



WHAT WE DO

The Office of Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) is responsible for investigating deaths resulting from criminal violence, accident or suicide; that occur suddenly, when in apparent good health; when unattended by a physician; in custody; or occurring in any suspicious or unusual manner. The Office also investigates deaths where an application for cremation is made. The Office provides additional forensic services, including DNA testing, to support criminal investigations. The Office also manages all functions of the City mortuary, including the retrieval and processing of deceased bodies; assistance with autopsies; and body preparation for City burial.

FOCUS ON EQUITY

The OCME has always been equitable in its treatment of New Yorkers. In an effort to provide greater service to those who may not be able to afford certain funerary rites, we are developing a decedent viewing policy for those who place their loved ones in the City Cemetery. The OCME also serves as the independent pathologist to families with valid concerns who cannot afford to hire a consultant when they have suspicions over a cause of death.

OUR SERVICES AND GOALS

SERVICE 1 Perform the processes necessary to certify deaths falling within the agency's jurisdiction.

- Goal 1a Respond promptly to scenes of reportable fatalities and conduct related investigations.
- Goal 1b Perform autopsies and examinations necessary to issue timely death certificates.
- Goal 1c Provide timely investigation for all cremation requests.

SERVICE 2 Provide mortuary services to the City.

- Goal 2a Recover and transport decedents to City mortuary facilities in a timely manner.

SERVICE 3 Respond to disasters and emergencies when fatalities are involved.

- Goal 3a Provide rapid response and safe fatality management services to the City.
- Goal 3b Identify victims of disasters and return their remains to families in a timely manner.

SERVICE 4 Provide DNA services to the City for forensic purposes.

- Goal 4a Provide timely and accurate DNA laboratory services for criminal justice purposes.

HOW WE PERFORMED

- OCME performed 1,689 autopsies in the first four months of Fiscal 2015, slightly fewer than the 1,751 autopsies performed in the same period of Fiscal 2014. However, the median time taken to complete autopsy reports was 56 days, eight percent more than the median 52 days to complete autopsy reports in the first four months of Fiscal 2014. This increase resulted from several issues, including temporary reassignments of medical examiners, staff shortages, retirements and turnover in laboratory areas including histology and neuropathology. OCME has hired staff, which should help improve performance in this area.
- In the area of forensic DNA testing, OCME showed improvements in most of its indicators in the first four months of Fiscal 2015. The median time to complete DNA homicide cases, from evidence submission to report, decreased 40 percent, to 76 days, from 127 days during the first four months of Fiscal 2014. The median time to complete DNA sexual assault cases, from evidence submission to report, decreased 19 percent to 56 days from 69 days during the same period a year earlier. However, the median time to complete DNA property crime cases, from evidence submission to report, rose to 192 days, 98 percent longer than the median time of 97 days in the first four months of Fiscal 2014. The reduction in DNA homicide and DNA sexual assault case completion times is primarily a result of a new process OCME implemented in Fiscal 2015 in its DNA laboratory. The DNA laboratory also prioritizes crimes against people over crimes against property. In the remainder of Fiscal 2015 and going forward, OCME expects to maintain or further reduce completion times for DNA homicide and DNA sexual assault cases while reducing its backlog and turnaround times for DNA property crime cases.

SERVICE 1 Perform the processes necessary to certify deaths falling within the agency's jurisdiction.

Goal 1a Respond promptly to scenes of reportable fatalities and conduct related investigations.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
★ Median time for scene arrivals by medicolegal investigators (MLIs) (hours)	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8
Deaths reported	25,941	27,265	27,505	*	*	8,903	8,842
Cases where Chief Medical Examiner takes jurisdiction	7,152	7,095	7,109	*	*	2,388	2,377

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↕ shows desired direction

Goal 1b Perform autopsies and examinations necessary to issue timely death certificates.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
★ Median time to complete autopsy reports (days)	69.5	50.0	56.0	51.0	51.0	52.0	56.0
★ Median time to complete toxicology cases (days)	60.0	55.0	29.0	25.0	25.0	24.0	28.0
Median time to complete toxicology DUI (driving under the influence) cases (days)	15.0	14.0	20.0	10.0	10.0	20.0	25.0
Median time to complete toxicology sexual assault cases (days)	30.5	27.0	27.0	17.0	17.0	22.0	38.0

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↕ shows desired direction

Goal 1c

Provide timely investigation for all cremation requests.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
Median time to process cremation requests (minutes)	78.6	123.9	136.0	90.0	90.0	192.0	192.2

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↕ shows desired direction

SERVICE 2 Provide mortuary services to the City.**Goal 2a**

Recover and transport decedents to City mortuary facilities in a timely manner.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
Number of decedents' remains transported and stored by OCME	9,558	7,803	6,976	*	*	2,344	2,342
Median time to remove decedents from scene (non-hospital) after investigation (minutes)	55.2	42.1	40.1	*	*	39.7	43.3

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↕ shows desired direction

SERVICE 3 Respond to disasters and emergencies when fatalities are involved.**Goal 3a**

Provide rapid response and safe fatality management services to the City.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
Remains recovered following a disaster or mass fatality incident (cumulative)	21,818	21,906	21,914	*	*	21,906	21,914

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↕ shows desired direction

Goal 3b

Identify victims of disasters and return their remains to families in a timely manner.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
Remains identified following a disaster (cumulative)	13,024	13,639	13,979	*	*	13,747	14,052

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↕ shows desired direction

SERVICE 4 Provide DNA services to the City for forensic purposes.

Goal 4a

Provide timely and accurate DNA laboratory services for criminal justice purposes.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
Median days to complete analysis of a DNA case	88.0	138.0	92.0	75.0	75.0	94.0	98.0
★ Median time to complete DNA homicide cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	111.0	161.0	100.0	90.0	90.0	127.0	76.0
★ Median time to complete DNA sexual assault cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	46.0	89.0	59.0	50.0	50.0	69.0	56.0
★ Median time to complete DNA property crime cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	68.0	139.0	119.0	70.0	70.0	97.0	192.0
DNA matches with profiles in database	1,791	1,618	2,621	*	*	730	1,935

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↕ shows desired direction

AGENCY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
Completed customer requests for interpretation	202	164	188	*	*	NA	75
Letters responded to in 14 days (%)	100%	98%	100%	*	*	100%	100%
E-mails responded to in 14 days (%)	100%	100%	100%	*	*	100%	100%

AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Statistics	Actual			Sept. 2014 MMR Plan	Updated Plan	Plan	4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY15 ¹	FY16 ¹	FY14	FY15
Expenditures (\$000,000) ²	\$60.9	\$64.8	\$65.8	\$63.6	\$75.8	\$64.1	\$13.2	\$23.0
Revenues (\$000)	\$92	\$67	\$77	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$41	\$21
Personnel	582	583	556	646	676	673	579	563
Overtime paid (\$000,000)	\$2.5	\$3.0	\$2.8	\$2.0	\$2.1	\$2.0	\$0.6	\$1.2

¹February 2015 Financial Plan

²Expenditures include all funds.

"NA" - Not Available in this report

NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- There was a revision to the method used by OCME to calculate fiscal year-to-date (YTD) values for its median time indicators. As a result, Fiscal 2014 YTD values for OCME median time indicators are updated in this report.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information on the agency, please visit: www.nyc.gov/ocme.

