

BUDGET SUMMARY

Category	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Budget	2027 Requested Budget	2026/2027 Variance
Expenditures					
Personnel Costs	4,986,998	4,389,428	4,435,440	4,434,064	(1,376)
Operations Costs	1,476,403	1,308,077	1,315,838	1,455,838	140,000
Debt & Depreciation	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlay	21,706	73,496	0	0	0
Interdepartmental Charges	37,929	38,298	173,876	129,239	(44,637)
Total Expenditures	\$6,523,036	\$5,809,298	\$5,925,154	\$6,019,141	\$93,987
Revenues					
Other Direct Revenue	3,436,330	3,155,134	3,861,246	4,268,928	407,682
State & Federal Revenue	723,969	580,230	137,150	58,093	(79,057)
Total Revenues	\$4,160,299	\$3,735,365	\$3,998,396	\$4,327,021	\$328,625
Tax Levy	\$2,362,737	\$2,073,934	\$1,926,758	\$1,692,120	(\$234,638)
Personnel					
Full Time Pos (FTE)	37.00	36.00	36.00	35.00	(1.00)
Overtime \$	115,922	110,863	111,066	111,066	0
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 Vision:

To be a nationally recognized leader in forensic death investigation, advancing public health, public safety, and the administration of justice through excellence in forensic science, innovation, regional collaboration, and compassionate service to our community.

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 Medical Examiner's Office will complete its first full year of operations in the Forensic Science and Protective Medicine Center. The new facility serves as a regional hub for forensic science, public safety, and emergency management, strengthening collaboration with the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory and Milwaukee County Office of Emergency Management while enhancing service delivery throughout southeastern Wisconsin.

- Referral county autopsy and external examination fees will increase by \$300 per case in 2027 to help offset increased operational costs. Additional charges for specialized testing and consultations will continue to apply as needed. Referral service demand is expected to remain stable based on historical case volumes and existing intergovernmental agreements.
- The Funeral Home Prepayment Policy will be revised in 2027 to apply to funeral homes with outstanding balances of \$20,000 or more, reduced from the current threshold of \$25,000. The policy is intended to improve collection of outstanding receivables and ensure revenues earned by the Medical Examiner's Office are collected in a timely and responsible manner.
- The Forensic Toxicology Laboratory will continue to expand testing capacity and regional partnerships in 2027. Investments in personnel, instrumentation, and laboratory infrastructure will support increased testing volumes, enhance service delivery, and position the laboratory for future growth opportunities both within and outside Milwaukee County.
- 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. For budget planning purposes, the Medical Examiner's Office is conservatively estimating the allowable CPI increase for 2027 at 2.5%. Based on this estimate, the proposed 2027 fees are as follows: Death Certificate \$172, Cremation Permit \$402, Body Transportation Fee \$172.
- The Medical Examiner's Office has implemented a new E-Billing platform for 2027 that enables funeral homes and partner agencies to pay invoices online via credit card or ACH. The platform improves payment convenience, increases collection efficiency, and enhances accounts receivable management.

**The following contracts are included in the 2027 Budget in lieu of separate review
and approval from the County Board during the fiscal year:**

Vendor	Contract Description	Contract Amount
Outagamie County	Revenue contract in which MCMEO provides contracted autopsy services.	\$115,000
Jefferson County	Revenue contract in which MCMEO provides contracted autopsy services.	\$115,000
Kenosha County	Revenue contract in which MCMEO provides contracted autopsy services.	\$300,000
Washington County	Revenue contract in which MCMEO provides contracted autopsy services.	\$115,000
Racine County	Revenue contract in which MCMEO provides contracted autopsy services.	\$300,000
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 FSPMC space lease	\$152,642
Versiti	Revenue contract to provide operational services to Versiti at FSPMC	\$60,000
Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin	Revenue contract to provide space for eye donation recovery.	\$10,000
Waters	Waters Service Contract	\$158,612
Agilent	Agilent Service Contract	\$44,884
Delta Medical Systems	Service Contract for CT Scanner	\$99,978
North Dakota State Forensic Examiner's Office	Revenue contract in which MCMEO provides forensic toxicology services to North Dakota State Forensic Examiner's Office	\$60,000

Strategic Program Area: Medical Examiner**Service Provision:** Mandated**How We Do It: Program Budget Summary**

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Expenditures	6,523,036	5,809,298	5,925,154	6,019,141	93,987
Revenues	4,160,299	3,735,365	3,998,396	4,327,021	328,625
Tax Levy	2,362,737	2,073,934	1,926,758	1,692,120	(234,638)
Full Time Pos (FTE)	40.00	40.00	36.00	35.00	(1.00)

What We Do With It: Activity Data

Activity	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Target	2027 Target
Cremation Permits	6,300	6,558	6,500	6,500
Death Certificates	0	2,135	2,200	2,200
Deaths Investigated	8,279	8,928	9,000	9,000
Milwaukee County Exams	1,399	1,284	1,500	1,500
Referral Exams	429	456	450	450

How Well We Do It: Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Target	2027 Target
Accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education	Unaccredited	Accredited	Accredited	Accredited
Accreditation by the National Association of Medical Examiners		Accredited	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 fostering professional collaborations across Wisconsin. The Office remains firmly aligned with national standards for forensic death investigation, emphasizing professionalism, accuracy, accountability, 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, overdose trends, and other public health concerns to help 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 2027, the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office will continue focusing on operational excellence within the new Forensic Science and Protective Medicine Center while balancing increasing service demands, accreditation standards, and community expectations. Specific goals include:

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

Continuing implementation, optimization, and integration of the Forensic Advantage and Clinisys management systems to improve operational efficiency, reporting capabilities, and data analysis.

Strengthening partnerships with public health organizations, epidemiologists, law enforcement agencies, and regional stakeholders to improve collaboration and enhance mortality trend monitoring and prevention efforts.

Ensuring competitive compensation for investigative, laboratory, and autopsy staff, targeting pay levels within 10% of comparable peer agencies, including the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office in Minnesota.

Supporting staff recruitment, retention, wellness, and professional development through continuing education, in-service training, conference participation, and employee engagement initiatives.

Expanding regional partnerships and contracted services, including referral autopsy and toxicology testing programs, to strengthen long-term operational sustainability.

Enhancing public transparency, operational reporting, and data-driven decision-making through improved analytics, technology integration, and collaboration with Milwaukee County departments and external partners.

Strategic Implementation:

The Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office is committed to achieving its 2027 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 2027 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.