

# MEDICAL EXAMINER

*It is the mission of the Sheboygan County Medical Examiner's Office to provide professional death investigation into the deaths reportable to the Sheboygan County Medical Examiner's Office as it is applicable to the Wisconsin State Statutes and make a determination into the cause and manner of death. The Medical Examiner's office investigates deaths in Sheboygan County that are reportable under Wisconsin Statutes 30.67, 346.71, 350, 155, 979.01 & 979.025.*



**Desarae Rohde**  
Medical Examiner



The Medical Examiner's Office (MEO) investigates deaths that are sudden, suspicious, or unnatural, serving as a critical link in the County's public health and justice systems. By conducting thorough scene investigations, physical exams, and medical record reviews, the Office determines the precise cause and manner of death. This work ensures the accuracy of vital records, identifies emerging drug trends or disease outbreaks, and provides answers to families and the justice system.

Beyond investigations, the MEO is statutorily required to review and issue cremation permits, ensuring all legal and medical requirements are met before final disposition. The department works 24/7 in close collaboration with law enforcement, public health officials, and forensic laboratories. By participating in the Overdose Fatality Review Team and the Traffic Safety Commission, the Office translates mortality data into local prevention strategies. Staff maintain professional excellence through memberships in state and international associations, ensuring access to best practices and expert networks.

# 2025 Achievements



Utilized \$6,600 in grant funds for opioid related autopsies



2025 Mortality Trend  
Improvement: Homicides  
↓ 50% | Suicides ↓ 18% |  
Accidental Deaths ↓ 16%

## 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2025, the Medical Examiner's Office successfully transitioned to a new professional leadership model with the appointment of the county's first Full-Time Medical Examiner. This change, along with the addition of two new Deputy Medical Examiners, has modernized the department's 24/7 response capabilities. The team also enhanced its impact on public health by integrating with national mortality databases, including the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS), to help track and address critical drug and violence trends.

The department also focused heavily on community education and professional collaboration. Staff worked closely with local hospitals and hospice agencies to ensure accurate death reporting and a clear understanding of the Medical Examiner's jurisdiction. By leading discussions within the Opioid Fatality Review and Traffic Safety teams, the Office ensured that investigation findings were directly used to inform local prevention strategies and community safety initiatives.

# 2025 BUDGET

Revenues	\$ 340,355
Expenses	\$ 334,024
Transfers In/Out	-
(Under)/Over Budget	\$ (6,332)

## 2026 LOOK AHEAD

In 2026, the Medical Examiner's Office will achieve 100% staff certification through the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigator. To provide both timely exams and respect for families, the office will strive to complete autopsies within 72 hours of investigation, coordinating with forensic pathologists to return decedents to their chosen funeral homes as quickly as possible.

The Office will also continue to strengthen partnerships with law enforcement, funeral homes, and hospital systems through policy updates and ongoing education. Notably, in collaboration with the Division of Public Health, the MEO will re-establish the Child Death Review Team, restoring a resource that had been dissolved since 2020.

