

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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Speaker of the Council

Hon. Corey Johnson
Chair, Committee on Health



Report on the Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget and the Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report

Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

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Table of Contents

Office of the Chief Medical Examiner Overview	1
Report Structure	1
Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Plan Highlights	2
Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Mayor’s Management Report.....	4
Appendix A: OCME Budget Actions in the November and the Preliminary Plans	6
Appendix B: OCME Contract Budget.....	7
Appendix C: OCME Capital Budget Summary	8

Office of the Chief Medical Examiner Overview

Housed in the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH or the Department), the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME or the Office) identifies the manner and cause of death of people who die within New York City from criminal violence, by accident, by suicide, in a correctional facility, or in any suspicious or unusual manner. The Office also provides forensic DNA analysis through the Forensic Biology Laboratory and manages all functions of the City mortuary.

Other services include on-site investigation into manner and cause of death; identification of remains; performing autopsies; performing DNA testing related to identification of remains; examination of homicide, sexual assault, and other crime evidence collected by the Police Department for DNA extraction and typing; and responding to disasters that involve fatalities as part of a multidisciplinary team comprised of various City agencies.

The Office also maintains jurisdiction over the Repository at the World Trade Center Memorial. The Repository lies within the structure of the National September 11 Memorial complex and is accessed, operated and maintained solely by OCME. Under the professional auspices of the Office, the Repository provides a dignified and reverential setting for victim remains to repose—temporarily or in perpetuity—as the identification work continues.

To promote equity and best serve all New Yorkers—regardless of economic ability—OCME provides a viewing policy for those unable to afford funerary rites and offers free burial services for those who place their loved ones in the City Cemetery. The Office also serves as the independent pathologist for families unable to afford to hire a consultant when they have suspicions over a cause of death.

Report Structure

This report reviews the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner's \$66.7 million Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget. The report provides a financial summary, including highlights of the Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Budget and the Fiscal 2015 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report, and an analysis of capital spending.

Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Plan Highlights

OCME Expense Budget

The Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget allocates \$66.7 million to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME, or the Office), an increase of \$2.3 million, or three percent, since the Fiscal 2016 Adopted Budget. The OCME budget represents less than five percent of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's \$1.41 billion budget. Due to the staff-intensive nature of the Office's work, Personal Services (PS) account for 77 percent of the total OCME budget at \$51.4 million and Other Than Personal Services (OTPS) represent 23 percent of the budget at \$15.3 million.

OCME Expense Budget						
<i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	2014	2015	2016	Preliminary Plan		*Difference
	Actual	Actual	Adopted	2016	2017	2016 - 2017
Spending						
Personal Services						
Full-Time Salaried - Civilian	\$38,482	\$39,561	\$43,711	\$46,975	\$45,468	\$1,757
Other Salaried and Unsalariated	166	99	1,337	1,340	1,337	0
Additional Gross Pay	2,305	2,745	256	1,627	256	0
Overtime - Civilian	2,776	4,531	1,952	2,186	1,814	(137)
Fringe Benefits	162	167	18	178	18	0
Amounts to be Scheduled	0	0	1,676	0	2,474	798
Subtotal	\$43,891	\$47,104	\$48,950	\$52,306	\$51,367	\$2,418
Other Than Personal Services						
Supplies and Materials	\$5,698	\$4,962	\$3,588	\$6,106	\$4,789	\$1,201
Other Services and Charges	8,063	7,378	7,896	8,474	6,668	(1,228)
Contractual Services	5,432	4,737	3,689	6,840	3,367	(321)
Property & Equipment	2,722	2,358	246	1,772	496	249
Subtotal	\$21,916	\$19,436	\$15,419	\$23,192	\$15,319	(\$100)
TOTAL	\$65,806	\$66,539	\$64,369	\$75,498	\$66,687	\$2,318
Funding						
City Funds			\$64,369	\$64,472	\$66,687	\$2,318
State			0	1,376	0	0
Federal - Other			0	9,651	0	0
TOTAL	\$65,806	\$66,539	\$64,369	\$75,498	\$66,687	\$2,318
Headcount (Full-Time, Salaried)	554	569	641	641	662	21

*The difference of Fiscal 2016 Adopted Budget compared to Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget.

The State and federal governments did not allocate any funding to OCME in the Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget or the Fiscal 2016 Adopted Budget; therefore, the \$2 million increase is attributable to increased City funding for OCME new needs. Specifically, the Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget includes \$45.5 million for PS full-time salaried positions, an increase of \$1.8 million, or two percent when compared to the budget at adoption. Funding for OCME supplies and materials increased by \$1.2 million, or 25 percent, to \$4.8 million.

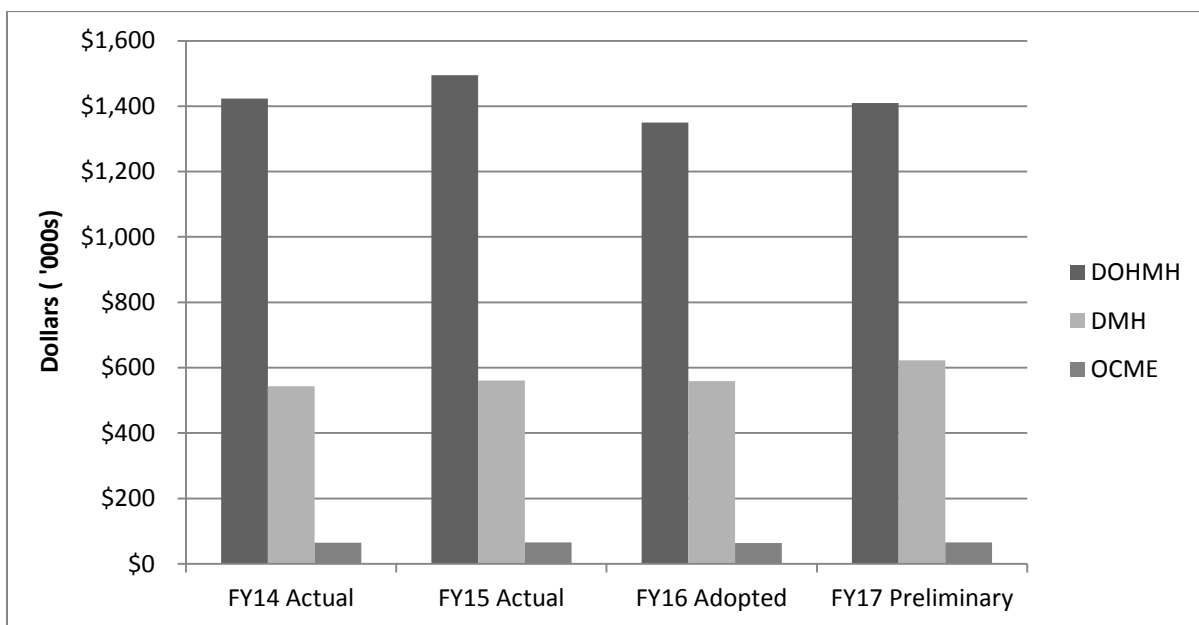
Fiscal 2016

Regarding the current fiscal year, the Office's \$75.5 million Fiscal 2016 Budget shows an increase of \$11 million since the budget was adopted in June of 2015. City funds increased

by \$100,000 during this period; State funding increased by \$1.4 million and federal funding increased by \$9.7 million, representing midyear increases typical for the Office.

The Office typically does not include federal and State funding in its preliminary appropriations but, rather, modifies the budget over the course of the fiscal year as it receives the funding. This funding is generally in the form of grants. In Fiscal 2016, the Office receives \$43,000 in Paul Coverdell State grants for DNA and toxicology work; \$1 million in federal funding through Homeland Security Grants; and \$2.6 million in National Institute of Justice grants to conduct research and development and DNA data analyses and to reduce the DNA backlog. The OCME headcount also remained at 641 positions.

OCME and DOHMH Actual and Planned Spending



The Office’s Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget includes \$2 million to conduct DNA testing of all guns swabbed by the New York Police Department (NYPD), a practice that can prove instrumental in assisting criminal investigations. The Budget allocates 21 new positions for this initiative, a three percent increase, bringing the OCME total headcount to 662 positions in Fiscal 2017.

Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report

The Preliminary Mayor's Management Report (PMMR) for Fiscal 2016 provides a comprehensive assessment of the City's performance from July through October 2015. The PMMR enables the public to evaluate agency effectiveness and efficiency in meeting the central needs of New Yorkers. The PMMR evaluates the ability of the Office to (1) perform the processes necessary to certify deaths falling within the agency's jurisdiction; (2) provide mortuary services to the City; (3) respond to disasters and emergencies when fatalities are involved; and (4) provide services to the city for forensic purposes.

The Office, tasked with providing services to the City for forensic purposes, strives to provide timely and accurate laboratory services for criminal justice purposes. During the first four months of Fiscal 2016, the OCME Forensic Biology Laboratory continued to reduce the number of DNA cases in its large backlog. By the end of this period, this OCME laboratory reduced its DNA case backlog to 549 cases, a reduction of 81 percent from the end of the Fiscal 2015 four-month period, when it had 2,689 cases backlogged.

The laboratory also improved its median DNA case completion time to 46 days for all case types, a reduction of 53 percent from the first four months of Fiscal 2015. OCME provided DNA sexual assault case reports to NYPD and DA offices in 37 days in the Fiscal 2016 four-month period, down from 56 days in the same period a year earlier, and the median times to complete homicide and property crime DNA tests also decreased noticeably at OCME in the first four months of Fiscal 2016.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Median days to complete analysis of a DNA case	138	92	92	30	30	98	46
Median time to complete DNA homicide cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	161	100	62	30	30	76	39
Median time to complete DNA sexual assault cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	89	59	50	30	30	56	37
Median time to complete DNA property crime cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	139	119	188	30	30	192	62
DNA matches with profiles in database	1,618	2,621	6,008			1,935	2,802
Median time to complete toxicology cases (days)	55	29	31	45	45	28	108
Median time to complete toxicology DUI (driving under the influence) cases (days)	14	20	30	10	10	25	58
Median time to complete toxicology sexual assault cases (days)	27	27	43	17	17	38	164

Toxicology case completion times rose sharply at OCME for the first four months of Fiscal 2016, compared to the same period of the previous year, from 38 days to 164 days. The Office reports that these increases were primarily due to the retirement of the Forensic Toxicology Laboratory director and assistant director in late Fiscal 2015. After an extensive search for a new director, OCME has selected an internationally recognized expert who is expected to join the Office shortly. Additionally, the Laboratory began an operational improvement project in Fiscal 2016, with the goal of reducing case backlogs and turnaround times while maintaining the high-level of quality that the City expects.

In order to perform the process necessary to certify deaths falling within the agency's jurisdiction, the Office strives to: respond promptly to scenes of reportable fatalities and conduct related investigations; perform autopsies and examinations necessary to issue timely death certificates; and provide timely investigation for all cremation requests. OCME reduced the time spent completing autopsy reports and processing cremation requests for the first four months of Fiscal 2016 when compared to the same period of the previous year, by 14 days and 11.3 minutes, respectively.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Median time for scene arrivals by medicolegal investigators (MLIs) (hours)	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.8	2.0
Deaths reported	27,265	27,505	27,984	-	-	8,842	9,015
Cases where Chief Medical Examiner takes jurisdiction	7,095	7,109	7,136	-	-	2,377	2,444
Median time to complete autopsy reports (days)	50	56	77	60	60	71	57
Median time to process cremation requests (minutes)	123.9	136.0	184.5	180.0	180.0	184.5	173.2

The Office, tasked with providing mortuary services to the City, strives to recover and transport decedents to the City mortuary facilities in a timely manner. However, the time spent removing decedents from non-hospital scenes after investigation increased at a time when the number of decedents' remains transported and stored by OCME decreased.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Number of decedents' remains transported and stored by OCME	7,803	6,976	10,721	-	-	3,707	3,363
Median time to remove decedents from scene (non-hospital) after investigation (minutes)	42.1	40.1	49.3	-	-	43.3	58.2

The Office must also respond to disasters and emergencies when fatalities are involved. Accordingly, OCME endeavors to provide rapid response and safe fatality management services to City as well as identify victims of disasters and return their remains to families in a timely manner.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Remains recovered following a disaster or mass fatality incident (cumulative)	21,906	21,914	21,916	-	-	21,914	21,918
Remains identified following a disaster (cumulative)	13,639	13,979	14,202	-	-	14,052	14,256

Appendix A: OCME Budget Actions in the November and the Preliminary Plans

<i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	FY 2016			FY 2017		
	City	Non-City	Total	City	Non-City	Total
OCME Budget as of the Adopted 2016 Budget	\$64,369	\$0	\$64,369	\$64,531	\$0	\$64,531
New Needs						
OMCE - Gun Testing	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,031	\$0	\$2,031
Other Adjustments						
Fiscal 2016 November Plan	\$84	\$7,393	\$7,477	\$101	\$0	\$101
Anthropology	14	-	14	-	-	-
Communications	37	-	37	-	-	-
Decedent Disposition	11	-	11	-	-	-
Emergency Management	30	-	30	-	-	-
Environmental Sanitation	37	-	37	-	-	-
Evidence	82	-	82	-	-	-
Facilities	25	-	25	24	-	24
Finance and Administration	68	-	68	-	-	-
Financial Plan Savings	(2,251)	-	(2,251)	-	-	-
Forensic Biology, Pathology	(331)	-	(331)	-	-	-
Health and Safety	25	-	25	-	-	-
Histology	40	-	40	-	-	-
Homeland Security Grants	-	1,000	1,000	-	-	-
Identification	43	-	43	-	-	-
Information Technology	87	-	87	-	-	-
Materials, Records Management	39	-	39	-	-	-
Medical Legal Investigations	184	-	184	-	-	-
Molecular Genetics	29	-	29	-	-	-
Mortuary Operations	197	-	197	-	-	-
Motor Pool	152	-	152	-	-	-
National Institute of Justice	-	2,590	2,590	-	-	-
Not in Use, Other	26	-	26	-	-	-
Office of General Council, Director	61	-	61	-	-	-
Paul Coverdell State Grant	-	43	43	-	-	-
Photography	23	-	23	-	-	-
Security	1,223	-	1,223	-	-	-
Toxicology	128	-	128	-	-	-
World Trade Center	21	-	21	-	-	-
X-Ray	18	-	18	-	-	-
Subtotal, Other Adjustments	\$19	\$3,633	\$3,652	\$24	\$0	\$24
TOTAL, All Changes	\$103	\$11,026	\$11,129	\$125	\$0	\$125
OCME Budget as of Preliminary 2017 Plan	\$64,472	\$11,026	\$75,498	\$66,687	\$0	\$66,687

Appendix B: OCME Contract Budget

The New York City Charter mandates the preparation of a Contract Budget to identify expenditures for contractual services, which are defined as any technical, consultant or personal service provided to the City by means of a contract. The Contract Budget is actually a subset of the OTPS portion of the City's Expense Budget. The Administration prepares a Contract Budget twice each fiscal year. In January, it is prepared with the Departmental Estimates, and in late April it is submitted to the Council with the Executive Budget.

The following table provides OCME's Preliminary Contract Budget for Fiscal 2017.

Category	Fiscal 2016 Adopted*	Number of Contracts	Fiscal 2017 Preliminary*	Number of Contracts
Cleaning Services	\$146	1	\$269	1
Computer Services	398	1	172	1
Contractual Services	232	1	116	1
Data Processing Equipment	129	1	367	1
Maintenance and Repairs	1,940	23	1,916	24
Professional Services, Other	47	1	433	1
Security Services	0	0	393	1
Telecommunications Maintenance	0	0	0	1
Training Program, City Employees	797	1	94	1
TOTAL	\$3,689	29	\$3,760	32

*Dollars in Thousands

The Office's Fiscal 2017 Contract Budget totals \$3.8 million, an increase of \$71,000 when compared to the Fiscal 2016 budget at adoption. The Fiscal 2017 Contract Budget includes 32 OCME contracts.

Appendix C: OCME Capital Budget Summary

The Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Capital Commitment Plan includes \$27.8 million in Fiscal 2016-2018 for the Office of Chief Medical Examiner (including City and Non-City funds). The \$27.8 million includes a \$2.855 million commitment from the City Council for toxicology equipment. The Office's budget represents approximately eight percent of DOHMH's \$341.7 million capital program, which comprises less than one percent of the City's total \$57.2 billion Preliminary Plan for Fiscal 2016-2019.

OCME 2016-2019 Commitment Plan: September and Preliminary Budget					
<i>Dollars in Thousands</i>					
	FY 16	FY17	FY18	FY19	Total
September					
Total Capital Plan	\$12,193	\$5,701	\$5,574	\$4,322	\$27,790
Preliminary					
Total Capital Plan	\$12,193	\$5,701	\$5,574	\$4,322	\$27,790
Change					
Level	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

The majority of the capital projects span multiple fiscal years; therefore, it remains common practice for an agency to roll unspent capital funds into future fiscal years. Hence, the Office may roll a significant portion of its Fiscal 2016 Capital Plan into Fiscal 2017, increasing the size of the Fiscal 2017-2020 Capital Plan. Since adoption last June, the citywide total Capital Commitment Plan for Fiscal 2016 has increased from \$19.3 billion in the Adopted Capital Commitment Plan to \$19.7 billion in the Preliminary Capital Commitment Plan, an increase of \$415 million, or 2.2 percent.

The OCME capital budget funds various laboratory equipment and systems, from forensic lab cyclers and spectrometers to robotics and sequencing systems. Forensic Biology Laboratory Equipment constitutes the largest Fiscal 2017 OCME budget item at \$2.6 million.