750
<b>Expense</b>	\$ 1,421,650	\$ 1,502,498	\$ 1,634,245	\$ 761,446	\$ 1,644,120	\$ 1,686,962
<b>Total FTE</b>	9.85	9.85	9.80		10.30	10.40

Performance Measures	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Medicolegal death Investigator training	AMBDI cert within 2 years	ABMDI cert & IACME facility Certification	ABMDI cert and in-service equipment cert	ABMDI cert, IACME training Outside training	ABMDI cert Outside training for 30% of investigators
# of deaths reported Per full-time employee	100 per investigator	110 per investigator	110 per investigator	110 per investigator	100 per investigator
Autopsy	156	310	289	210	220
Organ/Tissue donation	250 referrals	300 referrals	300 referrals	300 referrals	300 referrals

Performance Measures	Narratives & Data
Training and Certification Maintenance.	All staff need to be aware of advancements in training, technology, and procedures. During the pandemic, in-person training was limited to the point of being nearly non-existent. To make up for this, professional organizations were offering online training, and reimbursing offices for expenses to attend what limited in-person training was available. This practice has or is ceasing. In order to keep our staff, including our doctor and our investigators current on training for practical application, as well as for meeting certification requirements, it will be necessary to send at least 30% of our staff to at least one outside training event per year.
Case load management And Autopsy	Maintaining a caseload of 90-100 cases per year per investigator is optimum. We have worked in concert with the board of commissioners to eliminate unnecessary work by eliminating the need to contact our office with non-jurisdictional deaths. This allows our staff to focus on mandated investigations. We have also discontinued contracts for autopsy service with Mason County to manage our autopsy case load within certification standards. We are improving our autopsy tech staffing by one part-time employee to better handle autopsy caseload and have brought in forensic pathologists from surrounding counties as extra help to cover our pathologists PTO and other leave needs.
Organ/Tissue donation	This is an element of our service provision that is prescribed by Washington State Law; however, no performance metrics are outlined in the RCW. We have incorporated reporting for donation into our reporting software, so it is done automatically when the investigator enters the case. We also charge a facility fee for tissue and cornea recovery, providing some revenue as well.

**How does the organization measure its performance toward the County's strategic goals?**

**How has the organization's staffing changed in the last five years and why? Please discuss vacancy, turnover and overtime if applicable.**

We have increased investigative staffing by 0.5 FTE, we have added a staff forensic pathologist, and a staff autopsy technician. We have eliminated the Chief Deputy Coroner position and are no longer utilizing outside contract pathologists. This has brought us to being a Medical Examiner's office from Coroner's office. Turnover has been robust, yet not unforeseen. Overtime utilization has been minimized with part-time positions. Overtime utilization is up this year due to challenges in filling part-time positions.

**How does the organization monitor remote employee productivity and ensure accountability?**

We do not employ any remote employees.

**What changes would the organization need to make if it were necessary to implement budget reductions of 10% in 2025?**

In order to accomplish any type of budget reduction, we would have to eliminate a full-time staff position, which would only equate to an approximately 8% budget reduction. The net result would be limited staff availability and limiting of response hours.

**Please discuss any non-essential functions that the organization provides beyond mandated services.**

We are providing screening of indigent decedents for qualifying veterans service for burial at Tahoma. This is incorporated into the program supervisors' administrative duties and consumes minimal time. We are also continuing with in-person death notifications for next-of-kin whenever possible. While not mandated, it does provide a much more personal service than a phone call and allows us the ability to assess the need for, and offer, other services as needed. This is also consuming minimal time.

**Are there any initiatives in place to enhance employee engagement and satisfaction, and/or retention strategies to reduce turnover and associated hiring costs?**

In addition to requiring national certification, we are trying to get staff into regular training. Not only does this allow for outside peer interaction, it supports confidence in and for the employee, especially when handling lower frequency, but higher consequence investigations, such as homicides. We are also as accommodating as possible with PTO. In addition to a schedule that allows for 4 days off per week, we are trying to give employee's a better work/life balance, as well as additional avenues to allow for mental and physical rest from a job that can be exceptionally grueling in both realms.

**What emerging challenges do you expect the organization to face in the next three years?**

First and foremost is the lack of certified forensic pathologists. We are also dealing with an exponentially increasing workload due to increased population, coupled with an unprecedented increase in the number of overdose related deaths. Our workforce will be facing a potential 50% turnover in the next year due to retirements alone. Filling vacant positions with personnel who are qualified and able is becoming increasingly difficult. It has taken over 6 months to fill a part-time investigator, and a part-time autopsy tech position this year. Both candidates who were found will require several months of training before being able to work independently and will also need to become certified.