

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 2025**

MINUTE ORDER NO. 16

**SUBJECT: NOTICED PUBLIC HEARING:
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE
CODE ARTICLE XX SECTION 364.6, RELATING TO MEDICAL EXAMINER
FEES AND CHARGES (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

OVERVIEW

The San Diego County Department of the Medical Examiner (Medical Examiner) is responsible for investigating and determining the cause and manner of death for all homicides, suicides, accidents, and sudden and/or unexpected deaths according to California Government Code Section 27491 and Health and Safety Code Section 102850.

The Medical Examiner recently conducted a review of all six (6) of its fees and rates to ensure compliance with Board Policy B-29 (Fees, Grants, and Revenue Contracts - Department Responsibility for Cost Recovery), which requires County departments to recover the costs to provide services to agencies or individuals. As a result, the Medical Examiner is proposing to increase five (5) fees and to decrease one (1) fee. The Auditor and Controller reviewed and approved the supporting documentation and methodology used to determine the proposed fees to be adjusted in this proposal for Fiscal Year 2025-26.

Today's action requests that the Board of Supervisors (Board) approve amendments to Article XX of the San Diego County Administrative Code. The Board last approved revisions to the Medical Examiner fees on May 21, 2024 (20), when the Board approved the introduction of an amended ordinance, which included a directive to phase in the fees over two years. Today's request includes two steps, first the ordinance will be introduced on April 22, 2025, then it will be scheduled for consideration and adoption on May 6, 2025. If the proposed ordinance is altered on May 6, 2025, then on that date, a subsequent meeting date will be selected for the ordinance's adoption. A waiver of Board Policy B-29 is also requested as the phased fees will not achieve full cost recovery in the second year of implementation of the five fees proposed for increase.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

On April 22, 2025:

1. Approve the introduction of the Ordinance (first reading):
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE
ARTICLE XX SECTION 364.6, RELATING TO MEDICAL EXAMINER FEES AND
CHARGES
2. Waive Board Policy B-29, Fees, Grants, and Revenue Contracts - Department Responsibility for Cost Recovery, which requires full cost recovery for services.

If, on April 22, 2025, the Board takes the actions recommended in Item 1 above, then on May 6, 2025:

1. Consider and adopt (unless ordinance is modified on second reading):

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE
ARTICLE XX SECTION 364.6, RELATING TO MEDICAL EXAMINER FEES AND
CHARGES

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The San Diego County Department of the Medical Examiner (Medical Examiner) mission is to contribute to safe communities and to justice and equity for the residents of San Diego County by certifying the cause and manner of death for all homicides, suicides, accidents, and sudden and/or unexpected deaths in the county. The Medical Examiner has and continues to identify ways to reduce departmental costs to provide its services to the public. Fees paid by customers, ensure that Medical Examiner services, which benefit a single agency or individual, do not reduce resources available to the entire region.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed adjustments to the San Diego County Department of Medical Examiner (Medical Examiner) fee structure are a result of the cumulative increase of the cost drivers such as salaries and benefits, services and supplies, and associated departmental and countywide costs. The adjustments to the Medical Examiner fees are based on available expenditure and revenue data and time studies. The proposed actions support the County of San Diego's Strategic Initiative of Sustainability to align the County's available resources with services to maintain fiscal stability and ensure long-term solvency.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact in the current fiscal year. If approved, the revised County of San Diego Department of Medical Examiner (Medical Examiner) fees will be effective July 1, 2025. Related anticipated costs for services and revenue from the fees will be included in the Fiscal Year 2025-27 CAO Recommended Operational Plan for the Medical Examiner. At the Board of Supervisors directive on May 21, 2024, fee increases are being phased in over two years which will result in the Medical Examiner not achieving full cost recovery during that timeframe. For Fiscal Years 2025-26 and 2026-27, revenue from fees paid by customers is estimated at \$6,500 each year and will not fully cover operating costs for the services provided. The unrecovered estimated costs of \$95 each year will be supported with General Purpose Revenue (GPR) included in the Fiscal Year 2025-27 CAO Recommended Operational Plan for the Medical Examiner. There is no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ACTION:

Noting for the record that this item was heard on April 23, 2025; ON MOTION of Supervisor Montgomery Steppe, seconded by Supervisor Desmond, the Board of Supervisors closed the Hearing and took action as recommended, introducing the Ordinance for further Board consideration and adoption on May 6, 2025.

AYES: Lawson-Remer, Montgomery Steppe, Desmond

NOT PRESENT: Anderson

ABSENT: (District 1 Seat Vacant)

State of California)
County of San Diego) §

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of the Original entered in the Minutes of the Board of Supervisors.

ANDREW POTTER
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors



Signed
by Andrew Potter