

M00F05
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Operating Budget Data

(\$ in Thousands)

	<u>FY 06</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY 07</u> <u>Working</u>	<u>FY 08</u> <u>Allowance</u>	<u>FY 07-08</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>% Change</u> <u>Prior Year</u>
General Fund	\$8,005	\$7,951	\$8,239	\$287	3.6%
Federal Fund	158	178	181	3	1.5%
Reimbursable Fund	<u>65</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>28.8%</u>
Total Funds	\$8,228	\$8,205	\$8,516	\$312	3.8%

- The fiscal 2008 allowance is \$311,720 higher than the 2007 working appropriation. After adjusting for one-time health insurance savings, the allowance represents a \$0.5 million or 6.3% increase over fiscal 2007.
- The increase in the allowance is largely due to a change in the reimbursement paid to Deputy Medical Examiners, County Forensic Investigators, and body transportation service providers as provided for by amendment to agency regulations.

Personnel Data

	<u>FY 06</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY 07</u> <u>Working</u>	<u>FY 08</u> <u>Allowance</u>	<u>FY 07-08</u> <u>Change</u>
Regular Positions	76.00	76.00	76.00	0.00
Contractual FTEs	<u>4.54</u>	<u>6.00</u>	<u>6.75</u>	<u>0.75</u>
Total Personnel	80.54	82.00	82.75	0.75

Vacancy Data: Regular Positions

Turnover, Excluding New Positions	2.27	2.99%
Positions Vacant as of 12/31/06	0.00	0.00%

- The increase in contractual positions is for support staff such as autopsy assistants and office clerks who are needed to cover an increase in autopsies.

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding.

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- The department must keep 2.27 full-time equivalent positions vacant to meet its budgeted turnover rate of 2.99%. As of December 31, 2006, the department had zero vacancies. As it stands now, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner does not have sufficient vacancies to meet the turnover rate.

Analysis in Brief

Major Trends

Death and Autopsy Rates Are Rising: The number of deaths investigated continues to increase with the growth in population, but recently the number of autopsies has also started to climb.

Issues

Medical Examiner Workload: The number of autopsies per medical examiner grows closer to the maximum allowed for accreditation.

Recommended Actions

	<u>Funds</u>
1. Reduce funding for motor vehicle maintenance and repair.	\$ 1,500
2. Adopt committee narrative requesting report on accreditation preparedness.	
Total Reductions	\$ 1,500

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Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
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Operating Budget Analysis

Program Description

The mission of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner is to:

- provide competent, professional, thorough, and objective death investigations in cases mandated by Maryland statute that assist State's Attorneys, courts, law enforcement agencies, and families;
- strengthen partnerships between federal, State, and local governments through training and education of health, legal, and law enforcement professionals;
- support research programs directed at increasing knowledge of the pathology of disease; and
- protect and promote the health of the public by assisting in the development of programs to prevent injury and death.

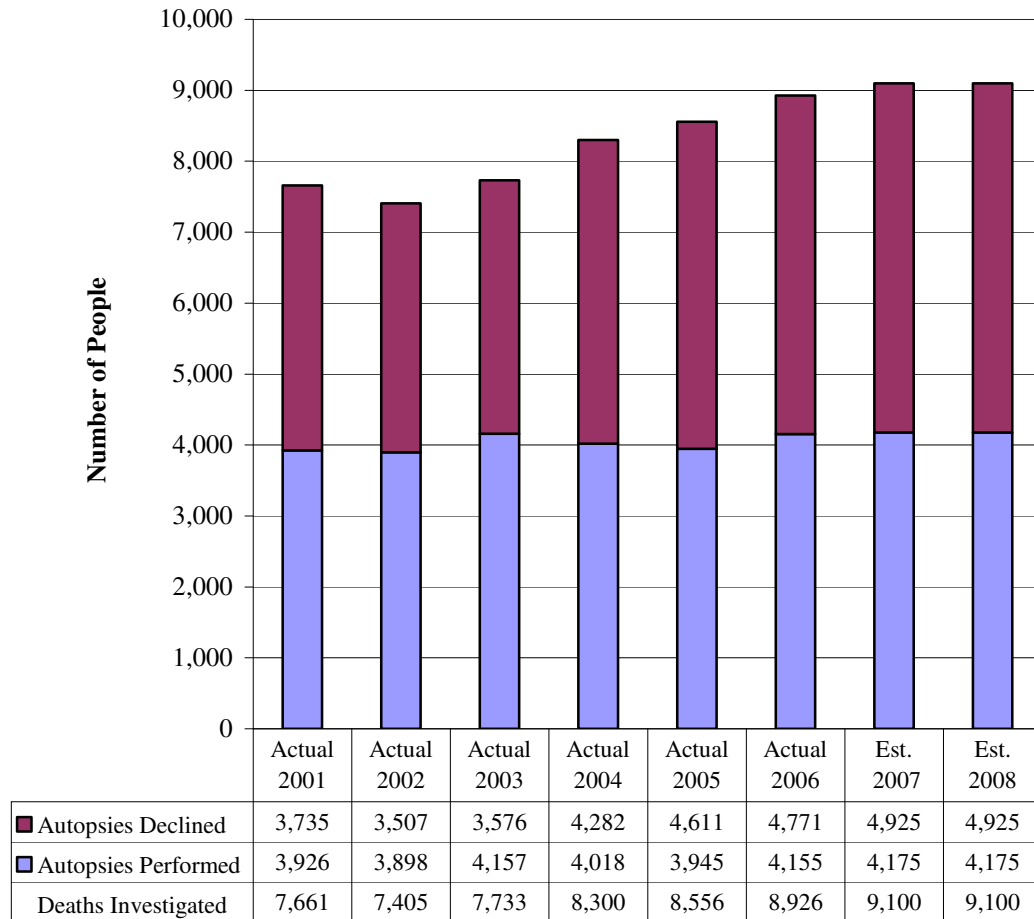
Performance Analysis: Managing for Results

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner is required to investigate all violent or suspicious deaths, including all deaths unattended by a physician. If the cause of death cannot be established during the initial investigation, the pathologist must perform an autopsy on the deceased.

Exhibit 1 shows the number of deaths investigated and the number of autopsies performed since fiscal 2001. The data indicates a trend of increasing death investigations, reflecting continued population growth. Despite remaining static for a number of years, the most recent data reflects a slow increase in autopsies. Even with the increasing rate of autopsies, Maryland's autopsy rate continues to be consistent with national averages. In fiscal 2006, the State performed an average of 1 autopsy per 1,296 residents compared to the national average of 1 autopsy per 1,349 residents, as measured by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME).

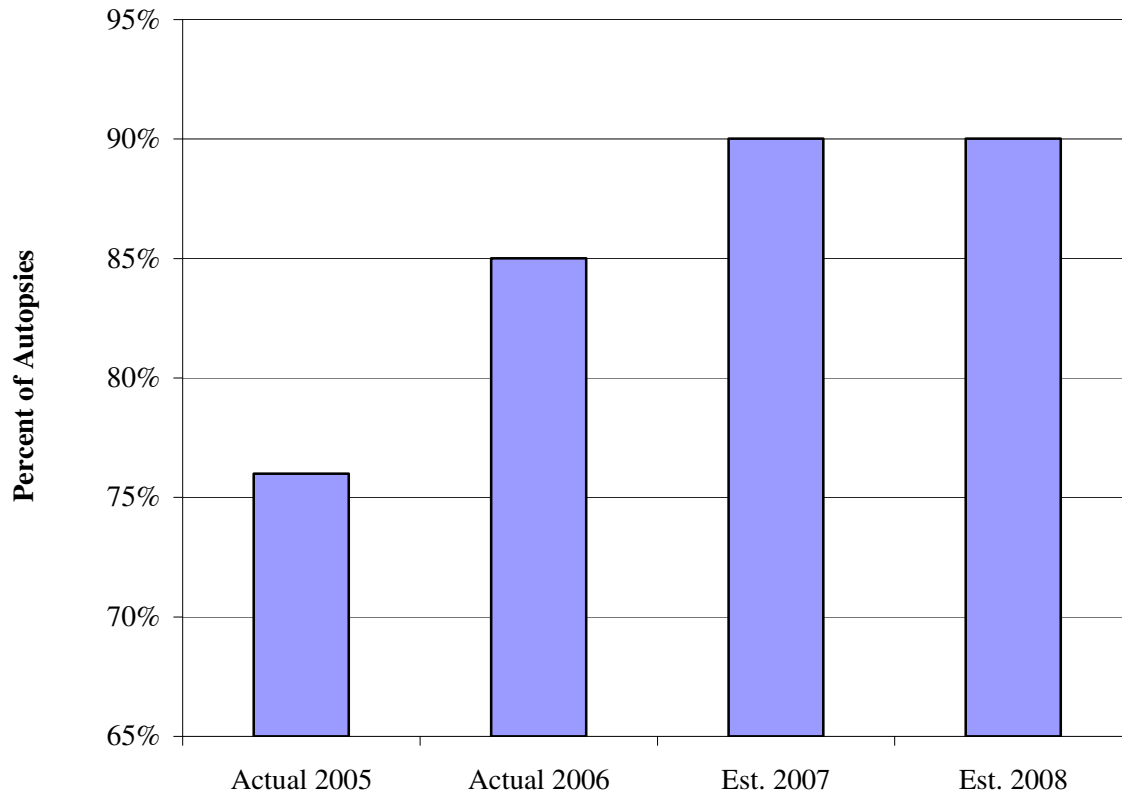
Exhibit 2 shows performance data for the goal of forwarding autopsy reports when necessary to the State's Attorney's office within 60 working days after an investigation. In fiscal 2006, the chief medical examiner reported 85% of autopsy results within 60 working days. This was an increase of nine percentage points over fiscal 2005. The improvement may be attributable to flexible work schedules which allow support staff to work from home once a week. This gives support staff time to concentrate on writing reports, rather than being interrupted by public relations duties.

Exhibit 1
Deaths Investigated by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
Fiscal 2001-2008



Source: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

Exhibit 2
Percent of Autopsies Reported within 60 Days
Fiscal 2005-2008



Source: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

Governor's Proposed Budget

The fiscal 2008 allowance increases funding \$311,720 over the fiscal 2007 working appropriation, an increase of 3.8%. After adjusting for the one-time health insurance savings, the underlying growth from fiscal 2007 to 2008 is \$527,000 or 6.3%. The most significant increase is due to changes in Code of Maryland Regulations requiring an increase in the reimbursement paid to deputy medical examiners, county forensic investigators, and body transportation service providers outside the Baltimore metropolitan area. Changes to the budget are detailed in **Exhibit 3**.

Exhibit 3
Governor's Proposed Budget
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
(\$ in Thousands)

How Much It Grows:	General Fund	Federal Fund	Reimb. Fund	Total
2007 Working Appropriation	\$7,951	\$178	\$75	\$8,205
2008 Governor's Allowance	<u>8,239</u>	<u>181</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>8,516</u>
Amount Change	\$287	\$3	\$22	\$312
Percent Change	3.6%	1.5%	28.8%	3.8%
Where It Goes:				
Personnel Expenses				
Retirement changes				\$94
Turnover adjustments				93
Increments and other compensation				66
Health insurance costs decline due to one-time savings				-207
Operating Expenses				
Funds used to reimburse deputy medical examiners and county forensic investigators for services provided outside the Baltimore metropolitan area as required by changes to Code of Maryland Regulations				110
Funds used to reimburse body transportation service providers for transporting bodies to OCME from outside the Baltimore Metro area				86
Replacement costs for computer and medical equipment using funds from Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention				35
Costs associated with contractual positions to cover rising autopsy caseload				32
Laboratory supplies based on three-year average including medicine, drugs, and chemical supplies				26
Steam costs based on fiscal 2006 actual				25
Supplies and maintenance costs based on three-year average				25
Replacement costs for laboratory, medical, and office equipment				22
Motor vehicle replacement costs for van used by OCME investigative staff to transport bodies from scenes of death in Baltimore metropolitan area back to OCME				18
Outside professional laboratory testing based on fiscal 2006 actual				9
Communication and travel expenses				4
Decrease in contractual data processing support position through University of Maryland, Baltimore				-75
Decrease in projected utilities including electricity, water, and sewage				-53
Other adjustments				2
Total				\$312

OCME: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding.

Issues

1. Medical Examiner Workload

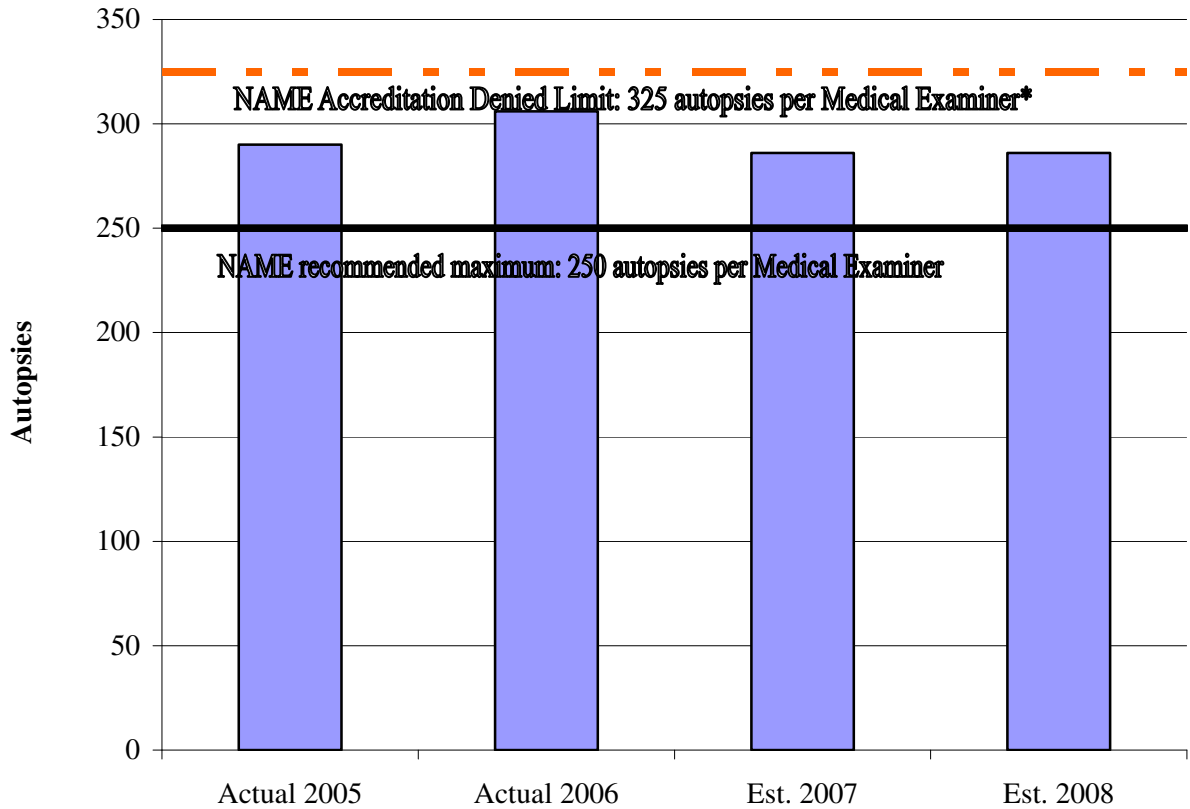
Exhibit 4 shows performance data for the average number of autopsies per medical examiner. NAME sets an absolute limit of 325 autopsies per pathologist to maintain accreditation. However, NAME strongly recommends offices stay below 250 autopsies per pathologist.

The chief medical examiner performed 306 autopsies per medical examiner in fiscal 2006. About 287 autopsies per examiner are forecast for fiscal 2007 and 2008. However, recent conversations with the department indicate the number may actually be closer to 300. A rise in violent or suspicious deaths could put the department close to going above the limit of 325 autopsies per examiner and losing NAME accreditation.

In order to achieve the recommended 250 autopsies per examiner, the department estimates a need of six new pathologists. Due to current space constraints, it would be difficult for the department to take on the necessary staff to achieve the NAME recommended level. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) is scheduled to build new offices, which according to the fiscal 2008 Capital Improvement Plan is estimated for completion in March 2010.

The department's NAME accreditation status is scheduled for review in fiscal 2009. **The Department of Legislative Services recommends committee narrative requiring OCME to submit to the committees a report on their preparation for reaccreditation.**

Exhibit 4
Average Number of Autopsies per Medical Examiner
Fiscal 2005-2008



NAME: National Association of Medical Examiners

*NAME standards changed in 2006 from 350 autopsies per medical examiner

Source: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

Recommended Actions

- | | <u>Amount
Reduction</u> | |
|--|------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Reduce funding for motor vehicle maintenance and repair. Maintenance and repair costs should be reduced with the purchase of a new vehicle. | \$ 1,500 | GF |
| 2. Adopt the following narrative: | | |

Report Needed to Assure Reaccreditation Preparedness: The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) is scheduled to undergo review for the National Association of Medical Examiners accreditation in December 2008. Maryland's current medical examiner workload is only slightly below the accreditation organization's absolute limit. OCME should submit a report by January 1, 2008, summarizing the actions taken to ensure the State maintains its accreditation.

Information Request	Author	Due Date
Accreditation Preparedness Report	OCME	January 1, 2008
Total General Fund Reductions		\$ 1,500

Current and Prior Year Budgets

Current and Prior Year Budgets Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (\$ in Thousands)

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Special Fund</u>	<u>Federal Fund</u>	<u>Reimb. Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
Fiscal 2006					
Legislative Appropriation	\$7,484	\$0	\$156	\$129	\$7,769
Deficiency Appropriation	0	0	0	0	0
Budget Amendments	521	0	3	0	524
Reversions and Cancellations	0	0	0	-64	-64
Actual Expenditures	\$8,005	\$0	\$159	\$65	\$8,229
Fiscal 2007					
Legislative Appropriation	\$7,809	\$0	\$178	\$75	8,062
Budget Amendments	142	0	0	0	142
Working Appropriation	\$7,951	\$0	\$178	\$75	\$8,204

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding.

Fiscal 2006

The general fund appropriation increased \$521,000 in order to recognize the fiscal 2006 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), reallocation of health insurance, and to cover an increase in utility costs.

The federal fund appropriation increased \$3,000 to cover a salary increase for an assistant medical examiner funded with the bioterrorism grant.

The reimbursable fund appropriation decreased \$64,000.

Fiscal 2007

The general fund appropriation increased \$142,000 in order to recognize the fiscal 2007 employee COLA and increased utility costs. Funds for the COLA were transferred from the Department of Budget and Management while funds for utilities were transferred from other units of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

**Object/Fund Difference Report
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner**

<u>Object/Fund</u>	<u>FY06 Actual</u>	<u>FY07 Working Appropriation</u>	<u>FY08 Allowance</u>	<u>FY07-FY08 Amount Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Positions					
01 Regular	76.00	76.00	76.00	0	0%
02 Contractual	4.54	6.00	6.75	0.75	12.5%
Total Positions	80.54	82.00	82.75	0.75	0.9%
Objects					
01 Salaries and Wages	\$ 6,213,626	\$ 6,243,762	\$ 6,289,588	\$ 45,826	0.7%
02 Technical and Spec Fees	418,980	439,381	581,918	142,537	32.4%
03 Communication	52,535	50,046	53,552	3,506	7.0%
04 Travel	4,048	3,617	4,048	431	11.9%
06 Fuel and Utilities	289,361	310,720	283,730	-26,990	-8.7%
07 Motor Vehicles	12,077	12,421	31,209	18,788	151.3%
08 Contractual Services	575,277	583,841	613,356	29,515	5.1%
09 Supplies and Materials	537,520	488,417	528,225	39,808	8.2%
10 Equip — Replacement	84,759	59,091	81,251	22,160	37.5%
11 Equip — Additional	18,307	0	34,539	34,539	N/A
13 Fixed Charges	16,953	13,402	15,002	1,600	11.9%
14 Land and Structures	4,774	0	0	0	0.0%
Total Objects	\$ 8,228,217	\$ 8,204,698	\$ 8,516,418	\$ 311,720	3.8%
Funds					
01 General Fund	\$ 8,004,817	\$ 7,951,385	\$ 8,238,847	\$ 287,462	3.6%
05 Federal Fund	157,970	178,313	180,985	2,672	1.5%
09 Reimbursable Fund	65,430	75,000	96,586	21,586	28.8%
Total Funds	\$ 8,228,217	\$ 8,204,698	\$ 8,516,418	\$ 311,720	3.8%

Note: The fiscal 2007 appropriation does not include deficiencies, and the fiscal 2008 allowance does not reflect contingent reductions.

**Fiscal Summary
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner**

<u>Program/Unit</u>	<u>FY06 Actual</u>	<u>FY07 Wrk Approp</u>	<u>FY08 Allowance</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>FY07-FY08 % Change</u>
01 Post Mortem Examining Services	\$ 8,228,217	\$ 8,204,698	\$ 8,516,418	\$ 311,720	3.8%
Total Expenditures	\$ 8,228,217	\$ 8,204,698	\$ 8,516,418	\$ 311,720	3.8%
General Fund	\$ 8,004,817	\$ 7,951,385	\$ 8,238,847	\$ 287,462	3.6%
Federal Fund	157,970	178,313	180,985	2,672	1.5%
Total Appropriations	\$ 8,162,787	\$ 8,129,698	\$ 8,419,832	\$ 290,134	3.6%
Reimbursable Fund	\$ 65,430	\$ 75,000	\$ 96,586	\$ 21,586	28.8%
Total Funds	\$ 8,228,217	\$ 8,204,698	\$ 8,516,418	\$ 311,720	3.8%

Note: The fiscal 2007 appropriation does not include deficiencies, and the fiscal 2008 allowance does not reflect contingent reductions.