

MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATOR (OCME)

General Statement of Duties and Responsibilities

This class of positions encompasses professional responsibilities of varying degrees of difficulty in the investigation of deaths reported to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME), in order to obtain a factual history and record of events, emphasizing the manner and circumstance of death. There are three Assignment Levels within this class of positions. All personnel perform related work and drive vehicles, as necessary, to carry out assigned duties and responsibilities. The following are typical assignments within this class of positions.

Assignment Level I

Under direction, with some latitude for independent judgment and action, investigates deaths.

Examples of Typical Tasks

Interviews witnesses to obtain information useful to OCME.

Observes the death scene; prepares detailed descriptions.

Examines and takes possession of bodies, and supervises their transport to the Medical Examiner's Office.

Identifies and establishes evidentiary value of items and determines which items are to be taken into evidence.

MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATOR (OCME) (continued)

Assignment Level I (continued)

Examples of Typical Tasks (continued)

Documents evidence and directs its removal, while safeguarding its quality, and establishes and maintains chain of evidence.

Obtains or coordinates positive identification of bodies through visual personal identification affidavit, x-ray, dental records, descriptive evidence and fingerprint records.

Investigates death as required for cremation clearance.

Identifies immediate life threatening conditions and takes/coordinates action to remove hazards.

Testifies in court.

Provides information to family and authorized others as to cause of death, manner and circumstances as determined, thus providing counseling, understanding, and education.

Performs follow-up investigations and interviews within well-defined parameters, as assigned.

Recommends release or maintenance of jurisdiction over bodies based upon preliminary investigation.

Prepares detailed reports for executive review.

Maintains records regarding investigations.

MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATOR (OCME) (continued)

Assignment Level II

Under general direction, with latitude for independent judgment and action, in addition to performing the duties described above in Medicolegal Investigator - Assignment Level I, oversees the work of Medicolegal Investigator - Assignment Level I and conducts the most difficult and complex investigations of deaths, such as those resulting from suicidal, homicidal, criminal, suspicious, or undetermined causes.

Examples of Typical Tasks

Trains and supervises the work of Medicolegal Investigators Assignment Level I.

Independently identifies the need for follow-up investigations, and defines the scope of such investigations; performs related investigations and interviews, as necessary.

Testifies in court, particularly regarding cases which require greater expertise or professional judgment, and which may be of a sensitive or complex nature.

Assignment Level III

Under managerial direction, with wide latitude for independent judgment and action, works as a principal assistant to the Director of Investigations in the capacity of tour commander and expert in a specialized area of medicolegal investigations.

MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATOR (OCME) (continued)

Assignment Level III (continued)

Examples of Typical Tasks

Schedules and deploys Medicolegal Investigators to work in the field; coordinates field activities to ensure citywide coverage of all city street and hospital cases; prioritizes investigations, ensuring Investigators are assigned where they are most needed.

Deploys Medicolegal Investigators to hospitals, hospices and other medical care facilities for completion of autopsy reports; determines whether the hospital or OCME should perform the autopsy.

Oversees the handling of sites or bodies involving bio-hazardous conditions which present a potential danger to OCME staff, such as protecting staff from bodies emitting radiation.

Receives training in and works in a specialty area of medicolegal investigations; provides expertise, leadership and sets protocols in such areas as field operations, homicide, special victims, weapons of mass destruction, special operations, drug investigations, mass fatality operations and occupational safety and health; makes assignments to optimize efficiency and minimize overtime costs; coordinates work with the Police Department, as needed.

Coordinates and plans the training of Medicolegal Investigators Assignment Level I and II and advises management of training needs.

MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATOR (OCME) (continued)

Assignment Level III (continued)

Examples of Typical Tasks (continued)

Assesses Medicolegal Investigators work performance to determine the most appropriate assignment for each, as well as their training/retraining needs; acting as a quality control expert, advises management on operational areas and/or personnel requiring improvement.

Coordinates the work of Medicolegal Investigators, the Police Department and OCME's body transport teams; deploys Medicolegal Investigators and transport teams; resolves unusual problems/situations encountered in the field.

Completes and approves paperwork required for cremation; assigns Investigators to check up on unusual circumstances.

Prepares reports and keeps records.

May serve at a site of mass destruction as a field operations commander coordinating OCME's activities; may, under other special circumstances, serve at field sites to coordinate field activities.

May perform the duties of Medicolegal Investigator Assignment Level II as needed.

MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATOR (OCME) (continued)

Qualification Requirements

1. A New York State license as a Physician Assistant with current Registration Certificate issued by New York State; plus either
 - a. Certification as a Physician Assistant by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) and two years of full-time satisfactory experience as a registered Physician Assistant; or
 - b. Four years of experience as a registered Physician Assistant.

NOTE: Possession of an advanced degree in a health related field, or acceptable health related work experience prior to physician assistant education, may be substituted for up to six months of experience as a registered Physician Assistant.

OR

2. A current New York State license to practice as a Registered Professional Nurse, plus four years of full-time satisfactory experience as a Registered Nurse Practitioner.

For Assignment to Level II

In addition to meeting the "Qualification Requirements" above, to be assigned to Assignment Level II candidates must have at least one additional year of full-time satisfactory experience as described in "1" or "2" above.

MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATOR (OCME) (continued)

Qualification Requirements (continued)

For Assignment to Level III

In addition to meeting the "Qualification Requirements" above, to be assigned to Assignment Level III, candidates must have at least two additional years of full-time satisfactory experience working in death investigations.

License Requirements

1. Possession of a Motor Vehicle Driver license valid in the State of New York at the time of appointment. This license must be maintained for the duration of this employment; and
2. The license, certification and registrations listed above under Qualification Requirements "1" and "2" must be maintained for the duration of this employment.

Lines of Promotion

None. This class of positions is classified in the Non-Competitive Class.