


# Forensic Science Center

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**FY 26-27  
Budget**

# FY 25 Updates



## KEY FINDING

### Synthetic Opioid Epidemic Peaked in 2023

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The synthetic opioid epidemic appears to have peaked in 2023



## TREND



### Drug Overdose Case Volume

2023 → 2025

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Declining for three  
consecutive years

# Workload Adjustment

01

## Drug OD Rate Drop/Autopsy Load Stable

Observed in 2023, 2024, and 2025 consecutively — a sustained multi-year decline in overdose-related caseload. Lower case volume directly reduced Medical Examiner physician workload and overall operational demand.

02

## Forensic Laboratory continues highly effective service

Continued fast turn around time and demand for services from outside jurisdictions.

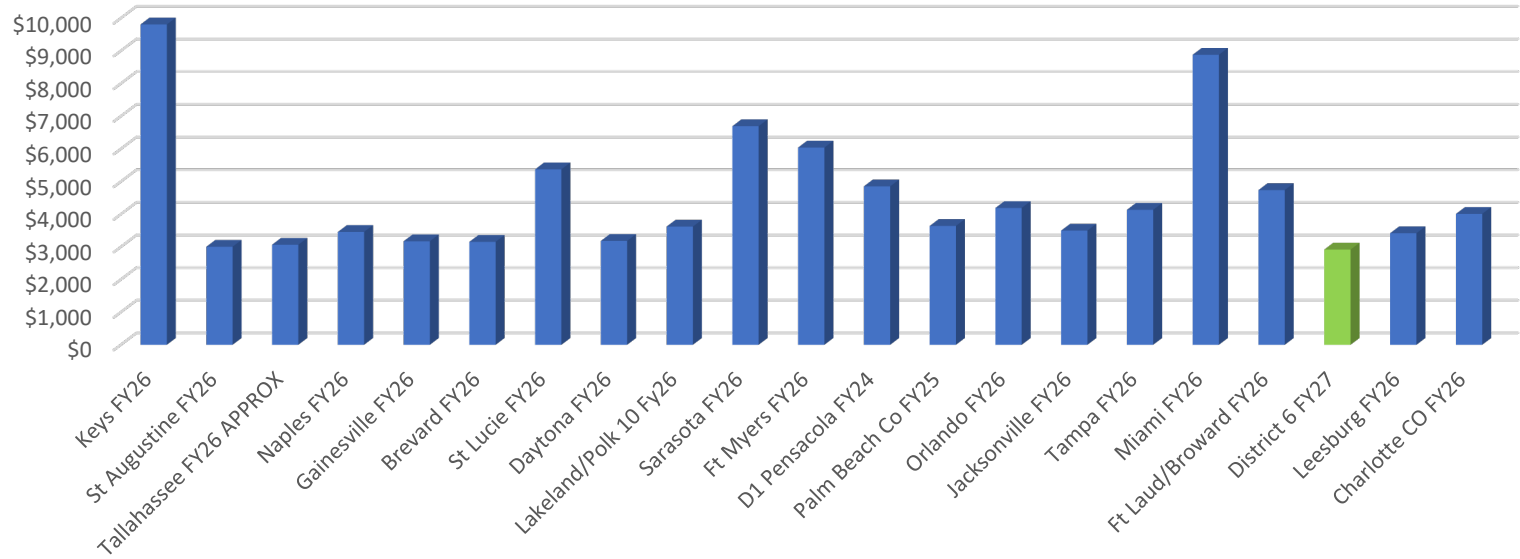
03

## Experimenting with cost efficient strategies

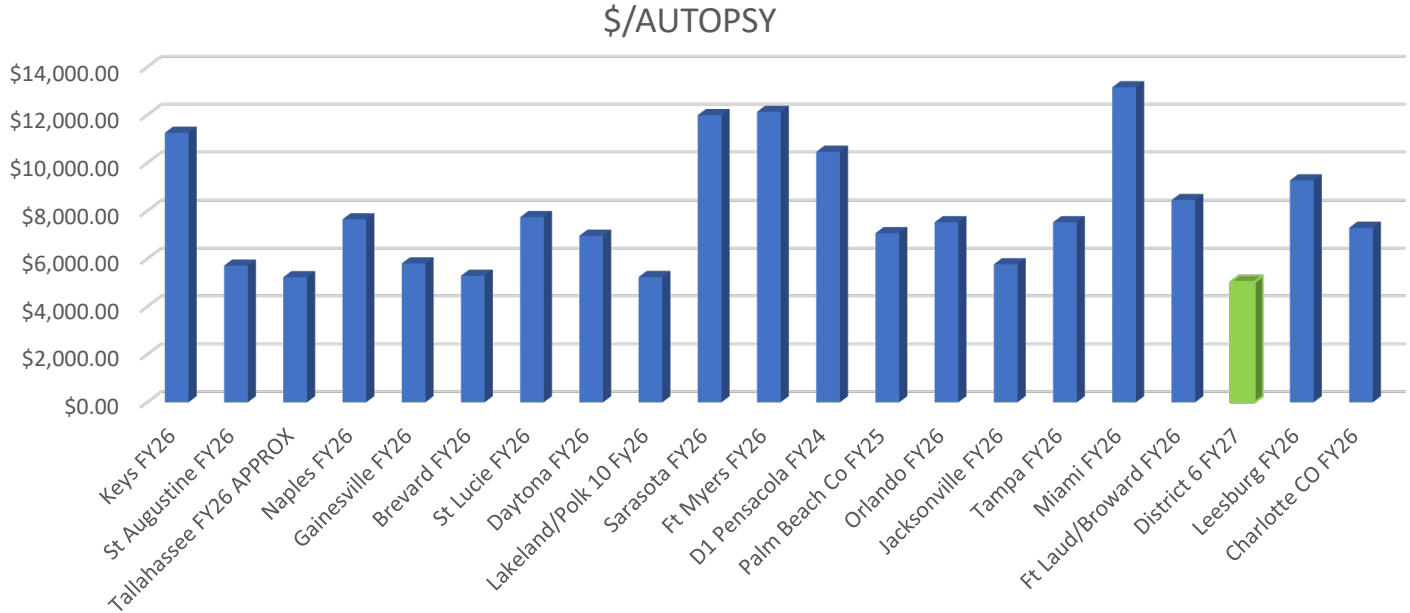
Eliminated two staff positions.

# M.E. Cost per Case

\$/CASE

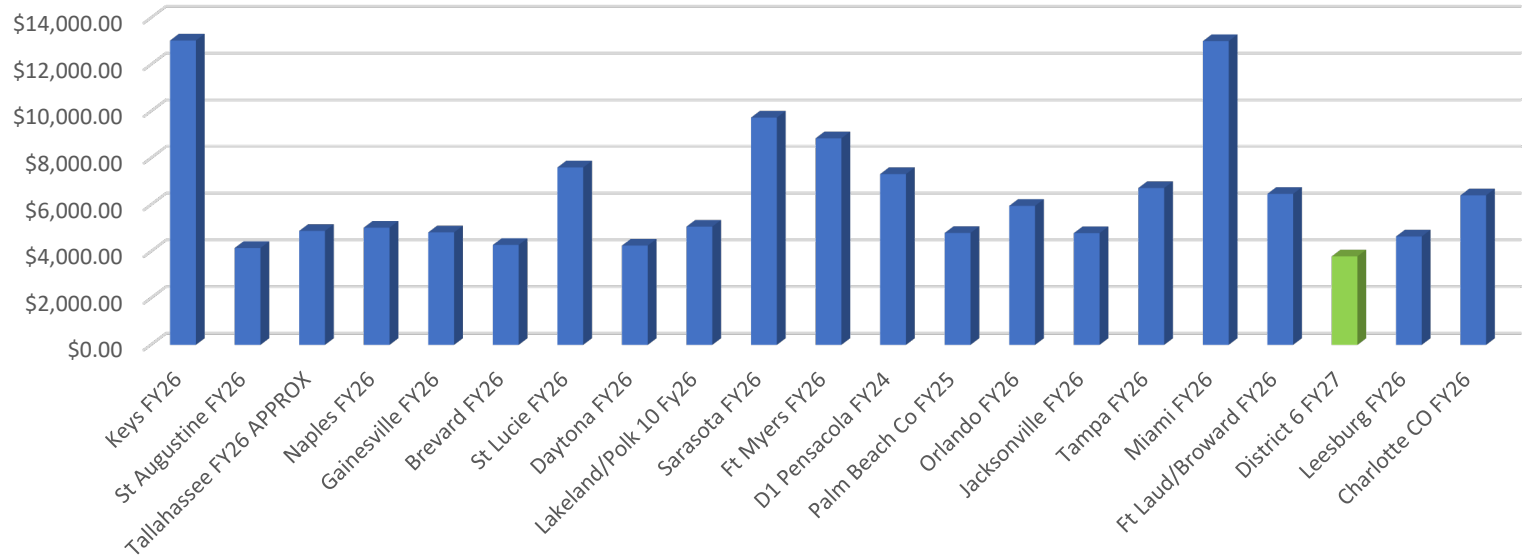


# M.E. Cost per Autopsy



# M.E. Cost per Violent Death

\$/Violent Death



## Forensic Laboratory Analysis – FY25

Lab Unit	Cases Completed	Tests
Biology – DNA	2444	13,868
Biology – Serology	332	3160
Chemistry – Seized Drugs	4689	9402
Toxicology – BAC	160	355
Toxicology – DUI – Drugs	524	737
Toxicology – Post Mortem	1217	8633
TOTAL	9395	36,145

Note: 7% decrease (PM toxicology)  
from FY24  
Eliminated FTE Analyst position

## Forensic Laboratory

- Maximus Award
- Half of all public crime labs report (~200)
- Award given to any laboratory that operates at least 90% efficiency based on established benchmarks

### *FORESIGHT MAXIMUS AWARD*

*is hereby presented to*

*Pinellas County Forensic Lab,*

*Largo, FL*

*in recognition of superior performance by achieving at least 90% peak efficiency for  
the 2023-2024 Foresight reporting year.*

*Presented the 7<sup>th</sup> day of April 2025.*



  
ASCLD President



# Cost per Case (FY24)

## All Labs - Foresight Project

Cost Per Case (USD)	Pinellas County	25th Percentile	Mean	75th Percentile
Toxicology: Blood Alcohol	159	141	234	357
Biology: DNA	726	1320	1623	2418
Chemistry: Seized Drugs	143	318	428	568
Chemistry: Fire Debris Analysis	501	1926	3083	4865
Biology: Serology	305	888	1213	2049
Toxicology: DUI Drugs	536	582	738	996
Toxicology: Post Mortem	589	641	858	1097

# Turn around time (FY24)

All Labs - Foresight Project				
Average Turn Around Time (days)	Pinellas County	25th Percentile	Mean	75th Percentile
Toxicology: Blood Alcohol	17	17	29	39
Biology: DNA	27	112	141	164
Chemistry: Seized Drugs	15	52	73	92
Chemistry: Fire Debris Analysis	19	29	97	130
Biology: Serology	13	57	69	87
Toxicology: DUI Drugs	22	42	69	84
Toxicology: Post Mortem	23	59	80	91

# Salary/Benefits – National Comparison (FY24)

All Labs - Foresight Project				
Average Compensation (USD)	Pinellas County	25th Percentile	Mean	75th Percentile
Toxicology: Blood Alcohol	70,032	83,487	100,150	123,303
Biology: DNA	74,114	109,611	129,356	144,116
Chemistry: Seized Drugs	70,953	106,467	123,348	133,841
Biology: Serology	60,539	93,063	108,869	121,422
Toxicology: DUI Drugs	70,333	96,918	112,794	125,561
Toxicology: Post Mortem	70,334	75,502	108,058	155,125

Note: Salaries are now comparable; the difference is in cost benefits

# Outlook and Strategies

- Continue to look for efficiencies while retaining staff
- Explore grants and other income

