

Medical Examiner Division

Who we are

The Clatsop County Sheriff's Office is happy to introduce our newest division! The Medical Examiner Division manages all aspects of the Clatsop County death investigation system in conjunction with national and state guidelines. We certify the cause and manner of deaths requiring investigation by state law (Oregon Revised Statutes, Chapter 146).

These investigations include sudden, unexpected, and unnatural deaths within the county. This may include postmortem examinations and toxicology analyses for drugs and alcohol. We work closely with the families of the deceased and other members of the community to provide timely, accurate, and empathetic investigations. Our division also maintains county records and provides lectures and trainings on death investigations to local law enforcement agencies, schools, attorneys, physicians, and others associated with death investigations.

Clatsop County Sheriff's Office Medical Examiner Division consists of one full time Medicolegal Death Investigator and one part time Medicolegal Death Investigator.

What we do

We are required to investigate the following deaths, including but not limited to:

- Suspicious or unknown circumstances
- Homicide or suicide
- Accidents or injuries



- Unlawful use of controlled substances, or the use of a chemical or toxic substance
- Persons who die unexpectedly in good health, while not under the care of a physician immediately before death (such as at home)
- Those that happen while incarcerated in jail or prison, or in police custody
- Contagious diseases that may pose a public health threat
- On-the-job activities

During an investigation, a deputy medical examiner may respond to the scene, interview witnesses, take photographs, obtain evidence and property and assist with notifying next of kin.

Death Certificates

After a cause of death has been determined, a death certificate is registered with state vital records. Certified copies may be ordered through the funeral service or [click here for Clatsop County Vital Records](#).

Note: It may take 8-10 weeks or longer to get a death certificate if the exact cause and manner of death cannot be immediately determined. Special laboratory tests or further investigation may be necessary.

Cost

There is no fee for the investigation. Occasionally transportation is needed to get the body to the Medical Examiner's Office. This cost is passed on to the designated funeral home/cremation service.

What to Do After Someone dies

Report the Death

Contact law enforcement at Clatsop County's non-emergency number, 503-325-2061 and press 1 for dispatch. They will have an officer or deputy come out and make a report to the Medical Examiner.

Make Final Arrangements

- Select a funeral home or cremation service. Then contact the Medical Examiner's Office and tell us which one you've selected.
- Funeral directors can help you make all the arrangements for final disposition of the deceased, including getting the death certificate.

- We are unable to recommend a funeral service.

Pick up Personal Property

The legal next of kin or funeral home may pick up personal property that is not being held as evidence from the Medical Examiner's Office, Monday through Friday, 9:00am -4:00pm. You will need to contact us ahead of time to make arrangements.

Autopsies

An autopsy will be performed when:

- There is a need to establish or confirm a cause and manner of death in order to issue a death certificate.
- There is a case involving a criminal or suspected criminal wrongdoing.
- It is considered to be prudent, at the state medical examiner's discretion.

Do I have to consent to an examination or autopsy?

Your desires will always be considered, however, the state medical examiner makes the final decision regarding which examination procedures are necessary.

Can I view the body?

The Medical Examiner's Office is not designed to accommodate viewing. Arrangements can be made at the funeral home for viewing.

Can the deceased be an anatomical donor?

In most cases, yes. The medical examiner will authorize anatomical gifts whenever possible, although certain cases may preclude donations.

Supporting Documents

Record Request- Fillable 790.13 KB

Related Links

- Vital Records (Death Certificate)