



## 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, assistance with autopsies 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 unable to afford to hire a consultant when they have suspicions over a cause of death.

## OUR SERVICES AND GOALS

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### **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.

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### **SERVICE 2 Provide mortuary services to the City.**

- Goal 2a Recover and transport decedents to City mortuary facilities in a timely manner.

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### **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.

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### **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

- The OCME Forensic Biology Laboratory continued to achieve decreases in its large backlog of DNA cases during the first four months of Fiscal 2016. By the end of this period, this OCME laboratory reduced its DNA case backlog to 549 cases, a reduction of 81 percent from the end of the Fiscal 2015 four-month period, when it had 2,689 cases backlogged. The laboratory also improved its median DNA case completion time to 46 days for all case types, a reduction of 53 percent from the first four months of Fiscal 2015. OCME provided DNA sexual assault case reports to NYPD and DA offices in 37 days in the Fiscal 2016 four-month period, down from 56 days in the same period a year earlier, and the median times to complete homicide and property crime DNA tests also decreased noticeably at OCME in the first four months of Fiscal 2016.
- Toxicology case completion times rose sharply at OCME for the first four months of Fiscal 2016, compared to the same period of the previous year. These increases were primarily due to the retirement of the Forensic Toxicology Laboratory director and assistant director in late Fiscal 2015. After an extensive search for a new director, OCME has selected an internationally recognized expert, who is expected to join the agency in February 2016. Additionally, this laboratory began an operational improvement project in Fiscal 2016, with the goal of reducing case backlogs and turnaround times while maintaining the high-level of quality that the City expects.

### 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.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
★ Median time for scene arrivals by medicolegal investigators (MLIs) (hours)	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.8	2.0
Deaths reported	27,265	27,505	27,984	*	*	8,842	9,015
Cases where Chief Medical Examiner takes jurisdiction	7,095	7,109	7,136	*	*	2,377	2,444

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report \* No Target ↕ shows desired direction

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

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
★ Median time to complete autopsy reports (days)	50.0	56.0	77.0	60.0	60.0	71.0	57.0

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report \* No Target ↕ shows desired direction

**Goal 1c** Provide timely investigation for all cremation requests.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Median time to process cremation requests (minutes)	123.9	136.0	184.5	180.0	180.0	184.5	173.2

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report \* No Target ↕ 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.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Number of decedents' remains transported and stored by OCME	7,803	6,976	10,721	*	*	3,707	3,363
Median time to remove decedents from scene (non-hospital) after investigation (minutes)	42.1	40.1	49.3	*	*	43.3	58.2

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report \* No Target ↕ ↑ 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.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Remains recovered following a disaster or mass fatality incident (cumulative)	21,906	21,914	21,916	*	*	21,914	21,918

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report \* No Target ↕ ↑ shows desired direction

### Goal 3b

Identify victims of disasters and return their remains to families in a timely manner.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Remains identified following a disaster (cumulative)	13,639	13,979	14,202	*	*	14,052	14,256

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report \* No Target ↕ ↑ 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.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Median days to complete analysis of a DNA case	138.0	92.0	92.0	30.0	30.0	98.0	46.0
★ Median time to complete DNA homicide cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	161.0	100.0	62.0	30.0	30.0	76.0	39.0
★ Median time to complete DNA sexual assault cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	89.0	59.0	50.0	30.0	30.0	56.0	37.0
★ Median time to complete DNA property crime cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	139.0	119.0	188.0	30.0	30.0	192.0	62.0
DNA matches with profiles in database	1,618	2,621	6,008	*	*	1,935	2,802
★ Median time to complete toxicology cases (days)	55.0	29.0	31.0	45.0	45.0	28.0	108.0
Median time to complete toxicology DUI (driving under the influence) cases (days)	14.0	20.0	30.0	10.0	10.0	25.0	58.0
Median time to complete toxicology sexual assault cases (days)	27.0	27.0	43.0	17.0	17.0	38.0	164.0

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## AGENCY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Completed customer requests for interpretation	164	188	304	*	*	75	164
Letters responded to in 14 days (%)	98%	100%	100%	*	*	100%	100%
E-mails responded to in 14 days (%)	100%	100%	100%	*	*	100%	100%

"NA" - means Not Available in this report \* No Target

## AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Indicators	Actual			Sept. 2015 MMR Plan	Updated Plan	Plan	4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY16 <sup>1</sup>	FY17 <sup>1</sup>	FY15	FY16
Expenditures (\$000,000) <sup>2</sup>	\$64.8	\$65.8	\$66.5	\$64.4	\$75.5	\$66.7	\$23.0	\$25.9
Revenues (\$000)	\$67	\$77	\$41	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$21	\$11
Personnel	583	556	569	673	697	718	563	574
Overtime paid (\$000,000)	\$3.0	\$2.8	\$4.5	\$2.0	\$2.2	\$1.8	\$1.2	\$1.6

<sup>1</sup>January 2016 Financial Plan    <sup>2</sup>Expenditures include all funds    "NA" - Not Available in this report

## NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- There have been revisions to OCME Service 4 and Goal 4a, and to the indicators reported there, to correct the presentation of three OCME indicators of laboratory performance. The acronym "DNA" was removed from the names of Service 4 and Goal 4a to broaden them to encompass more types of OCME laboratory work. The indicators 'Median time to complete toxicology cases (days)', 'Median time to complete toxicology DUI (driving under the influence) cases (days)' and 'Median time to complete toxicology sexual assault cases (days)' were relocated from Goal 1b to Goal 4a, where they are more correctly placed. Goal 1b, where the indicators were reported previously, deals in examinations related to deaths. However, the toxicology cases these indicators cover are not limited to fatalities, and often deal with survivors of alleged crimes in the City.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information on the agency, please visit: [www.nyc.gov/ocme](http://www.nyc.gov/ocme).