

# Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

**FY 2025 Budget Hearing Presentation**

**Submitted by: Dr. Eric A. Pfeifer, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner**

# Dr. Eric A. Pfeifer, M.D. Chief Medical Examiner



The **Office of the Chief Medical Examiner** is statutorily charged with investigating sudden, violent, unexpected and suspicious deaths. These medicolegal investigations collect evidence, determine cause and manner of death, and provide expert testimony in both criminal and civil legal proceedings. When a death occurs on the job or appears to be work-related, the results of the medicolegal investigation are of direct benefit to the family in order that insurance claims may be appropriately settled. These examinations also help identify potentially unsafe consumer products. The public health function of the medical examiner's office is further apparent in the investigation of cases in which poisons, hazardous work environments or infectious agents are implicated. The identification of such dangerous elements allows the prompt implementation of treatment and preventative measures through coordination with Oklahoma's public health agencies and OSHA.

Founded in **1965**, this agency now encompasses the following divisions: Administration, Forensic Anthropology, Investigations, Forensic Pathology Services and Toxicology.

# Agency Vision, Mission and Core Values

**Vision:** Dignified and thorough medicolegal investigations of applicable deaths occurring in the State of Oklahoma.

**Mission:** The mission of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner is to protect the public health and safety of Oklahomans through the scientific investigation of deaths as defined by state statutes. This process involves scene investigation and medicolegal autopsy (including radiology, toxicology, histology, and microbiology) complementing the activities of law enforcement agencies, district attorneys and public health officials. We accept the responsibility with integrity, diligence and compassion in order to best assist and provide answers to families, law enforcement and taxpayers of this state.

**Core Values:** Integrity, dignified independent investigation and handling of human remains, professionalism.



# Accomplishments

## Top accomplishments for FY 2023 – FY 2024

- 1) Toxicology Laboratory received their ISO17025 accreditation.
- 2) Fellowship program received their continued accreditation for ACGME.
- 3) NCHIP (electronic fingerprint program) is in full use at both offices, along with a secure OLETS terminal.



# Challenges

## Top Challenges (current & upcoming years)

- 1) Recruitment and retention of Forensic Pathologists.
- 2) Timely implementation of a new Case Management System, to maximize our return on grant funding via OSDH.



# Savings & Efficiencies (Current or Planned)

Savings or Efficiency Name	Brief description of how savings were achieved	Savings in Unit of Measurement*	FY 2023 (Actual \$ Savings)	FY 2024 (Projected \$ Savings)	FY 2025 (Projected \$ Savings)
<i>CT Scanner</i>	<i>Continued development of using postmortem CT scans to supplement traditional surgical autopsies.</i>	<i>Lessen surgical autopsies.</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>My Health Membership</b>	Assist in acquiring medical records faster to reduce permit turn around time.	Improve permit turnaround.	N/A	N/A	N/A

\* Hours, FTE, square feet, etc.



# Agency Goals and Key Performance Metrics

Goal		Metric	FY 22 Actuals	FY 23 Actuals	FY 24 Target	FY 29 Target
1	The agency continues to work towards obtaining NAME (Nation Association of Medical Examiners) reaccreditation.	Once accreditation metrics are met, OCME will host an inspection to request reaccreditation.	New Tulsa building (improved autopsy lab and technology to meet NAME standards)	Replenish FP staff	Continue to recruit/retain FP staff	NAME reaccreditation
2	Cases per forensic pathologists (< 250/per year)	< 250 autopsy equivalents per forensic pathologist per year	242	319		
3	Permit turn-around time (< 2 business days)	< 2 business days	15 hours	12 hours		
4	> 90% cases finalized in 90 days	> 90% cases finalized in 90 days	N/A	56%		
5	% cases with autopsy	50%	33%	33%		



# Projects for FY 2024 - 2025

## Projects

- 1) Implementation of new Case Management System (CMS)
- 2) Upstairs expansion for Oklahoma City office – to allow space for new staff and expand the Toxicology Laboratory.
- 3) Add 2 new Forensic Pathologists, 1 new Forensic Anthropologist for the Tulsa office and 3 new Forensic Pathologists for the Oklahoma City office.
- 4) 2 new Forensic Pathologist Fellows (1 for Oklahoma City and 1 for Tulsa locations)

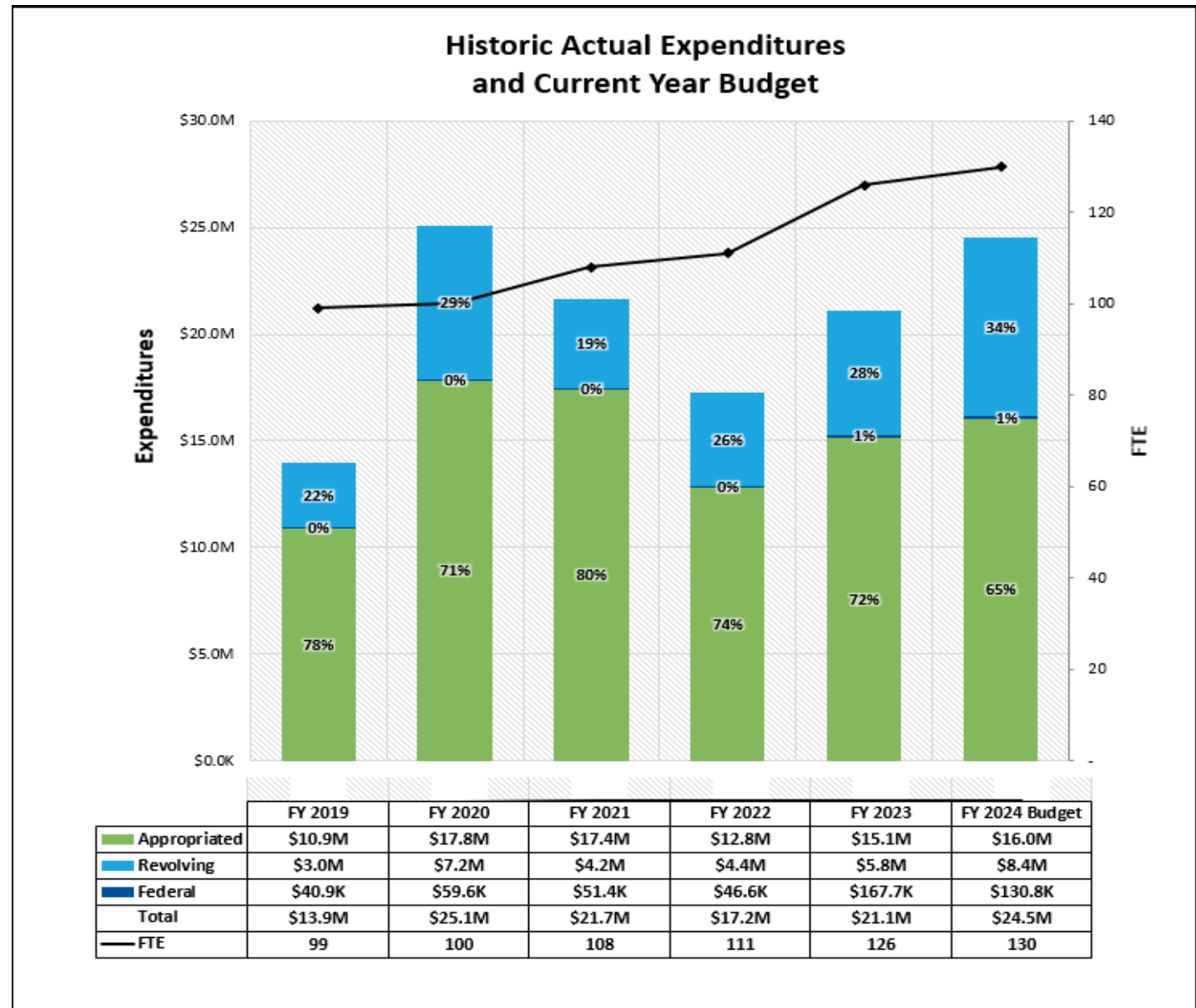


# Historic Actual Expenditures (FY 2019-23) and Current Year Budget (FY 2024)

## Explanation of Significant Changes and Trends

Increase in expenditures are due to market adjustments and cost of living increases for current staff, additional FTEs to increase case completion rates and provide additional administrative support.

Salaries for forensic pathologists were raised to increase retention due to an increasingly competitive market.



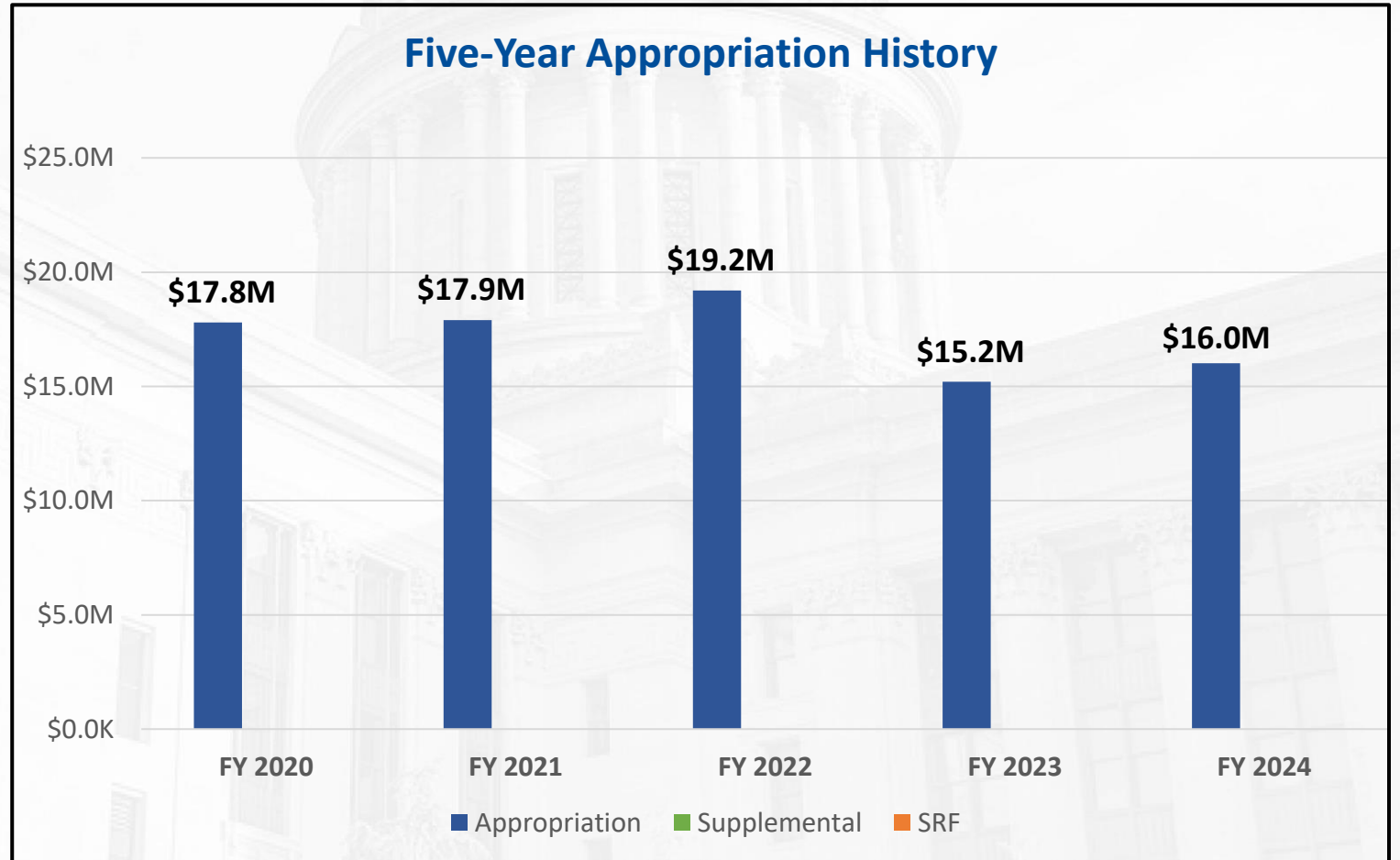


# FY 2024 Budgeted Full Time Equivalents (FTE)

	FY 2024 Budgeted FTE
<b>Total FTE</b>	130
<b>Supervisor FTE</b>	11
<b>Supervisors to Total FTE Ratio (%)</b>	8.5%

# Appropriation History

Fiscal Year	Legislated Appropriation (\$) (Includes supplementals and SRF/ARPA.)
FY 2020	\$17,800,000
FY 2021	\$17,900,000
FY 2022	\$19,200,000
FY 2023	\$15,200,000
FY 2024	\$16,019,144



*\*Includes Supplemental and Statewide Recovery Fund (ARPA) appropriations.*



# Financial Resource Analysis

Carryover	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
Total appropriated carryover amount expended (\$)	\$1,479,735	\$1,691,297	\$2,073,637	\$2,462,304

Historical Cash Balances	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
Year End Revolving Fund Cash Balances <i>(All Revolving Funds)</i>	\$5,815,281	\$6,044,920	\$7,396,790	\$7,094,980

Class Fund # <i>(Unrestricted only)</i>	Class Fund Name <i>(Unrestricted only)</i>	Current cash balance (\$)
20000		\$7,094,980
#		\$
#		\$
#		\$
#		\$
#		\$
	<b>Total Current Unrestricted Fund Cash balance:</b>	\$

Fiscal Year	Agency's plan to deploy unrestricted cash (including amounts):
FY 2024	Case Management System
FY 2025	3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor Expansion
FY 2026	



*Unrestricted funds are those that are not limited by state or federal law, rule, regulation, other legally binding method, or donor restriction.*

# FY 2022 Incremental Appropriation Review

<i>Purpose of appropriation increase / decrease</i>	<i>Amount of increase or decrease (\$)</i>	<i>Included in FY24 appropriation? (Yes/No)</i>	<i>If yes, included in appropriation for same purpose? (Yes/No)</i>	<i>If not included for same purpose, please explain.</i>
<b>FY 2022</b>				
Construction of Tulsa/OSU location	\$6,000,000	No		Construction Completed, funding no longer needed
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
<b>Total adjustment</b>	\$			



*\*Do not include SRF / ARPA appropriation increases.*

# FY 2023 Incremental Appropriation Review

<i>Purpose of appropriation increase / decrease</i>	<i>Amount of increase or decrease (\$)</i>	<i>Included in FY24 appropriation? (Yes/No)</i>	<i>If yes, included in appropriation for same purpose? (Yes/No)</i>	<i>If not included for same purpose, please explain.</i>
<b>FY 2023</b>				
Funding pay increase for staff/Operating cost for new Tulsa building	\$1,800,000	Yes	Yes	
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
<b>Total adjustment</b>	\$			



*\*Do not include SRF / ARPA appropriation increases.*

# FY 2024 Incremental Appropriation Review

<i>Purpose of appropriation increase / decrease</i>	<i>Amount of increase or decrease (\$)</i>	<i>Does this need to be included in your FY 2025 appropriation? (Yes/No)</i>	<i>If yes, included in appropriation for same purpose? (Yes/No)</i>	<i>If not included for same purpose, please explain.</i>
<b>FY 2024</b>				
Salary increases and incremental increase in FTEs	\$813,000	Yes	Yes	
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
<b>Total adjustment</b>	\$			



*\*Do not include SRF / ARPA appropriation increases.*

# Budget & Supplemental Request Summary

	Request Name	FY 2025 Appropriated Request Amount (\$) {or FY 2024 for Supplementals}	Type of Request: Operating, One-time, or Supplemental
1	Increases salaries to recruit and retain Forensic Pathologists, Forensic Anthropologists and Forensic Toxicologists to handle increased caseload.	\$1,200,000	Operational
2			
3			
4			
5			



# (1) Budget Request

<b>Recruitment/Retention Increase</b>	
Type: Operational	\$ 1,200,000
Pay adjustment to retain/recruit forensic pathologists, add FTE for 4 <sup>th</sup> forensic anthropologists to accommodate workload.	

