



Certification & Accreditation Standards

The Washington Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (WACME) is committed to excellence in death investigation practices as it is essential to law enforcement, our legal system, and surviving family members. In Washington State, the elected role of County Coroner requires no experience. Training for elected County Coroners is available, but unlike the expectations for law enforcement and firefighters, there is no set timeline or expectation for completion of basic training.



Washington Association
of COUNTY OFFICIALS

Sustainable Policies, Sustainable Counties

Counties provide constitutionally and statutorily directed state services to all of Washington's residents. The Washington Association of County Officials (WACO) is working to secure clear and sustainable policies to provide all 39 counties with the foundation to provide sustainable service levels to every Washingtonian. Our elected county officials provide direct services to citizens in support of their health, safety and financial well-being.

WACME is asking the Legislature to join them in raising the expectations for training to ensure the integrity of the medicolegal system, to increase reliability, and to ensure that funds are spent as intended.



Since 2012, WACME has provided a basic death investigation course that meets certification requirements.



Since then, 35 of 39 counties have participated in this training.



In 2019, the Legislature increased funding for updating this basic training to meet accreditation standards.



With funding and updated training in place, there should be an expectation that all Coroners complete it.

Training is necessary, but without a requirement to ensure that Coroner and Medical Examiner offices meet statewide minimum basic standards of practice, there is no incentive to do so. These professional standards are essential for law enforcement, the legal system, and for families dealing with the loss of a loved one.

A Cultural Change is Needed.

This proposal will create a culture change with an expectation of the highest levels of professional standards within the medicolegal community that is backed up by expectation of meeting such standards from legislature and Washington residents.

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