

AUTOPSY TECHNICIAN

JOB PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

The Autopsy Technician performs technical work in support of the Medical Examiner/forensic pathologist in conducting autopsies and other postmortem examinations. The primary role of the Autopsy Technician is preparing the body for examination (photographs, fingerprints, x-rays), assisting with external and internal examinations (dissecting, eviscerating, retracting, using bone saw, etc.), collection of evidence and samples, preparing the body for release, and cleaning bodies, instruments, and examination rooms. Additionally, the Autopsy Technician manages flow of specimens, evidence, and inventory throughout the morgue and is the primary contact for funeral home and vendor personnel within the morgue building.

CLASSIFICATION DISTINCTIONS

This is a single level classification within the Medical Examiner's Office. The work supports the efforts of the Medical Examiner through assisting in autopsies, maintaining the cleanliness of the examination rooms, and managing workflow and inventory. The work is distinguished from the Medical Examiner Investigator class by the absence of field investigations of death scenes and preparation of death investigation reports.

KEY OR TYPICAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (including but not limited to the following):
Responsible for receiving and releasing bodies and maintaining the proper chain of custody with regard to the human remains and to any clothing, personal effects, jewelry, or other property/evidence/prescription medications that may accompany decedent. Ensure proper handling of digital records and any paperwork associated with receiving or releasing of bodies.

- Prepares examination room for autopsies and external examinations including laying out supplies and instruments, transferring of body to autopsy table and x-ray table, undressing and documenting clothing and all property received with the body, removing blood, body fluids, and other debris from body.
- Prepares body for autopsy; may weigh and measure human and non-human remains; may open bodies and/or remove organs or tissues under direction from the Medical Examiner; sutures and cleans body upon completion of autopsy.
- Special preparation of body and tissue of unknown decedents for identification purposes. Which may include dissection or disarticulation.
- Data entry and tracking of records, evidence, property, sample submission/lab requests, etc. into Medical Examiner database as part of chain of custody.
- Respond to calls outside of traditional work hours as necessary to transport bodies and assist in postmortem examinations.
- Ensures proper handling, transfers, labeling and storing of specimens.

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- Assists in the collection and preservation of evidence, including biological samples, histological slides, fingerprints, and related records.
- Transfer of biological samples and organs to, laboratories, medical facilities, or other consultants
- Clean and maintain work area and equipment using sanitation/decontamination, safety, and biohazard control measures.
- Cleans various areas of the Medical Examiner's Office that include, but are not limited to, the examination rooms, prep/receiving room, elevator, and refrigerated storage unit. Cleaning includes mopping, vacuuming, emptying trash, and appropriate disposal of biohazardous waste.
- Transports bodies from death scenes including hospitals, nursing homes and other locations involving driving a motor vehicle.
- Operates x-ray equipment, takes photographs; coordinates handling, storage, and transfers of digital images, and maintains related records.
- Monitors level of supplies, conducts inventories, obtains quotes, requests supplies as needed.
- Researches and obtains quotes for autopsy suite equipment.
- Provides assistance to other Medical Examiner staff.
- May assist in clerical tasks including filing, labeling, typing, coping documents, and mailing reports.
- May assist in review of digital case materials for proper naming scheme.
- May assist the Medical Examiner in training of new hire Autopsy Technicians in performing duties.
- Responsible for maintaining fatality management supplies.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Training:

Six months experience handling bodies in a morgue, mortuary, or similar setting; or course work in biology, preferably including anatomy; or any combination of education or experience which would demonstrate the ability to perform the work.

Special Requirements:

- Requires a motor vehicle operator's license and proof of a safe driving record.
- Successfully pass a background investigation (including a criminal records check and fingerprinting).
- Carry an employer-issued cell phone while on shift.

Knowledge of: safety and biohazard control measures; use and operation of x-ray equipment; basic record keeping practices; cleaning and sanitizing practices.

Ability to: physically perform the essential functions of the job including transferring human remains; follow oral and written directions and protocols; deal with death and human remains in various stages of decomposition, disease, and trauma; handle the psychological effects of death; maintain the confidentiality and integrity of information; adhere to stringent sanitation and biohazard control measures; and communicate effectively orally and in writing. This position requires diligent attention to detail in both physical duties and data entry, tracking of records, evidence, property, sample submission/lab requests, and chain of custody.

WORK ENVIRONMENT & PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The work of the Autopsy Technician is predominantly performed within the Medical Examiner Office and requires the incumbent to handle human remains on a regular basis. The work is very physical, requiring lifting and transporting of bodies, the manipulating of autopsy equipment such as saws, scissors, and sutures, and bending, reaching, and pulling while assisting the Medical Examiner in conducting autopsies.

Regular exposure to chemicals and sanitation devices is expected.

The incumbent must be able to hear and respond to oral instructions; walk between the autopsy table and the storage room and office; stand for periods of time up to several hours; gather and transfer human remains from ground or counter level; and operate a motor vehicle for the transportation of bodies.

The incumbent must be able to deal with the psychological effects of the variety of deaths investigated by the Medical Examiner Office. This includes deaths of individuals ranging in age from fetuses to the elderly, trauma that can be extensive, and bodies in varying stages of decomposition and extent of insect activity.