



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Requested Board Meeting Date: 7/16/2024

*= Mandatory, information must be provided

Click or tap the boxes to enter text. If not applicable, indicate "N/A".

***Title:**

Amending Office of the Medical Examiner Fee for Service, Ordinance 2021-13

***Introduction/Background:**

Ordinance No. 2021-13 Section 1., is the current fee schedule adopted for the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner (PCOME) adopted on May 4, 2021. We are requesting to amend the following sections:

1.,

•I.

- o A.1-3
- o B.
- o C.1-2
- o D.
- o E.

•III.

- o B. 4-5

•IV.

- o A.
- o B. 1-3

•VI.

- o A. 1-4

***Discussion:**

Pima County has a long history of offering postmortem examination and death investigation services to other Arizona Counties for which Pima County is remunerated by either an IGA or a fee-for-service billing structure as outlined in the attached Board approved Fee Ordinance. Over time, our operating costs for personnel, ancillary studies such as toxicology testing, etc., increase. On review of Ordinance 2021-13, I believe it is time to increase those fees to reflect our increased costs. The PCOME will also become the acting agent for the cases referred to the Indigent Interment Program (IIP) for Pima County on the opening of the new building. A fee for the services provided by the IIP is needed to assist in the recovery of costs when it is necessary to do so.

***Conclusion:**

Ordinance 2021-13 needs to be amended to increase costs for Medical Examiner services and add a IIP fee schedule to recoup costs.

***Recommendation:**

Approve the requested amendments to Fee Ordinance 2021-13

***Fiscal Impact:**

Projected slight increase in out-of-county revenue and provide a mechanism to reimburse costs associated with the IIP

***Board of Supervisor District:**

Department: Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner Telephone: 520-724-8600

Contact: Christopher C Smith Telephone: 520-724-8609

Department Director Signature: _____ Date: 5/15/24

Deputy County Administrator Signature: _____ Date: 26 May 2024

County Administrator Signature: _____ Date: 5/15/24

ORDINANCE 2024 – ___

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF PIMA COUNTY,
ARIZONA, RELATING TO THE PIMA COUNTY OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL
EXAMINER; AMENDING FEES FOR SERVICES**

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA FINDS THAT:

1. The Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner has authority under A.R.S. §§ 11-594(E), 11-597.02(D), and 39-121.01(D) to charge fees for services and materials.
2. The Board of Supervisors has determined that it is reasonable to amend the fees charged by the Office of the Medical Examiner in order to defray its reasonable costs.

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF PIMA COUNTY,
ARIZONA:**

SECTION 1. Section 1 of Ordinance ~~2018-36~~ 2021-13, adopted on ~~December 4th, 2018~~ May 4, 2021 is amended to read as follows:

Section 1. Unless otherwise agreed and memorialized in an Intergovernmental Agreement, the following fee schedule is adopted for the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner:

I. SERVICE FEES

A. Procedures for counties other than Pima:

- 1) Autopsies - ~~\$2,500~~ \$3,000 per autopsy
- 2) External Examinations - ~~\$800~~ \$1,000 per examination
- 3) External Examinations with toxicology - ~~\$1,000~~ \$1,500 per examination

B. Cremation authorization - ~~\$32~~ \$35 per authorization

C. Body Storage Fees:

- 1) ~~\$75~~ \$150 per day, ~~72 hours after notification body may be released for storage of non-jurisdictional deaths at the behest of a funeral home or other death care industry (hospital, tissue organization, etc.)~~ establishment

- 2) ~~\$75~~ \$150 per day for out-of-county indigent cases, 15 business days after notification body may be released

D. Pathologists or Anthropologists fees - ~~\$500~~ \$600 per hour ~~plus travel and per diem~~ including travel, expert consultation time (including but not limited to review of records, telephone conferences, literature reviews, report

- E. preparation and other consultation related preparation), court, depositions, interviews and waiting time as applicable
- II. Funeral directors or the funeral establishment they are associated with will supply body bags to replace those in which they receive decedents. Body bags are to be of the same type and quality as received. In lieu of this body bag exchange, the funeral director or funeral establishment may pay \$50 per bag.

III. REPRODUCTION COSTS

- A. Commercial: Fees assessed for reproduction of documents or materials for a commercial request may vary depending on the nature of the request and will be determined by the following:
 - 1) The cost of obtaining the materials;
 - 2) The cost of time, materials, equipment and personnel in producing the reproduction; and
 - 3) The value of the reproduction on the commercial market as best determined by the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner
- B. Non-commercial:
 - 1) Tissue slides - \$25 per slide
 - 2) Kodachrome slides - \$7 per slide
 - 3) Photographs or other digital media (radiographs, etc.)
 - a. \$1 per print
 - b. Reproduction of digital media on a CD - \$5
 - 4) Copies of documents - ~~\$0.25 per page~~ \$2 per complete document plus postage as necessary
 - 5) Request for all items in chart Flat fee of \$25
- C. Family members, health care providers and institutions, law enforcement and other appropriate government agencies will not be charged for reasonable reproduction of documents or photographs as determined by the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner

IV. REQUESTS FOR EXTENDED RETENTION

- A. Tissue - ~~\$10~~ \$25 per month
- B. Toxicology/Histology
 - 1) Specimens retained at reference laboratory beyond standard retention – ~~retention and~~ fee as specified by reference laboratory
 - 2) Specimens retained at Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner beyond standard retention - ~~\$10~~ \$25 per month
 - 3) Fee to return specimen or tissue from lab for extended retention - \$50

V. EXTENDED RETENTION AND RETRIEVAL OF ARCHIVED ELECTRONIC MATERIALS

- A. Electronic media – at cost billing of charges incurred to retain requested materials

- B. Retrieval of archived electronic materials – at cost billing of charges the incurred to retrieve requested archived materials

VI. INDIGENT INTERMENT PROGRAM

- A. At cost billing of charges incurred for the interment and associated fees either from the decedent's estate or from an authorizing agent, should one be found at a later date

- 1) Cost paid to third party for interment (when applicable) or \$750
- 2) Viewing - \$50
- 3) Shipping of cremains - \$200
- 4) Death Certificates - \$50

SECTION 2. This Ordinance is effective 30 days after adoption by the Pima County Board of Supervisors.

SECTION 3. If any part of this Ordinance is found to be unenforceable for any reason, all other parts nevertheless remain enforceable.

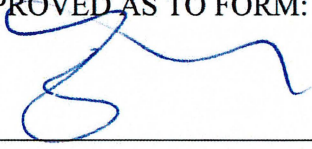
PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors, Pima County, Arizona, this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Chair, Pima County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Clerk of the Board



Deputy County Attorney

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Deputy County Attorney