



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 20-1390A, Version: 1

Subject:

Agreement with the District Six Medical Examiner for professional services related to the Medical Examiner's Office and Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory.

Recommended Action:

Approval of the agreement with the District Six Medical Examiner for professional services related to the Medical Examiner's Office and Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory.

- The provision of forensic laboratory services and medical examiner services is an integral part of the criminal justice system.
- Services performed by the Medical Examiner's Office include but are not limited to autopsies, laboratory testing for analysis of evidence, and cremation services.
- This Agreement provides funding in the amount of \$6,256,350.00 for professional services.
- Total Fiscal Year 2021 budget for Medical Examiner including two full-time equivalent positions for DNA section of the Forensic Laboratory and such operating expenses as utilities is \$6,934,130.00. Total offsetting revenue including grants, cremation fees, and charges for services to Pasco County is \$1,488,450.00.

Strategic Plan:

Ensure Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

2.1 Provide planning, coordination, prevention, and protective services to ensure a safe and secure community

2.2 Be a facilitator, convener, and purchaser of services for those in need

Summary:

This Agreement provides funding for Medical Examiner operations and Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory services in accordance with Chapter 406, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 11G, Florida Administrative Code. The Medical Examiner will furnish all services and personnel necessary for Medical Examiner operations within Pinellas County.

Background Information:

The Medical Examiner's Office provides both forensic medicine services (investigation of sudden, unexpected, or suspicious death) and forensic laboratory services (chemical and drug analyses) to Pinellas County. Medical Examiner operations comprises roughly 60% of the agreement budget and Forensic Laboratory operations including Chemistry/Fire/Debris Section, the DUI Section, and the DNA Section at roughly 40% of the budget. Under Section 406.06(3) and 406.08(1), Florida Statutes, the Board of County Commissioners is responsible for the payment of the Medical Examiner fees, salaries, and expenses.

The annual workload summary for the Medical Examiner's Office reports 12,900 deaths in Pinellas County in 2019. Of those, 1,561 became Medical Examiner cases, with 957 autopsies (up 12.5%

from FY18 to FY19) and 604 external examinations performed. Trends relating to substance abuse, illicit drugs and sexual assault kit requirements continue to drive forensic lab demand with caseload up 12% from FY18 to FY19.

Fiscal Impact:

Funding of \$6,256,350.00 is consistent with the FY21 Tentative Budget. Total Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) budget for Medical Examiner including two (2) full-time equivalent positions for DNA section of Forensic Laboratory and such operating expenses as utilities is \$6,934,130.00. Total offsetting revenue including grants, cremation fees, and charges for services to Pasco County is \$1,488,450.00.

Staff Member Responsible:

Daisy Rodriguez, Director, Human Services

Partners:

District Six Medical Examiner

Attachments:

Medical Examiner Agreement
List of Fees for Services