

## **MEDICAL EXAMINER - FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST**

### **DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:**

An incumbent in this position is responsible for planning, directing, coordinating, and evaluating all activities of the Office of Medical Examiner, supporting the criminal justice system, and ensuring that all efforts are directed at protecting the health of Dutchess County residents. The work involves responsibility for the investigation of unattended, suspicious or unexplained deaths, deaths of persons while confined in public institutions other than hospitals, infirmaries or nursing homes, or deaths which appear to be caused by violence, trauma, unlawful or criminal neglect. Work is performed according to various sections of the County law and other applicable sections of New York State and local laws. The work involves a wide degree of independence of judgment and action. The work is performed under the general supervision of the Commissioner of Health. Supervision is exercised over subordinate employees.

### **TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:**

The following is indicative of the level and types of activities performed by positions in this title. It is not meant to be all inclusive and does not preclude a supervisor from assigning activities not listed which could reasonably be expected to be performed by an employee in this title.

1. Assumes the authority to investigate every death occurring within Dutchess County or a death which appears to be violent in nature, caused by an unlawful or criminal action or by negligence, or one that is unattended or uncertifiable by a physician;
2. Performs and/or supervises the performance of autopsies when necessary to establish the cause of death, gross and histologic examinations of surgical specimens, and microscopic examinations; evaluates all data and prepares reports of findings;
3. Visits or supervises visitation of death scenes of suspicious and violent deaths, conducts investigations and prepares reports; completes death certificates;
4. Files and maintains full records of all investigations in accordance with the methods and forms prescribed by the New York State Commissioner of Health;
5. Delivers all pertinent records to the District Attorney and law enforcement officials whenever an investigation indicates that a crime may have been committed;
6. Testifies in court and at inquests, when necessary, concerning the cause of death; subpoenas and examines witnesses under oath;
7. Advises, consults with, and provides assistance to government officials, other medical examiners, coroners, physicians, public health laboratories, etc., relative to tests, examinations, and analysis of the body of the deceased, or to matters related to the investigation;
8. Oversees the disposition of money or property found upon the body of the deceased in accordance with law and prescribed procedure;
9. Evaluates the quality, quantity, and timeliness of service provided by the medical examiners program and develops plans to improve the standards of performance;
10. Manages and directs the day-to-day operation of the medical examiner program, ensuring such activities are in support of desired goals and missions;
11. Keeps abreast of changes in County, State and Federal laws, rules, procedures and regulations ensuring that compliance with all external regulations and laws in relation to the operation of the medical examiners office is maintained;
12. Maintains public relations through speeches, conferences, public and press contacts, and participation in professional and community activities;
13. Attends training seminars as required, and maintains membership in the National Association of Medical Examiners;
14. Prepares quarterly and annual annotated reports of all County deaths; works closely with the Health Planning and Education Unit to coordinate data sets.

## **MEDICAL EXAMINER - FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST (Cont'd)**

### **FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:**

Knowledge of principles, methods, techniques and new developments in the field of pathology;  
Knowledge of physiology and anatomy to conduct autopsies;  
Knowledge of clinico-pathological methods and procedures pertaining to the Office of Medical Examiner;  
Knowledge of forensic medicine;  
Knowledge of laboratory equipment, procedures and techniques, especially as related to pathology and autopsies;  
Skill in detecting, analyzing and evaluating manifestations of physical conditions from pathological examinations;  
Skill in the use of diversified special equipment, instruments, and materials required in all phases of pathology;  
Ability to meet, speak and deal effectively with public officials, professional personnel and the general public;  
Ability to supervise the work of others involved in death investigations and related reporting;  
Ability to write clear and concise reports;  
Ability to give professional testimony in court, inquests, or hearings;  
Personal characteristics necessary to perform the duties of the position;  
Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

Graduation from a medical school that is recognized or accredited by the Board of Regents of the New York State Education Department as a post-secondary, degree-granting institution; and completion of an approved internship and at least three years of residency in pathology in an approved hospital, public health or research laboratory, **and** three years of experience in the field of pathology.

### **SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:**

1. Possession of a valid license and current registration to practice medicine issued by the New York State Education Department, and certification by the American Board of Pathology in Anatomic Pathology.
2. Possession of a New York State Driver License at time of appointment.

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ADOPTED:

REVISED: 10/15/87 (County Medical Examiner)  
07/25/00