

ADDRESS THE WSP TOXICOLOGY LAB BACKLOG



The number of Coroner and Medical Examiner cases requiring toxicological analysis continues to grow each year. In addition, there is a higher need for analysis of all synthetic illicit drugs, which the WSP State Toxicology Lab lacks enough equipment to test for. These requisitions are forwarded from the WSP State Toxicology Lab to a national toxicology lab (NMS) to process and then sent back to WSP tox lab for final review which creates a travel cost for counties when needing trial representation from the testing lab.

Additionally, the processing time for a case takes on average 90 days, which affects the ability for the Coroner and Medical Examiner Offices to determine the cause and manner of death.

Law enforcement and the Prosecuting Attorney's rely on the Coroner and Medical Examiner's findings to assist in their work. This delay in results impacts the ability for a case to be successfully prosecuted.

The Washington Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (WACME) and all WACO members support dedicated funding for the WSP Toxicology Lab that would be allocated only for additional lab technicians and equipment to address the lab's backlog and handle current caseloads.

A well-funded toxicology lab will allow Washington to better respond to emergent trends such as drug overdoses, as well as reduce trial costs of flying in lab technicians from outsourced laboratories, creating a more responsive criminal justice environment.

Jennifer Wallace - Executive Director
jennifer@countyofficials.org
360-489-3042

Timothy Grisham - Deputy Director
tim@countyofficials.org
360-489-3044



WWW.COUNTYOFFICIALS.ORG