



Washington Association  
of COUNTY OFFICIALS

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## HB 1794 / SB 5612

# Concerning the Death Investigations Account

Supported by the Washington Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (WACME) and the Washington Association of County Officials (WACO).

The proposed legislation authorizes the Forensic Investigations Council (FIC) to spend from the Death Investigations Account (DIA) in order to fund a statewide case management system for coroners and medical examiners.

## A Statewide Case Management System

- A statewide system will make Washington safer.
- Currently each of Washington's 39 counties uses their own case management systems.
- A statewide case management system will allow counties to potentially identify connected crimes in different counties.
- A statewide case management system will increase the ability to identify human remains.
- A statewide case management system will allow for inter-jurisdiction aid and cooperation in the event of regional or statewide emergencies.

*A statewide case management system for the Coroner/ME offices would align with the current Death Investigations Account expenditures.*

### The Death Investigations Account (DIA)

- The DIA funds various activities related to investigations of deaths in the state.
- The DIA is funded with revenues from a fee charged by the Department of Health (DOH) and local registrars for providing certified copies of records such as birth and death certificates.
- The DIA currently pays for the Toxicology Laboratory, the cost of performing autopsies; the Washington State Patrol's dental identification system; and training specifically for coroners, medical examiners, and their investigative staff provided by the CJTC training.

### The Forensic Investigations Council (FIC)

- The FIC is a 13-member, Governor appointed council responsible for the oversight of the Bureau of Forensic Laboratory Services.
- Currently, the FIC is permitted to authorize various expenditures from the DIA including up to \$250,000 per biennium for assisting local jurisdictions in the investigation of multiple deaths involving unanticipated or extraordinary events, and up to \$25,000 per biennium for assisting local jurisdictions in securing forensic anthropology services or other testing in order to identify human remains.

