



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, and assistance and body preparation for City burial.

FOCUS ON EQUITY

To best serve all New Yorkers – regardless of economic ability – the OCME provides a viewing policy for those unable to afford funerary rites and offers free burial services for those who place their loved ones in the City Cemetery. The OCME also serves as the independent pathologist for families when they have serious 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 services to the City for forensic purposes.

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

HOW WE PERFORMED IN FISCAL 2016

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.

In Fiscal 2016, OCME took jurisdiction in 7,375 cases, 239 more than in the previous year.

OCME responded to death scenes in a median time of 2.4 hours in Fiscal 2016, an increase from 1.9 hours in Fiscal 2015. In addition to handling more cases in Fiscal 2016, OCME instituted new quality control procedures—including a centralized tour commander position to coordinate responses across all the boroughs—which slightly affected response times but ensure improved overall quality of service.

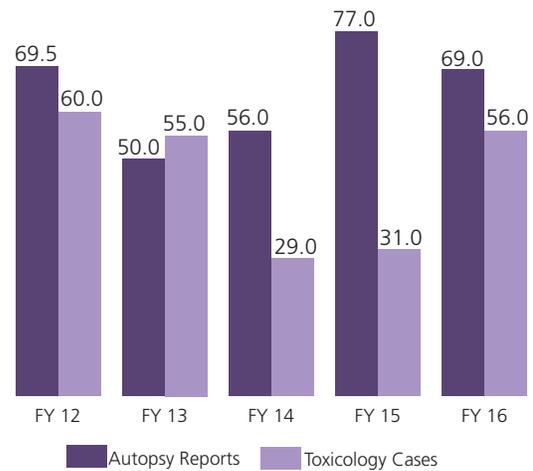
Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Desired Direction	5yr Trend
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY16	FY17		
★ Median time for scene arrivals by medicolegal investigators (MLIs) (hours)	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.9	2.4	1.7	1.7	Down	Up
Deaths reported	25,941	27,265	27,505	27,984	27,674	*	*	Neutral	Neutral
Cases where Chief Medical Examiner takes jurisdiction	7,152	7,095	7,109	7,136	7,375	*	*	Neutral	Neutral

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

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

OCME performed 5,077 autopsies in Fiscal 2016, an increase from the 4,960 performed in Fiscal 2015. The median time to complete OCME autopsy reports in Fiscal 2016 was 69 days, a decrease from 77 days in the previous year. The improvement resulted from a reorganization of the OCME Forensic Toxicology Laboratory during the second half of Fiscal 2016. Improvements in case management resulted in the elimination of a backlog of cases and a reduction in turnaround time, which affected the time to complete autopsy reports.

Autopsy Report and Toxicology Case Completion (median days)



Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Desired Direction	5yr Trend
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY16	FY17		
★ Median time to complete autopsy reports (days)	69.5	50.0	56.0	77.0	69.0	60.0	60.0	Down	Up

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

Goal 1c Provide timely investigation for all cremation requests.

In Fiscal 2016, OCME responded to 15,386 cremation requests, a slight increase from 15,358 the previous year. The median time for OCME to process cremation requests in Fiscal 2016 decreased by 9.81 minutes, as anticipated due to OCME's implementation of new quality control and tracking requirements to the cremation request process. OCME maintains and will continue to maintain a time of below three hours, the national practice, in order to facilitate family funeral plans.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Desired Direction	5yr Trend
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY16	FY17		
Median time to process cremation requests (minutes)	78.6	123.9	136.0	184.5	174.7	180.0	180.0	Down	Up

★ 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.

In Fiscal 2016, the median time required to remove a decedent from a non-hospital scene after investigation was 56.7 minutes, an increase from 49.3 minutes in Fiscal 2015. The additional time required to recover and transport decedents to its mortuary facilities resulted from new quality control measures being used by OCME's drivers when handling and transporting decedents.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Desired Direction	5yr Trend
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY16	FY17		
Number of decedents' remains transported and stored by OCME	9,558	9,473	10,456	10,721	10,108	*	*	Neutral	Neutral
Median time to remove decedents from scene (non-hospital) after investigation (minutes)	55.2	42.1	40.1	49.3	56.7	*	*	Down	Neutral

★ 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.

The OCME recovered no remains from newly identified victims of the 9/11 World Trade Center attacks in Fiscal 2016.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Desired Direction	5yr Trend
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY16	FY17		
Remains recovered following a disaster or mass fatality incident (cumulative)	21,818	21,906	21,914	21,916	21,916	*	*	Neutral	Neutral

★ 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.

The OCME continues to identify remains of the victims of the 9/11 World Trade Center attacks. In Fiscal 2016, an additional 106 remains were identified.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Desired Direction	5yr Trend
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY16	FY17		
Remains identified following a disaster (cumulative)	13,024	13,639	13,979	14,202	14,308	*	*	Up	Neutral

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

SERVICE 4 Provide services to the City for forensic purposes.

Goal 4a

Provide timely and accurate laboratory services for criminal justice purposes.

The OCME continued to show significant improvements in all of its forensic DNA testing indicators in Fiscal 2016. The median time to complete DNA homicide cases, from evidence submission to report, decreased to 39 days from 62 days in Fiscal 2015. The median time to complete DNA sexual assault cases decreased to 36 days from 50 days in Fiscal 2015. The median time to complete DNA property crime cases, from evidence submission to report, decreased to 57 days from 188 days in Fiscal 2015. The laboratory was able to decrease its average backlog by 75 percent and median turnaround time by 54 percent.

The increase in median times to complete toxicology cases in Fiscal 2016 resulted from a backlog of over 800 cases that had been accruing from the end of Fiscal 2015, after the departure of the previous Forensic Toxicology Laboratory director. As previously mentioned, the OCME Forensic Toxicology Laboratory has undergone considerable reorganization over the last six months of Fiscal 2016, and its median case turnaround times have shown improvements. By the end of March 2016, two months after the appointment of the new laboratory director, the backlog was cleared and the median time to complete toxicology cases decreased to 53 days. The median time to complete toxicology cases has remained below 30 days at OCME since April 2016.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Desired Direction	5yr Trend
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY16	FY17		
Median days to complete analysis of a DNA case	88.0	138.0	92.0	92.0	45.0	30.0	30.0	Down	Down
★ Median time to complete DNA homicide cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	111.0	161.0	100.0	62.0	39.0	30.0	30.0	Down	Down
★ Median time to complete DNA sexual assault cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	46.0	89.0	59.0	50.0	36.0	30.0	30.0	Down	Down
★ Median time to complete DNA property crime cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	68.0	139.0	119.0	188.0	57.0	30.0	30.0	Down	Neutral
DNA matches with profiles in database	1,791	1,618	2,621	6,008	7,758	*	*	Neutral	Up
★ Median time to complete toxicology cases (days)	60.0	55.0	29.0	31.0	56.0	45.0	45.0	Down	Down
Median time to complete toxicology DUI (driving under the influence) cases (days)	15.0	14.0	20.0	30.0	43.0	10.0	10.0	Down	Up
Median time to complete toxicology sexual assault cases (days)	30.5	27.0	27.0	43.0	84.0	17.0	17.0	Down	Up

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

AGENCY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Desired Direction	5yr Trend
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY16	FY17		
Customer Experience									
Completed customer requests for interpretation	202	164	188	304	664	*	*	Neutral	Up
Letters responded to in 14 days (%)	100%	98%	100%	100%	100%	*	*	Up	Neutral
E-mails responded to in 14 days (%)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	*	*	Up	Neutral

AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Indicators	Actual ¹					Plan ²		5yr Trend
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY16	FY17	
Expenditures (\$000,000) ³	\$60.9	\$64.8	\$65.8	\$66.5	\$76.0	\$75.5	\$68.9	Up
Revenues (\$000)	\$92	\$67	\$77	\$41	\$36	\$100	\$100	Down
Personnel	582	583	556	569	566	697	670	Neutral
Overtime paid (\$000,000)	\$2.5	\$3.0	\$2.8	\$4.5	\$2.5	\$2.2	\$3.6	Up

¹Actual financial amounts for the most current fiscal year are not yet final. Final fiscal year actuals, from the Comptroller's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, will be reported in the next PMMR. Refer to the "Indicator Definitions" at nyc.gov/mmr for details. ²Authorized Budget Level ³Expenditures include all funds
 "NA" - Not Available in this report

NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- OCME has corrected its Fiscal 2013 and Fiscal 2014 figures for 'Number of decedents' remains transported and stored by OCME'. The incorrect information resulted from miscalculation by an application in use at the time. The application has been repaired and the data recalculated for the two years.
- OCME Forensic Biology Laboratory experienced a more than doubling in number of weapons cases and suspects submitted and processed in the year ending Fiscal 2016, 1,475 in Fiscal 2016 compared to 646 in Fiscal 2015.
- OCME Forensic Toxicology Laboratory has expanded its current testing capability to include fentanyl and other common synthetic opioids. The laboratory is in the process of rescreening all cases received from January to June 2016 (over 2,500 cases) for the presence of fentanyl and will also begin rescreening all cases received in 2015 (over 5,000 cases).
- Further expansion of our testing capability is underway with the validation of new instrumentation received in Fiscal 2016.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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

