



International Association of Coroners & Medical Examiners

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Dedicated to the promotion of excellence in medicolegal death investigation through collaboration, education and accreditation.

May 26, 2023

Lewis County Washington Coroner Office Re-accreditation Report
 585 North Center St.
 Chehalis, WA. 98532

Connie Jacobson-Lead Auditor

P. Michal Murphy, Auditor

The Lewis County Washington Coroner Office has met the requirements as illustrated in the assessment table and check list below. The checklist is approved for completion and compliance with all standards. The standards checklist was reviewed and analyzed prior to our arrival to the office on Friday, May 26, 2023 to conduct the site review/visit.

Lewis County Overall Results

Required Standards	Standards						
	Yes	No	Blank	Yes	No	N/A	Blank
A. Medicolegal Office Practices	57	0	0	66	0	1	0
B. Investigative Practices	43	0	0	16	0	0	0
C. Morgue Facilities	46	0	0	25	0	0	0
D. Laboratory Services	12	0	0	6	0	0	0
E. Forensic Specialists	8	0	0	7	1	0	0
Total	166 (100%)	0	0	120 (99%)	1	1	0

Self-Assessment Results by Category

The following table represents the results of your "Self-Assessment."

NOTE: Full accreditation is obtained by having 100% of the Required Standards and at least 90% of the Standards.



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Category	Required Standards	Standards	Accredited
A. Medicolegal Office Practices	100%	100%	✓
B. Investigative Practices	100%	100%	✓
C. Morgue Facilities	100%	100%	✓
D. Laboratory Services	100%	100%	✓
E. Forensic Specialists	100%	88%	

Standards - No

E. Forensic Specialists

1. Forensic Pathologists

h. Medical staff should be of sufficient size so that no forensic pathologist is required to perform more than 250 autopsies/year (total by pathologist, inside AND outside cases included).

Standards - N/A

A. Medicolegal Office Practices

12. Employee Safety and Training

f. The office should keep records of required staff vaccinations (e.g., Hepatitis B vaccinations accepted or refused).

Auditors' Comments



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According to the 2020 Census Bureau, the population of Lewis County is 82,149. The county seat is Chehalis where the coroner's office is located. After arriving to the Portland, Oregon airport, we rented a car and drove 100 miles, one hour and 40 minutes to the coroner office location in Chehalis, Washington,

The facility tour was lead by Coroner Warren McLeod and Chief Deputy Stephen Wilson. The facility is in the same location where the initial accreditation inspection took place five years prior.

The main entrance from the street is secured by a locked door with a buzzer that alerts the receptionist who can control the door access. The command post and family room is the same room off the main office space where the receptionist's desk is located. We noted that almost all rooms both downstairs and upstairs has at least one office space set up. There is a kitchen area on both floors with appropriate separate bathrooms with showers and lockers. The chief deputy's office and coroner's office are separate private offices. Coroner McCloud made note that the decedent tracking white board outside the autopsy suite was in the planning process with their county's IT department to become digitalized which would make this information available to all computers in the office that will improve better organization of decedent movement throughout the entire investigative process while the decedent is present in the office.

The autopsy suite is equipped with one autopsy station with all necessary supplies and equipment to conduct autopsies, usually by the forensic pathologist who has been servicing this office for many years. Of note is there are many tables available for decedent conveyance throughout the morgue area. The cooler is spacious which holds more than their average number of six decedents per day. The area is organized and clean and contains all the equipment and supplies to conduct autopsies. The evidence room has locked containers or lockers where evidence and/or property is stored until moved to appropriate places with a chain of custody. Medications are noted at the scene but not brought into the facility. In the upper level of the office are three work spaces, a separate break room, workout equipment, storage space, sleep space. A separate work space is also present for the pathologist.

Interviews were conducted with three of the coroner office's professional colleagues from the community. Commander Andy Caldwell from Centralia City Police Department, Diane Achord from eCare Mortuary who transports from scenes and Matt Jeager, assistant county manager and IT director all offered many accolades, praises and compliments for the Lewis County Coroner and staff. Phrases such as "I love the Lewis County Coroner office, kind, warm, welcoming, professional, compassionate, respectful, supportive of families were mentioned.

Two case files from all manners of death including two baby deaths were inspected. All except one baby death investigation contained appropriate and required components of a thorough investigation. One baby death did not include a SUIDI form or documentation of a reenactment with dolls. The coroner is aware of the lost opportunity.

Overall, we found the Lewis County Coroner office to be very capable and accommodating of the service that is provided through medicolegal death investigation in this community. We very much appreciated the opportunity to take part in this peer review Lewis County's coroner office.

Auditors' Recommendations



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The Lewis County Coroner office has met 100% of the required standards and 99% of the nonrequired standards. We recommend full reaccreditation for this office.

Connie Jacobson, Lead Auditor

P. Michael Murphy, Auditor

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Connie Jacobson".

May 27, 2023

May 27, 2023