STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

DEVDUTTA SANGVAI
SECRETARY

May 6, 2026

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Mr. Brian Matteson, Director
Fiscal Research Division
Suite 619, Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

Dear Director Matteson:

Session Law 2023-134, Section 9H.8.(g) requires the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to submit an annual report on the autopsy centers and regional autopsy centers within the North Carolina medical examiner system. This report is due to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and the Fiscal Research Division. Pursuant to the provisions of law, the Department is pleased to submit the attached report.

Should you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Karen Wade, Director of Policy, at Karen.Wade@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

Signed by:
Debra Farrington for Devdutta Sangvai
45507E3ADBA8489...
Devdutta Sangvai
Secretary

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

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SECRETARY

May 6, 2026

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Carla Cunningham, Chair
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on
Health and Human Services
North Carolina General Assembly
Room 403, Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603

The Honorable Donny Lambeth, Chair
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on
Health and Human Services
North Carolina General Assembly
Room 303, Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603

The Honorable Larry Potts, Chair
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on
Health and Human Services
North Carolina General Assembly
Room 307B1, Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603

The Honorable Jim Burgin, Chair
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on
Health and Human Services
North Carolina General Assembly
Room 620, Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear Chairmen:

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Devdutta Sangvai
Secretary

Annual Autopsy Centers Report

Session Law 2023-134, Section 9H.8.(g)

Report to the

Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services

and

Fiscal Research Division

By

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

May 6, 2026

BACKGROUND

The North Carolina General Assembly passed the Statewide Medical Examiner Act of 1967 to provide a statewide system for postmortem medicolegal examinations. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) was established in 1968, and the first Chief Medical Examiner was appointed. The OCME is responsible for overseeing the operations of the entire medical examiner system in North Carolina and is assisted in that effort by five regional autopsy centers and another four hospital-based pathology practices that are contracted to perform autopsies for the medical examiner system.

Session Law 2023-134, Section 9H.8.(g) requires the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to submit an annual report each February 1st on the autopsy centers and regional autopsy centers within the North Carolina medical examiner system. The report shall include at least all of the following information:

(1) The total number of death investigations, toxicology screenings, and autopsies performed by each autopsy center and regional autopsy center within the medical examiner system.
(2) Of the number specified in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the total number of autopsies performed as a result of the district attorney of the county asserting the Chief Medical Examiner or the medical examiner of the county in which the body was located that there was probable cause to believe that a violation of G.S. 14-18.4 had occurred.
(3) The total number of outstanding autopsies and autopsy reports that need to be completed at each autopsy center and regional autopsy center on the date of the report, and, for each outstanding autopsy, the date on which the case commenced and whether the case involves a suspected violation of G.S. 14-18.4.
(4) Beginning with the report due on February 1, 2025, an analysis of the autopsy fee established by subsection (a1) of G.S. 130A-389, as amended by this act, which shall include at least all of the following:
    a. The results of the analysis and any recommended changes to the fee or how the fee is apportioned between the State and counties.
    b. The total amount of fees paid to each autopsy center and regional autopsy center within the North Carolina medical examiner system.

Data is provisional and subject to change as cases continue to be finalized and reported. Data on cases from January 2026 and later are not included as they were not available at the time of data query for the submission of this report.

Limitations of current data systems
The OCME is in the process of implementing a new information technology system that will enhance its ability to track and report data on medical examiner cases. The existing manual tracking system was used to compile the data presented in this annual report.

About the Medical Examiner System in North Carolina

Jurisdictional Authority

There are approximately 110,000 annual deaths in North Carolina, but fewer than 15% are referred to the medical examiner system. Pursuant to § 130A-383 of the North Carolina General Statutes, the following deaths are investigated by the medical examiner system:

- Any death resulting from violence, poisoning, accident, suicide, or homicide.
- Sudden deaths when the deceased had been in apparent good health or when unattended by a physician.
- Deaths occurring in a jail, prison, correctional institution, or in police custody.
- Deaths occurring in State facilities operated in accordance with Part 5 of Article 4 of Chapter 122C of the General Statutes.
- Deaths occurring pursuant to Article 19 of Chapter 15 of the General Statutes.
- Deaths occurring under suspicious, unusual, or unnatural circumstances.

There are approximately 275 county medical examiners across North Carolina, at least two in each county – all of which are appointed by NC's Chief Medical Examiner. All county medical examiners have some type of medical or death investigation background. The appointment for local medical examiners is for three (3) years, and initial training and continuing education are required. Once the medical examiner has determined that a death falls under the jurisdiction of the medical examiner system, the medical examiner may perform an external examination on the body, collect specimens for toxicological testing, and is responsible for providing an investigation report to the OCME and assisting in certifying the cause and manner of death on the death certificate.

The medical examiner determines whether the body requires an autopsy based on the investigation and OCME guidelines and statutes. Cases requiring autopsy receive both external and internal examinations at facilities staffed by forensic or anatomic pathologists.

Including the OCME Raleigh office, there are five Regional Autopsy Centers (RACs) staffed by American Board of Pathology-certified forensic pathologists, and four Autopsy Centers staffed by American Board of Pathology-certified anatomic pathologists.

The five RACs in the state include the OCME office in Raleigh, a state agency that conducts approximately one-third of all medicolegal autopsies in the system and serves as the central administrative office for North Carolina's Medical Examiner System, providing oversight of the statewide ME system. OCME is the only component of the system operated by the State of North Carolina and, in addition to functioning as an RAC, houses a forensic toxicology laboratory accredited by the College of American Pathologists that provides toxicology testing for the entire ME system. The remaining four RACS are operated by contracted entities: Greenville, staffed by the East Carolina University (ECU) at Brody School of Medicine; Winston-Salem, staffed by Wake Forest University Health Services (WFUHS); Charlotte, staffed by County of Mecklenburg Medical Examiner's Office (Meck) and South Piedmont Regional Autopsy Center in Union County that opened December 17, 2024. In addition, there are four hospital-based Autopsy Centers, under contract, located at Coastal Pathology Associates at Onslow Memorial

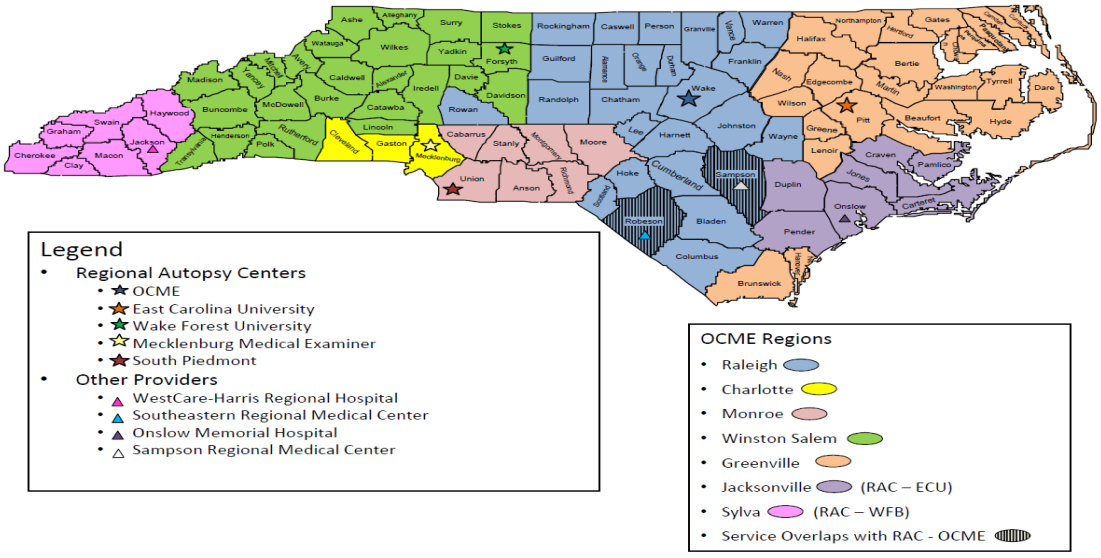
Hospital in Jacksonville; Falvy C. Barr, Jr., MD at Sampson Regional Medical Center in Clinton; Southeastern Pathology Associates in Lumberton; and Mountain Pathology Services at Harris Regional Hospital in Sylva.

Autopsy Facilities and Designated Counties

Facility	Counties Served
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME)	(32) Alamance, **Anson, Bladen, **Cabarrus, Caswell, Chatham, Columbus, Cumberland, Durham, Franklin, Granville, Guilford, Harnett, Hoke, Johnston, Lee, **Montgomery, **Moore, Orange, Person, Randolph, **Richmond, *Robeson, Rockingham, Rowan, *Sampson, Scotland, **Stanly, Vance, Wake, Warren, Wayne
†Southeastern Pathology Associates **†Falvy C. Barr, Jr., MD**	 *Robeson *Sampson
East Carolina University	(31) Beaufort, Bertie, Brunswick, Camden, *Carteret, Chowan, *Craven, Currituck, Dare, *Duplin, Edgecombe, Gates, Greene, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, *Jones, Lenoir, Martin, Nash, *New Hanover, Northampton, *Onslow, *Pamlico, Pasquotank, *Pender, Perquimans, Pitt, Tyrrell, Washington, Wilson
Coastal Pathology Associates	(7) *Carteret, *Craven, *Duplin, *Jones, *Onslow, *Pamlico, *Pender) *
Wake Forest University Health Services	(33) Alexander, Allegheny, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, ***Catawba, *Cherokee, *Clay, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, *Graham, *Haywood, Henderson, Iredell, *Jackson, Lincoln, Madison, McDowell, *Macon, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Stokes, Surry, *Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin, Yancey
County of Mecklenburg	(3) Cleveland, Gaston, Mecklenburg
Mountain Pathology Services	(7) *Cherokee, *Clay, *Graham, *Haywood, *Jackson, *Macon, *Swain
****South Piedmont**	**(7)** **Anson, **Cabarrus, **Montgomery, **Moore, **Richmond, **Stanly, Union

Note: * County designations may overlap with multiple regional facilities.
** Absorbed by South Piedmont in 2025: Anson 2/1/2025, Cabarrus 3/1/2025, Montgomery 5/1/2025, Stanley 7/1/2025, Richmond 10/1/2025, and Moore 12/1/2025.
*** Absorbed by WFUHS in 2021 when autopsy center stopped providing ME/Autopsy services.
****South Piedmont Regional Autopsy Center in Union County opened December 17, 2024.
†Dr. Barr and Southeastern Pathology Associates services overlap with OCME. Dr. Barr, Jr., MD and Southeastern Pathology Associates perform approximately 7% of the autopsy examinations in OCME-covered areas.

Medical Examiner Autopsy Centers in North Carolina



2025 MEDICAL EXAMINER CASES

In 2025, an estimated **108,046** people died in North Carolina and **16,843** of these deaths were referred to the ME system. Of these reported deaths, 14,215 were accepted as jurisdictional cases and further investigated by the ME system. At the time of drafting this report, 11,397 (80%) of medical examiner cases have a certified death certificate, a 6% improvement from 2023 and on par with 2024.

*Note: Pending refers to deaths when determination of cause and manner depends on further information (Centers for Disease Control). All case counts exclude assessment for non-human remains, historical remains, fetal deaths, those that are not yet identified, delayed examinations where death occurred prior to 2025 (e.g. exhumations), and deaths occurring outside North Carolina. In addition, death certificate data includes only those cases that have been reported to the state as of January 13, 2026**,** when the query was processed. Hence, deaths that occurred during recent months may have not yet been reported.*

Table 1. Overview of Deaths Reported and Jurisdictional Dispositions, 2025[†]

	OCME Jurisdiction*	***NC Medical Examiner System***
Total Deaths	44,954	108,046
Deaths Referred to ME	7,277	16,843
Cases Declined by ME	1,173 (16%)	2,628 (16%)
Deaths Investigated by ME	6,104 (84%)	14,215 (84%)
Deaths Certified by ME	5,614	13,017
Autopsies	1,509	4,378
Cases with Toxicology Performed	5,164 (92%)	11,997 (92%)
External and Supplemental Examinations	1,574	N/A
Completed Death Certificates (non-pending)	4,541 (74%)	11,397 (80%)
Pending Death Certificates on Autopsies	449	1,061

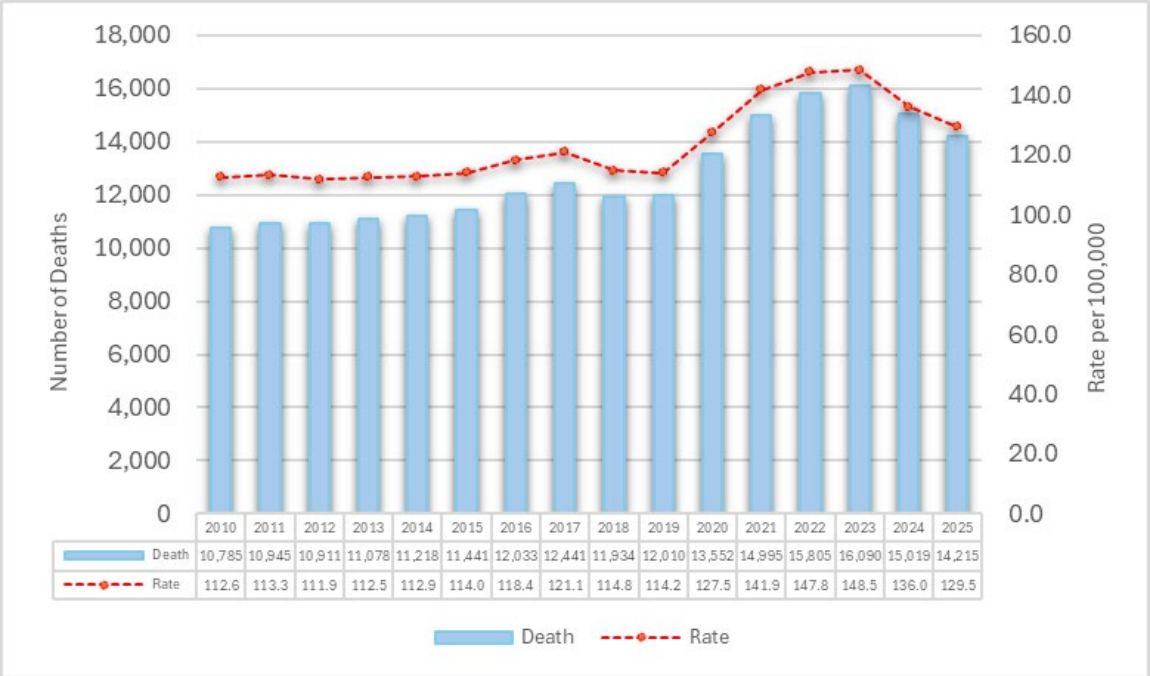
Note: *OCME jurisdiction: deaths investigated by ME system in the 32 counties OCME serves and autopsies performed at OCME (see Technical Notes), including Falvy C. Barr, Jr., MD and Southeastern Pathology Associates because services overlap with OCME.
[†]2025 Data are provisional and subject to change. OCME does not perform partial autopsies or hospital autopsies.

TOTAL DEATHS AND AUTOPSIES

Deaths Investigated by the Medical Examiner System

A total of 14,215 deaths were investigated by the ME system in 2025. Death investigation data for cases processed by Regional Autopsy Centers and Autopsy Centers are not currently available in existing information technology systems; however, these data will be tracked and reported following the completed systemwide launch of the new information technology system.

Figure 1. Deaths Investigated by the NC Medical Examiner System and Rate, 2010 – 2025[†]



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Death	10,785	10,945	10,911	11,078	11,218	11,441	12,033	12,441	11,934	12,010	13,552	14,995	15,805	16,090	15,019	14,215
Rate	112.6	113.3	111.9	112.5	112.9	114.0	118.4	121.1	114.8	114.2	127.5	141.9	147.8	148.5	136.0	129.5

Note: Rates per 100,000 NC residents. Deaths investigated include deaths that occurred within North Carolina and may include non-NC residents.

[†] 2025 Data are provisional and subject to change.

Autopsies Performed at Autopsy Centers

The ME system performed 4,378 autopsies in 2025, which is up 6% compared to 2024. OCME performed the largest number of autopsies (34%), followed by Wake Forest University Health Services (20%), and East Carolina University (17%).

Table 2. Autopsies Performed at Autopsy Centers, 2025†

Type of Centers	Autopsy Centers & RACs	Number of Autopsy Performed
Regional Autopsy Center	East Carolina University	727
Regional Autopsy Center	County of Mecklenburg	626
Regional Autopsy Center	Office of the Chief Medical Examiner*	1,509
Regional Autopsy Center	Wake Forest University Health Services	896
Regional Autopsy Center	South Piedmont**	209
Other Providers	Mountain Pathology Services	117
Other Providers	Coastal Pathology Associates	294
Other Providers	Falvy C. Barr, Jr., MD	**
Other Providers	Southeastern Pathology Associates	**
	TOTAL	**4,378**

Note: *Data reported for OCME includes Dr. Barr and Southeastern Pathology Associates because services overlap with OCME Autopsies per autopsy center are estimates as they are based on the autopsy facility's primary county coverage, which does not account for back-up coverage by another autopsy facility. Dr. Barr, Jr., MD and Southeastern Pathology Associates perform approximately 7.0% of the autopsy examinations in OCME-covered areas.

**South Piedmont Regional Autopsy Center in Union County opened December 2024.

† 2025 Data are provisional and subject to change.

TOXICOLOGY TESTING

A total of at least 11,997 (92%) of medical examiner jurisdictional cases in 2025 included toxicology testing. Among cases that underwent toxicology testing, OCME accounted for the largest share (43%), followed by Wake Forest University Health Services (21%), and East Carolina University (15%).

Note: Toxicology testing data are provisional and an underestimation as they do not include cases that were in process at the time of data query and have not yet issued an initial result. Toxicology testing consists of toxicological or other chemical tests performed upon tissue or body fluid(s) from a decedent. Substances tested may include toxins, alcohol, drugs of abuse, prescription drugs, their metabolites, or clinical chemistries. Toxicology testing numbers do not account for multiple tests performed on one case. The OCME Toxicology Laboratory performs more than 36,000 analytical tests each year.

Table 3. Toxicology Testing Requested by Autopsy Centers, 2025†

Type of Centers	Autopsy Centers & RACs	Cases - Toxicology Testing Performed
Regional Autopsy Center	East Carolina University	1,763
Regional Autopsy Center	County of Mecklenburg	1,438
Regional Autopsy Center	Wake Forest University Health Services	2,503
Regional Autopsy Center	South Piedmont**	378
Other Providers	Mountain Pathology Services	263
Other Providers	Coastal Pathology Associates	482
Other Providers	Falvy C. Barr, Jr., MD	**
Other Providers	Southeastern Pathology Associates	**
	County Not Assigned	6
	TOTAL	**11,997**

Note: *Data reported for OCME includes Dr. Barr and Southeastern Pathology Associates because services overlap with OCME.
Toxicology screenings requested per autopsy center are estimates as they are based on the autopsy facility's primary county coverage, which does not account for back-up coverage by another autopsy facility.
County Not Assigned: Not all data was complete at query date for toxicology testing performed. This designation is for those cases where toxicology testing county was not yet identified
**South Piedmont Regional Autopsy Center in Union County opened December 2024
† 2025 Data are provisional and subject to change.

DEATH BY DISTRIBUTION (G.S. 14-18.4)

District Attorney Authorized Death by Distribution Autopsies

Note: Suspected drug overdose and fentanyl positive cases reflect the most recent available data at the time of data query for this report (https://injuryfreenc.dph.ncdhhs.gov/DataSurveillance/overdose.htm).

Coinciding with the effective date of revisions to G.S. 14-18.4, tracking of autopsies requested by District Attorneys was implemented on December 1, 2023. This tracking captures cases in which a District Attorney asserts to the Chief Medical Examiner, or to the medical examiner of the county in which the decedent was located, that there was probable cause to believe a violation of G.S. 14-18.4 occurred.

For deaths occurring from January through December 2025, OCME received **204** District Attorney autopsy requests to authorize autopsies under these circumstances. The exams were conducted at the following autopsy facilities: OCME -143 (70%); Wake Forest University Health Services -20 (10%); East Carolina University -17 (8%); Coastal Pathology Associates -8 (4%); South Piedmont-6 (3%); Southeastern Pathology Associates - 5 (2%); County of Mecklenburg - 3 (1%) and Mountain Pathology Services- 2 (1%).

All autopsy examinations associated with District Attorney requests for violation of G.S. 14-18.4 have been complete. Autopsy reports and death certificates from deaths that occurred during the later months of 2025 remain in process and were still being finalized at the time of this report's submission.

Table 4. District Attorney Autopsy Request for Violation of G.S. 14-18.4, Jan. to Dec 2025[†]

Autopsy Center	Jan-Dec 2025	No. of Autopsy Examinations Completed	No. of Death Certificates Pending
Coastal Pathology Associates, PA	8	8	0
County of Mecklenburg	3	3	2
ECU Brody School of Medicine	17	17	7
Mountain Pathology Services	2	2	2
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner	143	136	66
Southeastern Pathology Associates, PA	5	5	3
South Piedmont	6	6	1
Wake Forest University Health Services	20	19	4
Total	**204**	**196**	**85**

Note: 2025 Data are provisional and subject to change.
*Four DA autopsy requests were rescinded, and autopsies were not performed under DA direction.

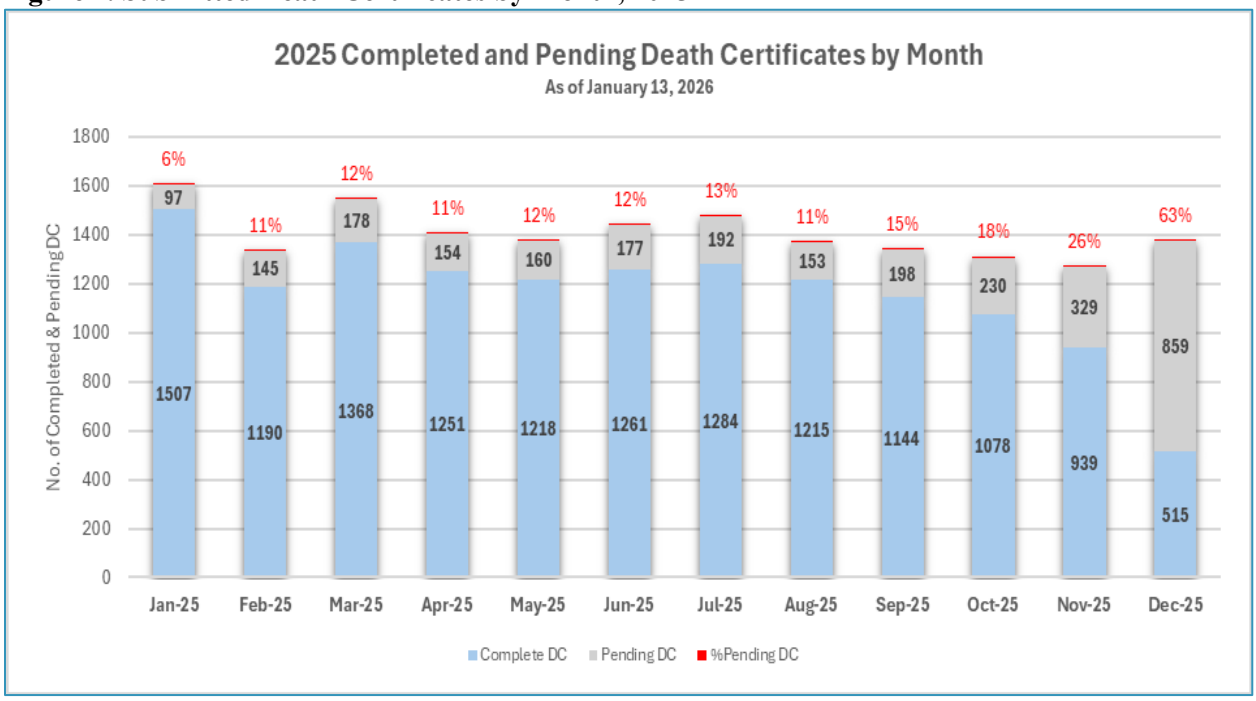
DEATH CERTIFICATES, 2025

Following the completed systemwide launch of the new information technology system, OCME will be able to track and report the total number of outstanding autopsies and autopsy reports. Until that time, pending death certificates serve as a useful surrogate measure and are reflected in Figure 2 below. The generally low numbers observed in the later months of the year, including December, reflect a large number of cases that were still in process as of date of data query (January 13, 2026) and are not fully captured. The target to meet national standards for 90% of cases completed in 90 days with application to death certificates with a non-pending cause and manner of death, means 10% of cases are expected to be completed beyond 90 days.

As of January 13, 2026, the ME system investigated 14,215 deaths that occurred in 2025, of which 13,017 death certificates (92%) had been certified by medical examiners. Given the time required to complete a full death investigation, including ancillary testing, it is not surprising that deaths occurring earlier in the year have lower percentages of pending or not yet submitted death certificates. January had the lowest percentage of pending or not yet submitted death certificates, at 6%.

Among medical examiner jurisdiction deaths occurring in 2025, 8.4% remain pending determination of death by the medical examiner. By comparison, 5.9% of medical examiner jurisdiction deaths occurring in 2024 remain pending determination.

Figure 2. Submitted Death Certificates by Month, 2025†



NOTE: Pending DC includes those with a pending manner of death or not yet submitted.
† 2025 Data are provisional and subject to change.

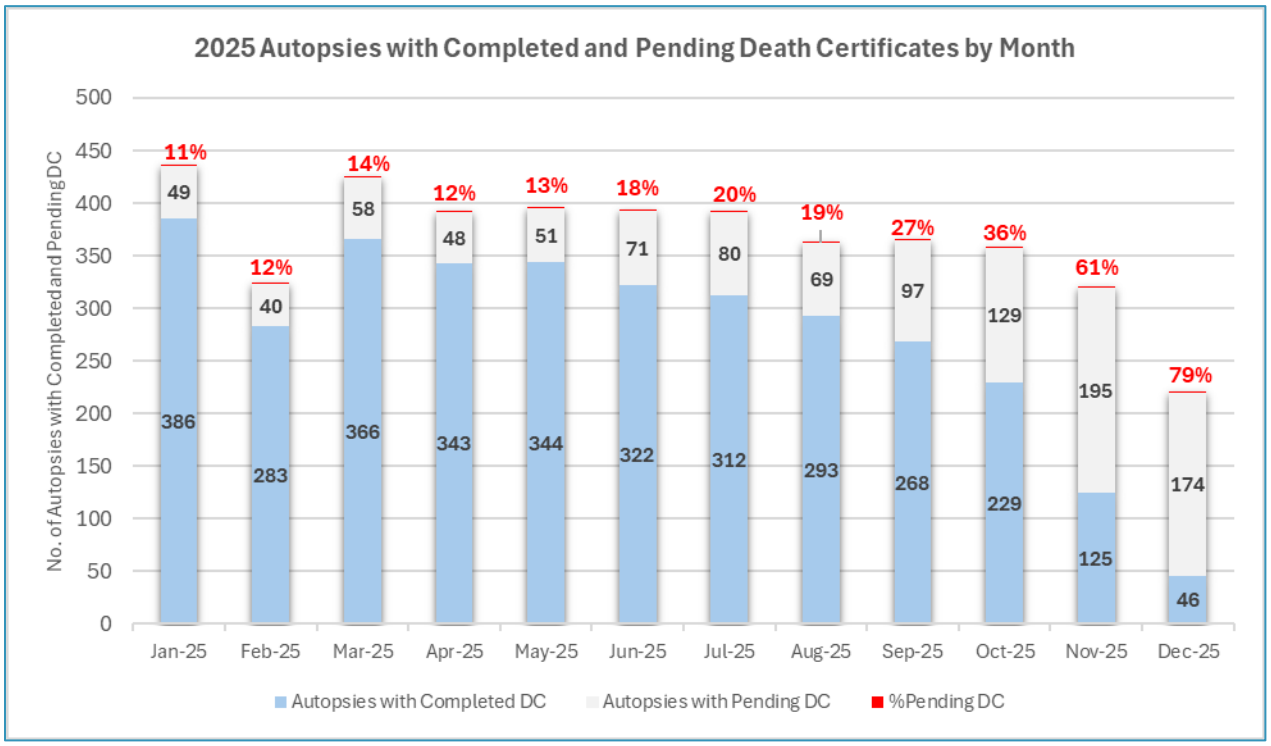
Autopsies with Pending Death Certificates, 2025

A total of 4,378 autopsies were performed by the ME system in 2025. Of these cases, 78% (n-3,317) have completed death certificates. This represents a 13% improvement compared to 2024 and a 20% improvement compared to 2023.

Given the time required to complete a full death investigation, including ancillary testing, it is not surprising that death certificates on autopsy cases for earlier months of the year have lower percentages of pending or not yet submitted death certificates. January 2025 had the lowest percentage of pending or not yet submitted death certificates for autopsy cases, at 11%.

The generally lower autopsy numbers observed in the later months of the year, including December, reflect a large number of cases that were still in process as of the date of data query (January 13, 2026) and are not fully captured.

Figure 3. Autopsies with Pending Death Certificates with Date of Death and Month of Death Certification, 2025†



Note: Pending DC includes those with a pending manner of death or not yet submitted
† 2025 Data are provisional and subject to change.

Table 5. Autopsies with Pending Death Certificates by Autopsy Facility, 2025†

Type of Centers	Autopsy Centers & RACs	Pending Death Certificate
Regional Autopsy Center	East Carolina University	209
Regional Autopsy Center	County of Mecklenburg	106
Regional Autopsy Center	Office of the Chief Medical Examiner* Falvy C. Barr, Jr., MD Southeastern Pathology Associates	449
Regional Autopsy Center	Wake Forest University Health Services	150
Regional Autopsy Center	South Piedmont**	28
Other Providers	Mountain Pathology Services	67
Other Providers	Coastal Pathology Associates	52
Other Providers	Falvy C. Barr, Jr., MD	**
Other Providers	Southeastern Pathology Associates	**
	TOTAL	**1,061**

Note: Pending autopsy death certificates cannot be easily separated into each regional and supporting facilities based on county of death given overlapping and backup county examination and ME coverage. Number of pending death certificates on autopsy cases is an **estimate** based on payment/billing information from 2025 correlated with county of death listed on the death certificates for information listed in above figure. See Regional and Supporting Facilities and Their Designated Counties. Pending DC includes those with a pending manner of death or not yet submitted.
† 2025 Data are provisional data and subject to change.
* Data reported for OCME includes Dr. Barr and Southeastern Pathology Associates because services overlap with OCME.
**South Piedmont Regional Autopsy Center in Union County opened December 2024.

Analysis of the Autopsy Fee Established by Subsection (a1) of G.S.130-389

Prior to July 1, 2024, the autopsy fee was $2,800, with the county of residence responsible for $1,750 and the State paying the remaining $1,050. If the death occurred outside the deceased's county of residence, the State paid the entire $2,800 fee.

Section 9H.8(c) amended G.S. 130A-389 to increase the autopsy fee from $2,800 to $5,800. Under the revised statute, the county of residence is responsible for $3,625, and the State pays the remaining $2,175. If the death occurred outside the deceased's county of residence, the State pays the entire $5,800 fee. This change became effective July 1, 2024.

Due to the time lag between the decedent's date of death, submission of invoices by autopsy centers, determination of State versus county payment responsibility, and completion of invoicing and payment, the data tracked by OCME Accounting are based on invoicing activity rather than date of death. As a result, OCME Accounting reports do not align directly with monthly death certificate data, and invoicing and payment for calendar year 2025 autopsies are still in progress. Additionally, once OCME invoices counties for their share of autopsy costs, the State does not have visibility into the receipt of county payments by autopsy centers.

Therefore, the assessment presented in Table 6 focuses on the number of autopsies identified through death certificate data and projected expenditures once the payment process is complete.

Based on historical billing and receipts data from FY 2021-22, 83% of the autopsy cases will have county payment in addition to the base State payment and 17% of the autopsies will be completely paid for by the State.

Using these proportions and extrapolating from 2025 autopsy death certificate data, total projected State and county expenditures for calendar year 2025 are estimated at **$25,392,400**. Of this total, an estimated $**13,172,308** will be paid by counties and **$12,220,093** paid by the OCME once all invoices, billing, and payments are completed.

Compared to estimated 2024 expenditures, full implementation of the revised autopsy fee is expected to increase county expenditures by **$4,179,569** and State expenditures by $**3,877,431**, for a combined total increase of **$8,057,000**.

Table 6: Fee Analysis for Autopsy Facilities, Jan-December 2025†

January - December 2025					
Type of Centers	**Autopsy Centers & RACs**	**No. of Autopsy Performed**	**State Expenditure**	**County Expenditure**	**Total Expenditure**
Regional Autopsy Center	East Carolina University	727	$2,029,239.00	$2,187,361.00	$4,216,600.00
Regional Autopsy Center	Mecklenburg Medical Examiner	626	$1,747,323.00	$.1,883,478.00	$3,630,800.00
Regional Autopsy Center	Office of Chief Medical Examiner*	1,509	$4,211,996.00	$4,540,204.00	$8,752,200.00
Regional Autopsy Center	Wake Forest University Health Services	896	$2,500,960.00	$2,695,840.00	$5,196,800.00
Regional Autopsy Center	South Piedmont	209	$583,371.00	$628,829.00	$1,212,200.00
Other Providers	WestCare-Harris Regional Hospital	117	$326,576.00	$352,024.00	$678,600.00
Other Providers	Onslow Memorial Hospital	294	$820,628.00	$884,573.00	$1,705,200.00
	TOTAL	**4,378**	**$12,200,093.00**	**$13,172,308.00**	**$25,392,400.00**

* Data reported for OCME includes Dr. Barr and Southeastern Pathology Associates because services overlap with OCME
† 2025 Data are provisional data and subject to change. The total payment per autopsy Jan-Dec 2025 is $5,800.
South Piedmont Regional Autopsy Center in Union County opened December 17, 2024.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Deaths Investigated
"Deaths Investigated" in this report include deaths reported to the medical examiner where the ME accepts jurisdiction. Death totals include North Carolina residents and non-North Carolina residents whose deaths were investigated under the jurisdiction of the medical examiner. Deaths investigated include Medical Examiner Investigator Scene Investigations as well as reported deaths that, while may not allow for a scene investigation, involved an investigation beyond the initial report of the death, usually in the form of a records review in response to information provided as part of a cremation request.

County of Death
Deaths in this report are assigned to the county where the decedent was pronounced dead, rather than the county of residence or the county where an event leading to death may have occurred. For example, an individual is injured in one county and is transported and later pronounced dead in a different county. This death is reported to the medical examiner of the second county where the individual was pronounced dead.

ME Jurisdiction
Refers to any death where the ME assumes jurisdiction in accordance with § 130A-383 of the North Carolina General Statutes. These include autopsies performed at the four regional autopsy centers and the four hospital-based pathology practices that are contracted to perform autopsies for the ME system.

OCME Jurisdiction
Deaths that fall under OCME jurisdiction are defined as deaths autopsied at the OCME and deaths investigated in one of the 32 counties OCME provides examination (autopsy, external exam, supplemental exam) and medical examiner services: Alamance, **Anson, Bladen, **Cabarrus, Caswell, Chatham, Columbus, Cumberland, Durham, Franklin, Granville, Guilford, Harnett, Hoke, Johnston, Lee, Montgomery, Moore, Orange, Person, Randolph, Richmond, Robeson*, Rockingham, Rowan, Sampson*, Scotland, Stanly, Vance, Wake, Warren, and Wayne.
**NOTE: County designations may overlap with multiple regional facilities.*
***NOTE: Absorbed by OCME in 2022 without additional resources when autopsy center eliminated coverage. South Piedmont Regional Autopsy Center in Union County opened December 17, 2024.*

Additional Technical Notes
1. Toxicology results are based on blood, vitreous fluid, or other specimens used for testing at the discretion of the pathologist and/or toxicologist.
2. Percentages may total above or below 100% due to rounding.