



OSAC Research Needs Assessment Form

Title of research need:

Keywords:

Submitting subcommittee(s): **Date Approved:**

(If SAC review identifies additional subcommittees, add them to the box above.)

Background information:

1. Description of research need:

Evaluating scene investigation caseload for medicolegal death investigators, and their perceptions of the scene investigation caseload's effects on a proper medicolegal investigation.

2. Key bibliographic references relating to this research need:

There is currently a deficit in the literature as no studies on workload have been performed examining the acceptable caseloads for medicolegal death investigators in medical examiner and coroner offices. There is, however, a large body of research on workloads in other professions. An example of this would be studies examining nursing professionals

3a. In what ways would the research results improve current laboratory capabilities?

The laboratory in which medicolegal death investigators work is that of a medical examiner/coroner office. Their work in the field plays an integral role in evaluating the available information of the death scene, as well as thorough follow-up work to help certify the cause and manner of death of individuals that fall under their jurisdiction. Proper certification of decedents' deaths is an imperative function of both public health and safety.

3b. In what ways would the research results improve understanding of the scientific basis for the subcommittee(s)?

There is currently no data to support standards associated with medicolegal professionals. This study would fill that gap by not only evaluating office-based factors, but the professionals' views on their workplace and workload.

3c. In what ways would the research results improve services to the criminal justice system?

Medicolegal death investigators perform parallel, yet separate, investigations as law enforcement when a death has occurred. The investigation by medicolegal death investigators, and the eventual certification of death by the forensic pathologist, are an essential function that law enforcement agencies utilize in their evaluation of whether or not a crime has been committed.

4. Status assessment (I, II, III, or IV): I

	Major gap in current knowledge	Minor gap in current knowledge
No or limited current research is being conducted	I	III
Existing current research is being conducted	II	IV

This research need has been identified by one or more subcommittees of OSAC and is being provided as an informational resource to the community.

Subcommittee

Approval date:

(Approval is by majority vote of subcommittee. Once approved, forward to SAC.)

SAC

1. Does the SAC agree with the research need? Yes No

2. Does the SAC agree with the status assessment? Yes No

If no, what is the status assessment of the SAC:

Approval date:

(Approval is by majority vote of SAC. Once approved, forward to NIST for posting.)