

BUDGET SUMMARY

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Recommended Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures					
Personnel Costs	3,753,088	4,986,998	4,389,320	4,435,440	46,120
Operations Costs	1,809,137	1,476,403	1,325,838	1,315,838	(10,000)
Debt & Depreciation	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlay	344,332	21,706	0	0	0
Interdepartmental Charges	62,232	37,929	53,923	173,876	119,953
Total Expenditures	\$5,968,789	\$6,523,036	\$5,769,081	\$5,925,154	\$156,073
Revenues					
Other Direct Revenue	3,400,739	3,436,330	3,611,531	3,861,246	249,715
State & Federal Revenue	1,010,926	723,969	137,150	137,150	0
Total Revenues	\$4,411,666	\$4,160,299	\$3,748,681	\$3,998,396	\$249,715
Tax Levy	\$1,557,123	\$2,362,737	\$2,020,400	\$1,926,758	(\$93,642)
Personnel					
Full Time Pos (FTE)	36.00	37.00	36.00	36.00	0.00
Overtime \$	139,789	115,922	110,000	111,066	1,066
Seasonal/Hourly/Pool	0	0	0	0	0

Department Mission:

The mission of the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner’s Office is to uphold the highest standards of professionalism in death investigation; to provide timely, accurate, and legally defensible determinations of cause and manner of death; to support public health and safety by identifying and helping prevent avoidable deaths; to protect the legal and personal interests of decedents and their families; and to serve Milwaukee County with integrity, accountability, and transparency.

Department Description:

Milwaukee County Medical Examiner’s Office investigates deaths in Milwaukee County as outlined in Wisconsin State Statutes (979.012). According to the 2020 United States Census, Milwaukee County has a population of 939,489. The racial and ethnic composition is approximately as follows: 55% White, 30% Black or African American, 15% Hispanic and Latino, 4% Asian, less than 1% Native American, and 2% other. The goals of the Medical Examiner’s Office align with national standards for forensic death investigation, with a strong emphasis on professionalism, accuracy, and community service. The core goals include investigation of suspicious, unexplained and violent deaths to determine the cause and manner of death; identifying patterns in deaths such as infectious diseases or drug overdoses to inform public health initiatives and reduce preventable deaths; providing expert testimony and forensic evidence to assist in criminal investigations and legal proceedings; and protecting the interest of deceased individuals and their families.

Major Changes

- The amount charged for referral autopsies increase approximately 3% to \$1,850 per autopsy with additional charges applied for any extra tests or consultations if required. Referral autopsy projections remain generally stable, with current data indicating consistent annual case volumes; however, mild fluctuations cannot be entirely discounted.
- The issuance of cremation permits continues to rise as an increasing number of families opt for cremation over traditional burial, based on data from the past five years.
- The volume of Toxicology Laboratory testing conducted for the University of North Dakota shows an overall upward trend based on data from the past five years.

- The contract with Randal Schneider, Ph.D., LLC has transitioned from an annual agreement to an hourly payment structure. Dr. Schneider provides oversight for the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner’s Office Forensic Toxicology Laboratory in accordance with the accreditation standards of the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) and the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB).
- Two new management software systems acquired in 2025, Forensic Advantage and Clinisys are scheduled to go live in January of 2026. To ensure smooth workflow, 1.0 FTE Business Intelligence Analyst has been added to the 2026 budget to assist with system maintenance, integration, and reporting.
- In 2026 the Medical Examiner's Office will move to the new Forensic Science Center Facility.
- The Medical Examiner’s Office will not have a Forensic Pathology Fellow during 2025-2026 academic year.
- In accordance with WI state statute 59.365 an increase in fees charged for death certificates, cremation permits, and body transport may not exceed the annual percentage change in the U.S. consumer price index for all urban consumers, U.S. city average, as determined by the U.S. department of labor, for the 12 months ending on December 31 of the year before the increase. This amount has been determined to be 2.9% percent, resulting in the following prices for 2026: Death Certificate \$168, Cremation Permit \$393, Body Transportation Fee \$168. The volume of Toxicology Laboratory testing conducted for the University of North Dakota shows an overall upward trend based on data from the past five years.

The following contracts are included in the 2026 Budget in lieu of separate review and approval from the County Board during the fiscal year:

Vendor	Contract Description	Contract Amount
Jefferson County	Revenue contract in which MCMEO provides contracted autopsy services.	\$99,000
Kenosha County	Revenue contract in which MCMEO provides contracted autopsy services.	\$275,000
Outagamie County	Revenue contract in which MCMEO provides contracted autopsy services.	\$99,000
Ozaukee County	Revenue contract in which MCMEO provides contracted autopsy services.	\$99,000
Racine County	Revenue contract in which MCMEO provides contracted autopsy services.	\$275,000
Randal Schneider PhD LLC	Randal Schneider, PhD, LLC Dr. Schneider provides oversight of the Forensic Laboratory as per accrediting standards of the National Association of Medical Examiner's (NAME).	\$82,500
North Dakota University	Revenue contract in which MCMEO provides forensic toxicology services to the University of North Dakota.	\$176,000
Versiti	Revenue contract for space and refrigerator space lease	\$99,000
Waters	Waters Service Contract	\$158,612
Agilent	Agilent Service Contract	\$44,884
Hitachi	Hitachi Preventive Maintenance	\$3,125
Pipette	Pipette Calibration	\$3,000
Parker Nitroflowlab	Parker Nitroflowlab Preventive Maintenance	\$6,125

MEDICAL EXAMINER STRATEGIC GOALS

Achieve full accreditation for Medical Examiner Office and Toxicology Laboratory.

Goal met on
3/30/2025

Our laboratory has received full ISO accreditation. Full National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) accreditation was awarded on March 30, 2025.

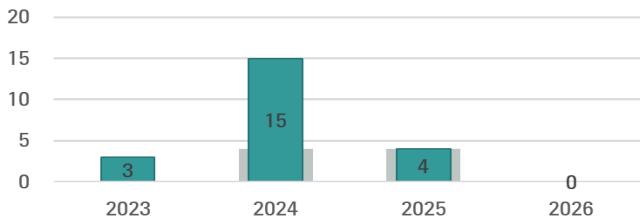
Create partnership with local epidemiologist.

Goal target completion date
12/31/2025

Partnership anticipated to be finalized by the goal date.

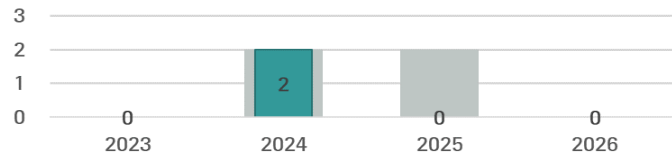
Prioritize continuing education seminars for four employees annually by July 2025.

■ Goal met ■ Goal not met



Promote positive working relationships by increasing office luncheons and outside work activities with a goal of at least two outside work activities annually.

■ Goal met ■ Goal not met



MCMED staff organized participation in the Cream Puff 5k and attended a Milwaukee Milkmen baseball game to promote a collegial environment and positive working relationships among staff.

Maintain competitive compensation for investigative and autopsy staff within 10% of Hennepin County, MN Office.

■ Goal — Actual Compensation Deviation



Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office is an office of similar population, case load, and case type. The compensation calculated is an average for investigative and autopsy staff only.

Strategic Program Area: Medical Examiner

Service Provision: Mandated

How We Do It: Program Budget Summary

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures	5,968,789	6,523,036	5,769,081	5,925,154	156,073
Revenues	4,411,666	4,160,299	3,748,681	3,998,396	249,715
Tax Levy	1,557,123	2,362,737	2,020,400	1,926,758	(93,642)
Full Time Pos (FTE)	36.00	40.00	36.00	36.00	0.00

What We Do With It: Activity Data

Activity	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Cremation Permits	6,450	6,300	6,500	6,500
Death Certificates	2,362	2,174	2,200	2,200
Deaths Investigated	8,287	8,279	9,000	9,000
Milwaukee County Exams	1,429	1,399	1,500	1,500
Referral Exams	485	429	450	450

How Well We Do It: Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education	Unaccredited	Accredited	Accredited	Accredited
Accreditation by the National Association of Medical Examiners			Accredited	Accredited
Pass Rate for Forensic Board Exam	Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass

Strategic Overview:

The Milwaukee County Medical Examiner’s Office is dedicated to delivering professional, high-quality services to the people of Milwaukee County and professional collaborations across Wisconsin. The Office remains firmly aligned with national standards for forensic death investigation, emphasizing professionalism, accuracy, and community service. Core objectives include conducting thorough investigations of suspicious, unexplained, and violent deaths to determine cause and manner; identifying patterns such as infectious disease outbreaks or drug-related fatalities to inform public health strategies and reduce preventable deaths; providing expert forensic analysis and testimony to support criminal investigations and legal proceedings; and upholding the dignity and rights of the deceased and their families.

In 2026, the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner’s Office will continue to focus on strengthening staffing, balancing operational demands with accreditation standards, managing caseloads, and meeting community service expectations. Specific goals include:

Maintaining accreditation through both the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) and the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB).

Establishing a formal partnership with a local epidemiologist to enhance public health collaboration.

Ensuring competitive compensation for investigative and autopsy staff, targeting pay levels within 10% of those at the Hennepin County Medical Examiner’s Office in Minnesota.

Encouraging continuous education amongst staff members..

Strategic Implementation:

The Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office is committed to achieving its 2026 goals through a focused strategy that supports operational excellence, accreditation standards, and community service expectations. Key areas of strategic implementation include:

Accreditation Compliance: Ongoing adherence to standards set by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) and the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) will be ensured through regular internal audits, staff training, and process improvements.

Public Health Collaboration: A formal partnership with a local epidemiologist will be established to enhance data sharing, trend analysis, and collaborative responses to public health concerns such as drug overdoses.

Continuing Education: Annual professional development will be a priority for all staff. This includes monthly in-service training, participation in the office's annual Forensic Science Seminar, and support to attend regional and national conferences, either in person or virtually.

Workplace Culture: The Office will promote a positive and collaborative work environment through staff engagement initiatives, improved internal communication, and recognition of professional contributions.

This Strategic Implementation Plan establishes a framework for the Office to achieve its 2026 objectives while upholding the highest standards of forensic science. It reaffirms the Office's commitment to excellence in service delivery and its ongoing contribution to public health and safety throughout Milwaukee County and surrounding communities.