

# STATE OF MAINE

## Chief Medical Examiner

Location: Augusta, Maine

Base Salary Range: \$285,000 – \$310,000

Application Dates: Open Until Filled

Starting Date: Open Until Filled

The Maine Office of Chief Medical Examiner is seeking a forensic pathologist to serve as Chief Medical Examiner in our facility in Augusta, Maine.

Maine, the Pine Tree State, is best known for lobsters, rocky shoreline, and the vast forests that blanket most of the state. With a large geographical area, and total population less than 1.4million, Maine is one of the most rural states in the country. This means there are plenty of open spaces to get away and explore! Maine has coastline, mountains, multiple state parks, and Acadia National Park with opportunities for enjoying the outdoors, hiking, biking, camping, boating, and fishing. With 3,478 miles of coastline, you are bound to find a spot to enjoy the Atlantic Ocean any time during our four seasons of the year. Maine has the lowest violent crime rate in the country; and an average of 24 homicides a year. Working in Augusta, the state's capitol, provides a unique opportunity for networking. Augusta is 50 minutes from Portland, the state's largest city. Centrally located between two international airports (Portland and Bangor) and the Amtrak train system, any destination point is easily accessible from Augusta. By car, it is 2.5 hours to Boston, five hours to Montreal, and six hours to New York City.

About the Maine Office of Chief Medical Examiner (OCME): At the moment, the facility occupies a free-standing 8,350 square foot building at 30 Hospital Street in Augusta. A new 20,000 sq./ft. building is currently being designed, with construction on the current campus set to begin in 2023.

The Office of Chief Medical Examiner was established in 1968 through the passing of the “Medical Examiner Act”, Title 22 MRSA Chapter 711. The office is administratively within the Office of the Attorney General and is empowered to take jurisdiction over all deaths that are not known to be due to exclusively natural processes. All violent, criminal, suspicious, and deaths of apparent undetermined causes or manners fall under the jurisdiction of the OCME. Other types of deaths (which may be due to natural causes), such as in infants, or people in custody, or any deaths whose causes may represent a potential risk to the public at large, are also investigated by the OCME. The OCME works with many local and state agencies including the Attorney General's Office, state and local law enforcement, various state agencies, and fatality review teams. The OCME has been fully accredited by the National Association of Medical Examiners since 2017.

The OCME is staffed with twelve full time positions: one Chief Medical Examiner, one Deputy Chief Medical Examiner, one Office Administrator, two Medicolegal Death Investigators, four clerical/office staff, one Director of Laboratory and Mortuary Operations, and two Medical Examiner Assistants. By statute, the Chief Medical Examiner is appointed for a seven year term by the Governor. The Chief then appoints the Deputy Chief and Office Administrator. The Chief Medical Examiner also appoints all field Medical Examiners and field Medicolegal Death Investigators.

The office currently has one full-time position funded by a grant from the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS). This program is funded and administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). There are also two part-time Field Deputy Chief Medical Examiners, and contracted administrative staff to answer the phones overnight, on weekends, on holidays, and whenever else the office is officially closed.

In addition to the two full-time Medicolegal Death Investigators employed by the OCME, there are approximately 45 field Medical Examiners who conduct examinations and certify deaths on behalf of the OCME. They are physician volunteers who are reimbursed a set fee for their service. There are also several field Medicolegal Death Investigators who conduct examinations under the direction and guidance of the Chief or Deputy Chief Medical Examiner. The field Medical Examiners and field Medicolegal Death Investigators are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Chief Medical Examiner for a term of five years and can be renewed indefinitely. The OCME also utilizes medical consultants such as a forensic anthropologist or a forensic neuropathologist as necessary for case investigation.

Duties of the Chief Medical Examiner/Examples of Work: Chief Medical Examiner duties include oversight of medicolegal death investigations, attendance at scenes of investigation when necessary, performance of medicolegal autopsies and review of ancillary tests (including completion of reports and records), forensic pathology consultative services, expert witness testimony in civil and criminal matters, responding to inquiries from next of kin, and teaching undergraduate and medical students, pathology residents, and law enforcement. The Chief will also be heavily involved in the administration of the office and medicolegal death investigator system (oversight of personnel, policy and procedure development, interactions with stakeholders). To perform these duties well, the pathologist must dedicate time to continuing medical education (CME) and familiarization with existing and updated performance standards, research/literature, and technologies. Funding is available for medical licensing and renewal, CME activities and membership in professional organizations, including attendance at professional meetings.

Workload: Successful applicant will share responsibility for casework with one other full-time forensic pathologist (the Deputy Chief) and occasional contracted weekend pathologists, to include performance of autopsies (weekdays and every third or fourth weekend) and low volume, after-hours calls by phone to support death investigators. When fully staffed, caseload is well within National Association of Medical Examiner accreditation limits, leaving suitable time for paperwork, court appearances, academic pursuits, and vacation scheduling.

Qualifications: The ideal candidate will have:

- Thorough knowledge of the principles, practices, methods and techniques, and current developments of forensic pathology
- Demonstrated ability to act independently in an administrative and leadership roll
- Ability to perform autopsies
- Ability to prepare testimony and act as an expert witness in court
- Ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing

- Ability to prepare and present clear and concise reports
- Ability to establish and maintain effective professional relationships

Minimum qualifications:

- Education: Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy
- Medical Certification: American Board of Pathology certification in Anatomic Pathology and Forensic Pathology
- Medical Licensure: Eligibility for, or possession of, a license to practice medicine or osteopathy in Maine
- Candidates must pass any level of background investigation applicable to the position