

MISSION, VISION, VALUES

Mission

The NAME is the premier professional organization for medical examiners and medicolegal affiliates, which is committed to:

- Providing leadership and advocacy for best practices and excellence in forensic pathology and death investigation;
- Developing and promulgating forensic autopsy standards;
- Offering and promoting accreditation of medicolegal death investigation systems in the United States and internationally;
- Providing education to its members and stakeholders;
- Promoting research and advancing knowledge;
- Ensuring access to ethical, objective and impartial services, including testimony, to all stakeholders;
- Representing medicolegal death investigation and its practicing professionals to the public and the government;
- Enhancing public health through thorough and accurate death investigation and certification; and
- Treating decedents and their survivors with dignity and respect.

Vision

Through leadership, education, collaboration, advocacy and outreach, publication, and research, the NAME will continue to be the foremost authority promoting the highest quality forensic pathology practice and medicolegal death investigation in the world. The application of excellence in this medical practice will enhance public health, public safety and the administration of justice.

Values:

1. A medicolegal death investigation, including scene investigation as appropriate, should provide the medical examiner with information integral to determining the cause and manner of death.
2. The focus of a medicolegal death investigation is to facilitate determination of the cause and manner of death; this investigation is parallel to and distinct from the law enforcement investigation.
3. A properly conducted medicolegal death investigation and autopsy provide information critical to families, vital statistics, public health, governmental agencies, law enforcement, the judicial systems, and the public.
4. A medicolegal death investigation must be supported by the available data and be independent of external influences.
5. The practice of forensic pathology and the autopsy procedure fall under the scope of the science and art of medicine. The principles of forensic pathology may be applied to both decedents and living patients.

6. The physical findings noted at autopsy, as well as the results of adjunctive studies, must be interpreted in the context of the medicolegal death investigation in order to determine correctly the cause and manner of death.
7. The circumstances surrounding a death often dictate allocation of limited resources and personnel. We are obligated to be responsible stewards of public resources.
8. Competent death investigation and accurate death certification benefit surviving family members; promote public health, education, and safety; and assist in the development of prevention strategies.
9. Proper medicolegal death investigation is an expression of our compassion to families and survivors, respect for their loss, and value of life.
10. We shall strive to continue our education and to remain informed of emerging science and technology, facilitating research advances when possible. As such, our conclusions and testimony should be defensible, based on fact, and supported by available research.

Board Approved February 14, 2017