



Oregon State Police Briefs 2009

Office of the State Medical Examiner

Overview of Services

The State Medical Examiner's Office is responsible for conducting death investigations throughout the state of Oregon. ORS Chapter 146 outlines the authorities and responsibilities of the office.

The State Medical Examiner's Office is the sole source provider of forensic pathology services in the state. We oversee the conduct of death investigations from scene investigation, witness interviews, and medical backgrounds, to forensic autopsy, histology and toxicology throughout the state. We provide expert court testimony on a routine basis for all 36 counties.



The state Medical Examiner's Office is located in the Portland Metropolitan area with satellite offices in Eugene and Central Point. Four forensic pathologists are located in the Portland office. One forensic pathologist is located in Eugene and one is located at Central Point. They are supported by one administrator, three clerical staff and one morgue attendant.

Our primary clients are the citizens of Oregon, families who have lost loved ones suddenly and unexpectedly. One of our major responsibilities is to provide answers to these families about how and why their loved one died. This knowledge assists families and individuals in their recovery period.

We are partners to law enforcement during homicide, accident, suicide and drug death investigations. We partner with state injury prevention and epidemiology programs to find strategies to prevent injury and death in Oregon. We interact with groups nationally to identify decomposed and skeletonized remains.

The State Medical Examiner's Office provides a variety of on-going educational programs, including forty hours of training for Oregon deputy medical examiners called "The Oregon Certified Medical Legal Death Investigator Program" presented twice a year. We teach forensic pathology and death investigation techniques in various lectures to law enforcement personnel, physicians, medical students and attorneys throughout the year.

The office is currently in the process of producing a DVD to train local medical examiners and law enforcement to recognize ancient Indian remains in partnership with the nine federally recognized tribes of Oregon. Our goal is to help preserve and maintain ancient Indian burial sites which are culturally important to our Native American population.

At the State Medical Examiner's Office, our goal is to provide professional, thorough and sensitive death investigation to all citizens of Oregon.

State Medical Examiner

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