



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
— Homer Stryker M.D. —  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

# MEDICAL EXAMINER AND FORENSIC SERVICES

Grand Traverse

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County



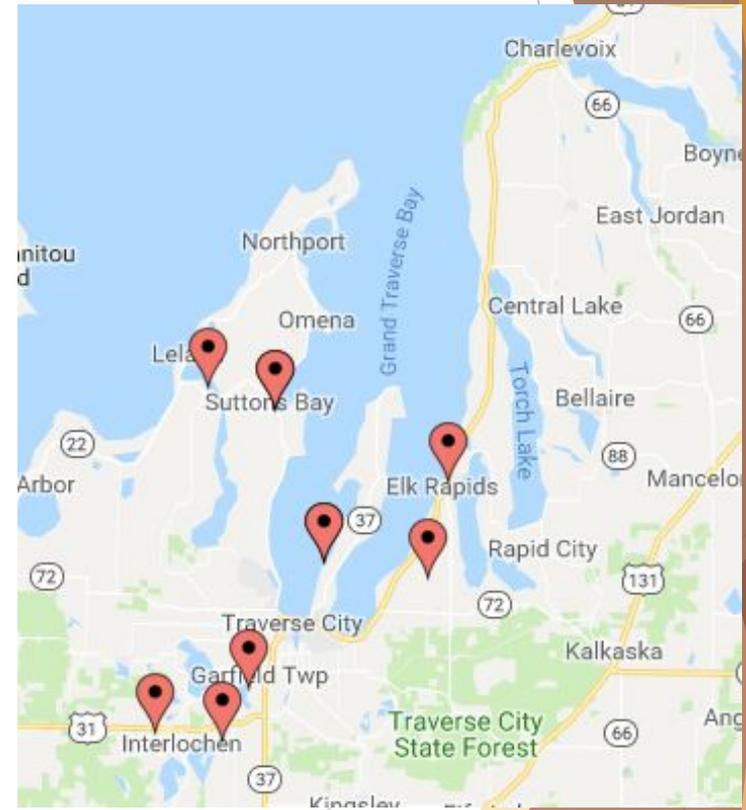
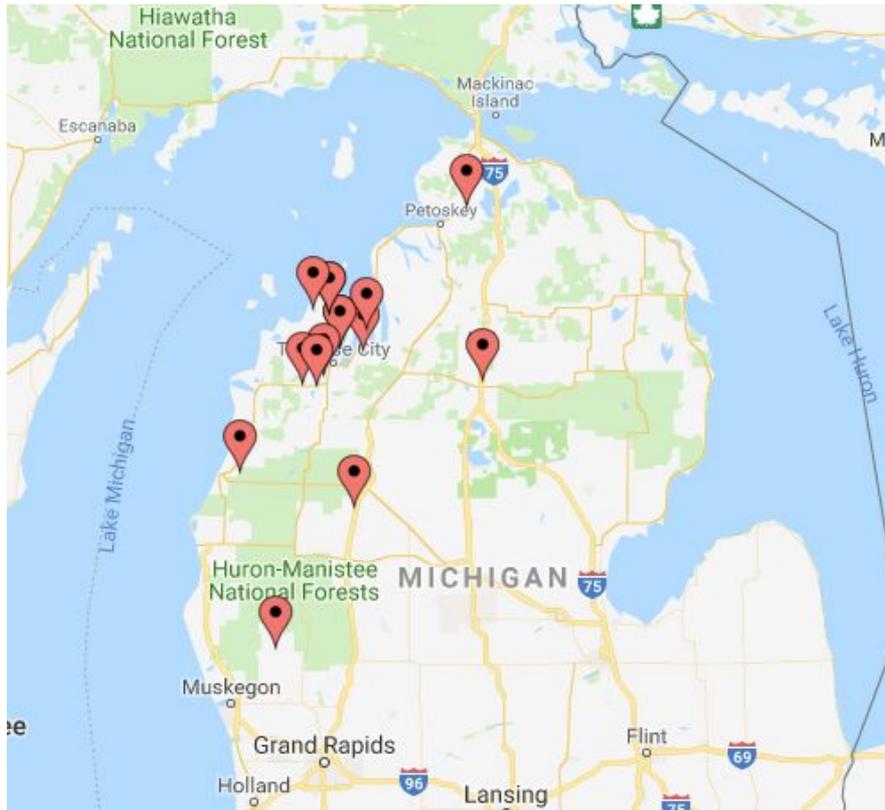
# Grand Traverse County

Year	2017	2018
<b>Total Deaths in the County</b>	<b>1,306</b>	<b>1,413</b>
<b>Deaths Reported to the MEO</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>350</b>
<b>Deaths Investigated by MEO</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>252</b>
<b>MEI Scene Investigations</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>206</b>
<b>Death Certificates signed by MEO</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>Decedents Transported to WMed</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Complete Autopsy</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Limited Examination</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>External Examination</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Storage Only</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Cases with Toxicology</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Unidentified Remains After Exam</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Referrals to Gift of Life</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Tissue Donations</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Cornea Donations</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Unclaimed Decedents &amp; Investigations</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Exhumations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Cremation Permits</b>	<b>1,005</b>	<b>1,108</b>
<b>% of Total Deaths with Cremation</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>78%</b>

# Comparisons with Counties - Population and Deaths in County

County	Van Buren	Grand Traverse	Allegan	Calhoun
Population	75,448	92,573	117,327	134,487
Deaths in County	514	1,413	772	1,495
Deaths Reported	162	350	197	475
Postmortem Exams	53	58	67	149
Accident	25	69	35	89
Homicide	5	1	1	6
Acc Drug	10	9	9	49
Traffic	10	15	12	15

# Zip Code of Injury - Traffic Related Deaths



## 2017 versus 2018 – drug related deaths

- ▶ What are opioids?
  - ▶ A class of drugs that include pain relievers available legally by prescription, such as oxycodone, codeine, hydrocodone, morphine, as well as illegal drugs such as heroin, synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, and the fentanyl analogs.

Manner	2017	2018	2019 (YTD)
Accident	19	9	3
Suicide	4	1	2
Indeterminate	0	0	0
Total	23	10	5
% with opioids	84%	89%	0

# Medical Examiner Office - 2018

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- ▶ Maintain full NAME Accreditation
- ▶ Turn-around-time
  - ▶ 85% within 30 days
  - ▶ 99% within 60 days
- ▶ Swift Toxicology for Opioid-Related Mortalities (STORM) project participation with State of Michigan
  - ▶ Rapid tracking to public health and law enforcement
  - ▶ Which drugs are in each county within days
- ▶ Child Death Review Team Participation

# Website: [mimedicallexaminer.com](http://mimedicallexaminer.com)



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## Home

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## What We Provide

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We are nationally accredited and we serve to scientifically investigate deaths that may pose a concern to the health, safety, and welfare of the community. The death investigation process begins at the scene with a



Medical Examiner Investigator (MEI). Our MEIs are in direct contact with the Medical Examiner and Deputy Medical Examiners, who are board-certified forensic pathologists. When indicated by the investigation and circumstances of the death, postmortem examinations are completed by the Medical Examiner and Deputy Medical Examiners, to determine the cause and manner of death, as well as gather and document other pertinent information. The cause of death refers to the underlying disease and/or injury that resulted in the individual's death. The manner of death, in the state of Michigan, is limited to the following options: natural, accident, suicide, homicide, or indeterminate. In general, deaths investigated by our office include those that are sudden and unexpected, related to injury, violence, or suspected drug toxicity, work-related deaths, and deaths that occur while in law enforcement custody.

As mandated by the [Michigan Compiled Laws](#), all deaths that are sudden or unexpected, or occur from other-than-natural causes, must be reported to us. We currently serve as the Office of the Medical Examiner for these counties:

## Mailing Address

1000 Oakland Drive  
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

## Physical Address

300 Portage Street  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

## Phone

Direct: 269.337.6173  
After Hours: 844.337.6001

## Fax

269.224.0262

## E-mail

[pathology@med.wmich.edu](mailto:pathology@med.wmich.edu)

## Hours

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. M-F  
For assistance after hours,  
call 844.337.6001, ext. 112

[Map and Driving Directions](#)

[Request Reports](#)



OPSY REPORTS

## Request Autopsy Reports

Records regarding a death investigated by our office are available through our [Report Request Center](#). Information in the record includes the investigative report, toxicology and postmortem examination reports. The investigative report is generated by the Medical Examiner Investigator (MEI) assigned to investigate the scene and provides the Medical Examiner or Deputy Medical Examiner with details of the individual's death. This report aids in determining whether the individual needs to be transported to our office for further examination. A postmortem report is completed in cases where the Medical Examiner or Deputy Medical Examiner performs a postmortem examination. The postmortem report, or autopsy report if an autopsy was performed, may take up to 60 days to complete, although most are completed within 30 days. In rare cases, the final report may take more than 60 days.

The report describes the findings of the Medical Examiner/Deputy Medical Examiner, including disease processes and any injuries found. A request for an autopsy report generally includes the report of the postmortem examination, toxicology report and reports of any other studies or examinations by consultants. If the investigative report is needed, this should be requested separately.

You may request medical examiner records under the Michigan Freedom of Information Act. To request reports, please visit the [Report Request Center](#) to submit this request electronically. If you are unable to submit your request online, please mail a written request to our general mailing address:

Office of the Medical Examiner  
 [INSERT THE COUNTY WHERE THE DEATH OCCURRED]  
 1000 Oakland Drive  
 Kalamazoo, MI 49008

## Frequently Asked Questions

<a href="#">My loved one has died, what should I do first?</a>	+
<a href="#">Do I need to go to the Medical Examiner's Office to identify my loved one?</a>	+
<a href="#">What is a postmortem exam?</a>	+
<a href="#">Why is a postmortem examination necessary?</a>	+
<a href="#">What are the different types of postmortem examinations?</a>	+
<a href="#">Who pays for the postmortem exam?</a>	+
<a href="#">How long does a postmortem exam take?</a>	+
<a href="#">Can a family refuse an autopsy?</a>	+
<a href="#">How do I get a death certificate?</a>	+
<a href="#">What is the difference between cause and manner of death?</a>	+
<a href="#">When will I know the results of the postmortem exam?</a>	+
<a href="#">How do I get a copy of the postmortem examination or autopsy report?</a>	+
<a href="#">Why does the cause of death and/or the manner of death say PENDING?</a>	+
<a href="#">Who is next-of-kin?</a>	+
<a href="#">Can we still have an open casket after an autopsy?</a>	+
<a href="#">Are there any financial resources available for burial/cremation assistance?</a>	+



FOR FUNERAL DIRECTORS

## Resources for Funeral Directors

When delivering a body for an examination, the transporter should call (844) 337-6001, ext. 112. If you are removing a body, you must provide us with an [Authorization for Release Form](#).

- [Directions to the Office of the Medical Examiner](#)

### Death Certificates

If our office is completing the medical portion of a death certificate, we will fax or email you a completed and signed Medical Certificate of Death (MCOB) for you to use in the Electronic Death Registry System for the State of Michigan.

### Cremation Permit Authorizations

To obtain authorization for a cremation permit, please follow these instructions:

- Ensure that a death certificate signed by a physician is included with the cremation permit.
- If our office is signing the death certificate, please indicate this on the cremation permit.
- A **MANNER** of death is required (box 39). Only our office can assign a manner of death OTHER than Natural. If this is missing, please contact the signing physician for associated manner of death. If listed as anything other than Natural, please fax or email to our office for possible investigation.
- Please ensure decedent name, date of birth and date of death are identical on both the cremation permit and death certificate.
- Fax cremation permits and accompanying death certificate to (269) 224 - 0262 or email the cremation permit and accompanying death certificate as an attachment to [cremationpermits@med.wmich.edu](mailto:cremationpermits@med.wmich.edu).
- Cremation permits will be reviewed by our office **Monday-Friday, twice daily**.
- Cremation permit requests received by 9 AM will be reviewed and returned before 11 AM.
- Cremation permit requests received by 2PM will be reviewed and returned before 4PM.

## Resources for Grieving Families

### Resources on Grieving

A list of support groups and other information from the state of Michigan.

### Additional Resources

Questions or comments?