
Fleet Spotlight: Office of Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) Fleet

By Keith T. Kerman and Destiny Fierro



The [Office of Chief Medical Examiner \(OCME\)](#) is a unique and critical component of NYC's emergency response services. OCME investigates deaths that take place from criminal violence, accident, and unusual or suspicious circumstances. OCME serves as the mortuary for New York City and operates the oldest post-mortem toxicology laboratory in the nation; the nation's only public molecular genetics laboratory based in a medical examiner's office; and the city's DNA laboratory, which is responsible for testing physical evidence from criminal cases in the five boroughs.

Supporting the laboratory work at OCME are the field operations. In this week's newsletter, we spotlight the OCME fleet operations and the OCME fleet leadership team who support OCME field and logistic operations.

The fleet consists of 53 units with the most critical being 17 refrigerated box trucks and vans that are used to transport decedents from emergency scenes throughout the city. The OCME Fleet team consists of Vincent Ruggiero, Joseph Cahill, and James Ehlers. Vincent is Executive Director of Mortuary Operations & Response. Joseph is the Deputy Director of Fleet. James is a Fleet Logistics Administrator.



Fleet operations is an important aspect of any agency, but especially for emergency agencies like OCME. This 24/7 agency uses a specialized fleet designed for body recovery, transport, disaster response, and scene investigations. Medicolegal investigator response vehicles are used by investigators responding to death scenes. These vehicles are typically the first on scene. Body transport vans are large cargo vans modified with stainless steel interiors, rollers for stretchers, and refrigeration capability. Mass fatality response vehicles include refrigerated trucks, trailers, and mobile morgue units.

One of the team's ongoing challenges is keeping vehicles fully operational on a day-to-day basis. When vehicles are out of service or break down, especially the refrigeration units, it can disrupt the critical work OCME performs every day. The fleet team, along with OCME staff members Monet Adams, Sammy Rodriguez, Maureen Fulco and Dale Chance, work with DCAS Fleet Services to expedite repair and service needs for the fleet, which is part of the DCAS Client Fleet.



OCME is also working with DCAS on early fleet electrification. Currently eleven (11) fleet units are electric. Most recently, OCME has received one of two electric refrigerated mortuary box trucks, possibly the first such units in the world. With one purchased by DCAS and one by OCME, these electric units will serve as an important test of electric trucks in specialized emergency service roles. Join us at the [37th Annual Fleet Show](#) on May 21 at Flushing Meadows Corona Park to see this electric truck, and so many of our newest and cleanest fleet.



The Fleet Team at OCME works closely with the Logistics Team to ensure effective OCME operations. Joseph and James emphasized the team's efficiency and the key role communication plays in their success. "Everyone I work with takes pride in their work—no one thinks they're above helping, and everyone is always willing to lend a hand," Joseph shared. They also gave a special shout-out to the OCME logistics team for their ongoing support. Both the fleet and logistics teams are relatively small and rely heavily on one another, creating a strong, collaborative

environment that keeps everything moving forward. This collaboration was never more heavily tested than in the months after COVID emerged, as DCAS discussed in a previous [newsletter](#).

The entire OCME team is very connected to the mission and take great pride in supporting it. “Providing accountability for the family that is left behind, being able to identify the cause of death, helping bring justice to cases or supporting those who are affected by the death. OCME Fleet supports the agency and helps make this to happen,” said Joseph.

Thanks to everyone at the Chief Medical Examiner’s office for the extraordinary role they play in NYC life and the unique expertise and capacities they bring to NYC government.



This show highlights vendors who support the New York City's Clean Fleet and Vision Zero initiatives, and daily operations. Vendors will offer a wide array of products to improve vehicle safety. The show will also highlight vehicles and equipment with alternative fuels and emissions-reducing technologies, along with the latest in light and heavy-duty vehicles, trucks, horticultural equipment, tools, fleet services, and more!

Thursday,
May 21, 2026
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Accessibility Questions?
Contact DCAS Accessibility
at 212-386-0256, or email
accessibility@dcas.nyc.gov
by May 6, 2025



<https://www.nyc.gov/site/dcas/agencies/nyc-fleet-upcoming-events.page>

37th Annual Equipment & Vehicle Show

Flushing Meadows Corona Park
(by the Unisphere), Queens, NY



100 Mile Bicycle Challenge



100 Mile Bicycle Challenge | Happening Now!

Celebrate National Bike Month with **WorkWell NYC's first bicycle challenge!** Use the Count.It app (**group invite code: ecf4**) to track your progress throughout the month and ride a bike for 100 miles.

Don't own a bicycle? Try a commute with Citi Bike or use a stationary bike. Track your miles and cheer on colleagues in the app!

All experience levels welcome.

[Register here](#) to join!

Check out past editions of the Fleet Newsletter

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 535, May 7, 2026:](#) Learning From London: The Direct Vision Standard for Truck Safety

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 534, April 29, 2026:](#) DCAS and U.S. DOT Volpe Publish Clean Fleet Transition Report Update

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 533, April 23, 2026:](#) Car Free Earth Day, April 25

Check out the [complete archive](#).

// Connect with DCAS to learn more about the City of New York's Fleet //



Visit us on the web at nyc.gov/DCAS