

ENROLLED ORDINANCE 180-18

CREATE 1.0 FTE ASSOCIATE MEDICAL EXAMINER POSITION AND MODIFY THE
2025 MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE BUDGET

WHEREAS, the Waukesha County Medical Examiner's Office is mandated by §§ 59.34 and 979.01, Wisconsin Statutes, to investigate deaths to ensure safety, health, and welfare of the county; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Medical Examiners has established caseload standards, with a recommendation that forensic pathologists perform a maximum of 250 autopsies per year; and

WHEREAS, the county's two full-time forensic pathologists, the Medical Examiner and Associate Medical Examiner, have consistently performed more than 250 autopsies and external examinations for several years; and

WHEREAS, the expectation of law enforcement and county residents is for timely examination of deaths, which requires staff to be consistently on-call and available for investigations and responsive to decedent families; and

WHEREAS, providing this coverage with only two full-time forensic pathologists makes it difficult to accommodate weekends, holidays, and employee medical leave situations; and

WHEREAS, this high caseload and demanding coverage responsibility is likely to impair recruitment and retention of forensic pathologists, of which there is a national shortage; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to employ an additional Associate Medical Examiner (forensic pathologist) to alleviate caseload, help ensure retention of existing staff, and make future recruitments more successful; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that the partial-year impact of hiring a third forensic pathologist would be \$128,000; and

WHEREAS, due to the national shortage of forensic pathologists, it is anticipated that the county may need to use a contracted recruitment firm and potentially pay for relocation costs, estimated to total \$50,000; and

WHEREAS, these costs were not anticipated in the 2025 adopted budget and will need to be covered using General Fund balance.

THE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF WAUKESHA ORDAINS that the Waukesha County Medical Examiner's Office is authorized to create one (1) regular full-time Associate Medical Examiner position, medical range 03 (\$133.62/hour minimum, \$148.89/hour mid-point, \$164.14/hour maximum).

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that the 2025 Waukesha County Medical Examiner's Office Budget be modified to increase personnel costs by \$128,000, operating expenses by \$50,000, and


General Fund balance use by \$178,000 to fund a new Associate Medical Examiner position and related recruitment expenses.

CREATE 1.0 FTE ASSOCIATE MEDICAL EXAMINER POSITION AND MODIFY THE
2025 MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE BUDGET

Presented by: Judiciary &
Law Enforcement Committee

Approved by:
Human Resources Committee


Approved by:
Finance Committee


Jacob LaFontain, Chair

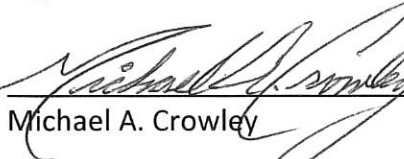

Larry Nelson, Chair

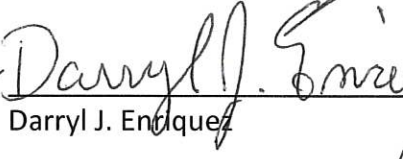

Gary J. Szpara, Chair

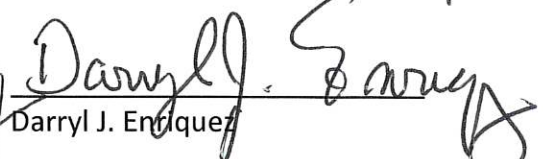

Jim Batzko


Michael A. Crowley



Timothy Dondlinger



Michael A. Crowley


Darryl J. Enriquez


Darryl J. Enriquez


Timothy Dondlinger


Darlene M. Johnson


Wayne Euclide

Absent


John D. Leisemann

Absent

Brian Meier

Absent


Joel R. Gaughan


Deb Schroeder

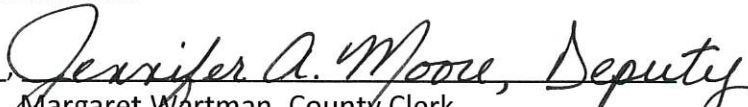

Chris Mommaerts


Darlene M. Johnson


Terry Thieme


Jeremy Walz

The foregoing legislation adopted by the County Board of Supervisors of Waukesha County, Wisconsin,
was presented to the County Executive on:

Date: 06-27-2025 
Margaret Wartman, County Clerk

The foregoing legislation adopted by the County Board of Supervisors of Waukesha County, Wisconsin, is
hereby:

Approved: X

Vetoed: _____

Date: 6/30/25 
Paul Farrow, County Executive

FISCAL NOTE

CREATE 1.0 FTE ASSOCIATE MEDICAL EXAMINER POSITION AND MODIFY THE 2025 MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE BUDGET

This ordinance authorizes the creation of a 1.0 FTE Associate Medical Examiner (forensic pathologist) position. The county currently employs two full-time forensic pathologists: The Medical Examiner and the current Associate Medical Examiner. The county currently provides autopsies services through a contract with Washington County, which is estimated to generate \$250,000 of revenue and helps ensure that the county can afford its current staff. The county also has a more limited contract with Kenosha County to provide pediatric autopsies.

Since 2022, the county has also employed a temporary part-time forensic pathologist to offset some of the caseload. Even with this part-time assistance, the two full-time forensic pathologists consistently perform more than the standard maximum number of autopsies/external evaluations of 250, with an average caseload of 276 in 2024 (see table below). (Please note that these figures exclude external examinations provided for Washington County cases because the recently revised contract (enrolled ordinance 179-52) anticipates that Washington County will perform the majority of their own external examinations. Thus, the table understates prior-year workload, but is more reflective of caseload going forward.)

<u>CASELOAD HISTORY</u>					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Waukesha County Autopsies	282	311	297	270	260
Waukesha County External Examinations	246	230	274	259	282
Washington County Autopsies	105	120	113	117	86
Kenosha County Autopsies				3	4
Subtotal	633	661	684	649	632
Less Cases Handled by Part-Time Pathologist			(68)	(70)	(81)
Net Cases	633	661	616	579	551
Full-Time Pathologists	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Cases per FTE	317	331	308	290	276

Hiring a third forensic pathologist will bring caseload levels down to more manageable levels and allow greater flexibility in providing on-call coverage. This is expected to help improve recruitment and retention for these scarce positions. Assuming 2024 actual case levels of 632, and the elimination of the temporary part-time pathologist, the caseload per full-time position would decrease from 276 to about 211.

This ordinance also modifies the budget to increase personnel costs by \$128,000, assuming a partial year impact of four months (September start date), and to increase operating expenses by \$50,000 to cover the costs of a recruitment firm and potential relocation costs (see table below). The cost of hiring a new forensic pathologist is uncertain due the wide range of salaries across the nation and the scarcity of these highly trained medical doctors in this field. The projection assumes an individual starting at the mid-point of the current range. Depending on the starting pay for the new position, some of these appropriations may be needed to provide pay adjustments to existing staff for internal equity purposes and avoid compression (i.e., provide reasonable differentiation in pay for existing staff with more experience and qualifications).

The full-year impact of the position is estimated to be \$402,000, which is offset by the elimination of the temporary part-time pathologist that was budgeted at \$158,000, for a net impact of \$244,000. The current-year costs will be covered through \$178,000 of General Fund balance. It is anticipated that most of the \$244,000 impact in 2026 will also be covered with General Fund balance and will need to be phased-down over multiple years.

PROJECTED COSTS			
	2025		2026
New Associate Medical Examiner	\$	128,000	\$ 402,000
Deduct Temp Pathologist			\$ (158,000)
Recruitment Expenses	\$	50,000	
Total	\$	178,000	\$ 244,000

William Duckwitz

William Duckwitz
Budget Manager
6/3/2025

VOTE RESULTS

22 YES 0 NO 0 ABSTAIN 3 ABSENT

Consent Agenda

Passed With 16 Yes Votes Needed

D1 - Styza	AYE	D10 - Thieme	AYE	D19 - Enriquez	AYE
D2 - Euclide	AYE	D11 - Howard	AYE	D20 - Schellinger	AYE
D3 - Vacant	ABSENT	D12 - Wolff	AYE	D21 - Gaughan	AYE
D4 - Batzko	AYE	D13 - Leisemann	ABSENT	D22 - Szpara	AYE
D5 - Dondlinger	AYE	D14 - Mommaerts	AYE	D23 - Hammitt	M AYE
D6 - Walz	AYE	D15 - Kolb	AYE	D24 - Schroeder	AYE
D7 - LaFontain	AYE	D16 - Crowley	AYE	D25 - Johnson	S AYE
D8 - Koremenos	ABSENT	D17 - Meier	AYE		
D9 - Heinrich	AYE	D18 - Nelson	AYE		

3rd Meeting, 180th Year of the County Board of Supervisors - June 24 2025 07:09:28 PM
June 24, 2025

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