

Chapter 18 - Department of the Medical Examiner

The Department of the Medical Examiner (MED) investigates sudden, unexpected, medically unattended, violent, and suspicious deaths. Accurate and timely medicolegal investigations and determination of causes and manners of death are essential to the community and public safety.

The department's goals are to:

- Provide accurate certification of the cause and manner of death and to identify, document, and interpret relevant forensic scientific information, while maintaining a high level of competence;
- Protect public health by diagnosing previously unsuspected contagious diseases and identifying trends affecting the lives of our citizens such as drug-related deaths, number of traffic fatalities, teen suicides, etc.;
- Identify new types of illicit drugs appearing in our community; and
- Identify hazardous environmental conditions in the workplace, home, and elsewhere.

The department's administration provides support to its two divisions:

Laboratory
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducts procedures including toxicological analysis, blood alcohol determinations, and histological examinations

Investigative/Plant Operations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interviews witnesses• Examines and documents death scenes• Conducts post mortem examinations

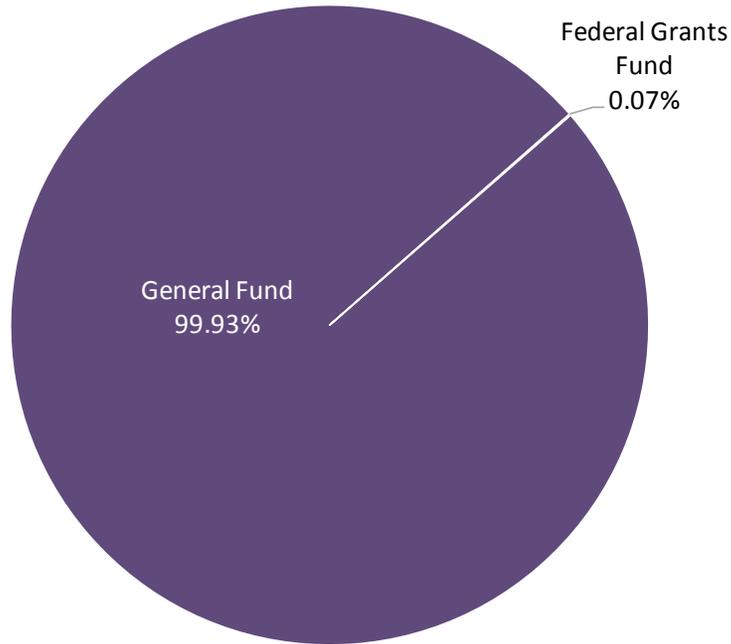


To provide accurate, dignified, compassionate, and professional death investigative services for the City and County of Honolulu's residents and visitors.

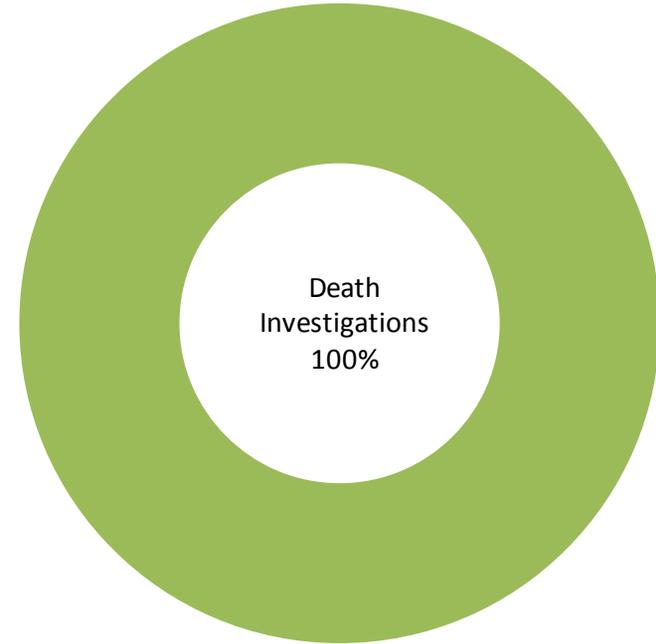
Mission Statement

Spending and Staffing

Fund Sources



Fund Uses



	Total Revenues ¹	Operating Expenditures (\$ millions)	Staffing		Overtime Expenditures ³				
			Total Authorized FTE	Total Vacant FTE	Cost Per FTE ²	Total	Non-Holiday	Investigations ⁴	Autopsies ⁵
FY 2015	\$5,755	\$1.78	19.0	0.0	\$93,573	\$48,165	\$31,258	2,367	795
FY 2016	\$2,854	\$2.02	19.0	2.0	\$106,323	\$46,775	\$29,871	2,371	881
FY 2017	\$6,086	\$1.96	19.0	2.0	\$103,100	\$51,939	\$31,486	2,779	891
FY 2018	\$2,840	\$2.05	20.0	4.0	\$102,498	\$50,171	\$31,041	3,030	571
FY 2019	\$6,318	\$2.20	24.0	2.0	\$91,675	\$54,453	\$31,172	3,121	488
Change from last year	122%	7%	20%	-50%	-11%	9%	<1%	3%	-15%
Change over last 5 years	10%	24%	26%	--	-2%	13%	<-1%	32%	-39%

Source: Department of Budget Fiscal Services and Department of the Medical Examiner. ¹Revenues are derived from \$5 autopsy report fees, which are deposited into the General Fund. ²Cost Per FTE = Total Operating Expenditures/Total Authorized FTE. ³Overtime pay is established by bargaining unit agreement, as applicable. ⁴Investigation numbers were restated from prior years to correct the values because of a system problem. ⁵Includes adjusted external examination (3:1) totals as recommended by National Association of Medical Examiners.

Spending and Revenues



Operating Expenditures

\$2.2 M ▲ 7%

Operating expenditures have increased 7% from \$2.05 million in FY 2018 to \$2.2 million in FY 2019. The department attributes the increase to the increase of the removal and pick up of dead bodies and solid waste disposals.



Revenues

\$6.3 K ▲ 122%

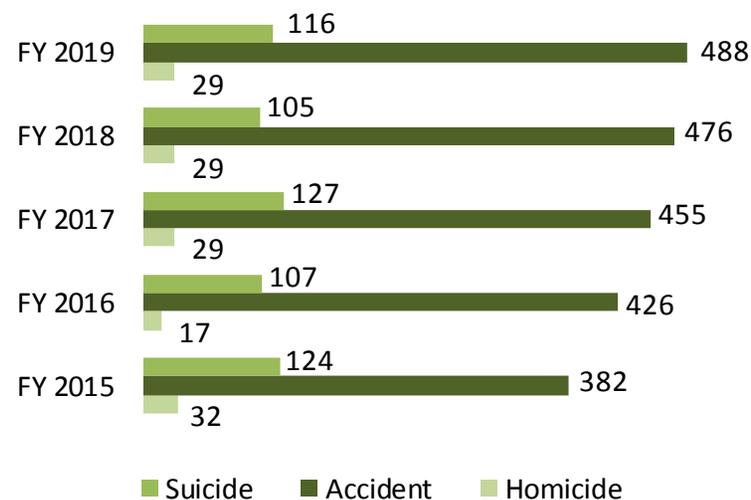
Revenues have increased 122% from \$2,840 in FY 2018 to \$6,318 in FY 2019.

Five Year Trend



- From FY 2015 to FY 2019, homicides decreased by 9%. The highest cause of fatalities in FY 2019 were due to gunshot wounds totaling 19 deaths.

**Top 3 Non-Natural Manners of Death
FY 2015 to FY 2019**



Source: Department of the Medical Examiner

FY 2019 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Investigated 4,239 deaths; assumed jurisdiction in 1,145 cases; performed 488 autopsies; and performed 657 external examinations
- Hired a new Forensic Pathologist and two Medicolegal Investigators

CHALLENGES MOVING FORWARD — FY 2020

- Building improvements and funding for new equipment
- Staff and leadership changes

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