

# UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT FORENSIC PATHOLOGY FELLOWSHIP CONNECTICUT STATE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER



The Connecticut OCME is a National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) Accredited, free-standing, modern facility that is located in historic Farmington Connecticut on the campus of UCONN Health Center. The OCME is a centralized, state-wide medical examiner system that performs approximately 2,900 autopsies per year which includes approximately 150 homicides, 370 suicides, and over 1600 accidents. We have academic relationships with the medical schools of the University of Connecticut, Yale University, and Quinnipiac University and all of the state pathology residency programs.

The population served by the OCME is approximately 3.6 million people and includes metropolitan and rural areas. Over 20,000 deaths are reported to the OCME each year. This provides an extremely varied exposure to types of deaths including motor vehicle collisions, long gun injuries, substance abuse, environmental and occupational injuries, and unexpected natural deaths.

Fellows will develop forensic autopsy and investigative skills and “forensic thinking” by exposure to a wide range of trauma and diseases leading to death. Our primary goal is to provide exceptional teaching to our fellows. By the end of the year, they will have the confidence and ability to investigate and certify any type of death.

Throughout the year, the fellows will work as junior-level medical examiners, performing examinations under the supervision and teaching of nine experienced board-certified forensic pathologists. The fellows will perform autopsies on all types and manners of death.

Additionally, the fellows will experience dedicated rotations in toxicology, forensic science, crime scene unit, anthropology, and scene investigation. The fellows will have the opportunity to observe the testimony of others and may testify on their cases. Our teaching facility will offer the fellows additional on-site experience in forensic anthropology, neuropathology, cardiovascular pathology, and pediatric pathology.

**Virtual Interviews for 2025 candidates – Early winter 2024**  
**NRMP Match Opens - February 7, 2024**  
**Ranking Opens - March 20, 2024**  
**Quota Deadlines - April 3, 2024**  
**Ranking Closes - April 17, 2024**  
**Match Day - May 1, 2024**



## **APPLICANTS: ELIGIBILITY, COMPENSATION, AND BENEFITS:**

Applicants must have a Doctor of Medicine degree (M.D./D.O.) and have successfully completed residency training in anatomic pathology or combined clinical/anatomic pathology in an ACGME-accredited program before the start of the fellowship.

Our program has one remaining fellowship position available with a start date of July 1, 2024, and two positions available with a start date of July 1, 2025. 2025 positions will be filled through the NRMP match. A Connecticut Medical License must be obtained prior to the start of work. State regulations require a physical examination and a background check. Details about compensation, benefits, and eligibility requirements and selection process are listed on the [UConn Health GME website](#). For inquiries about the program, please contact Michelle Carroll at [mcarroll@ocme.org](mailto:mcarroll@ocme.org)

## **LOCATION AND FACILITIES:**

Connecticut has charm, beauty, and a high standard of living. It is a place with mountains, forests, an ocean front, rivers, and wonderful green countryside right at your doorstep. Connecticut is well above the US average in Income (highest average per capita in the US), Education (ranked #14 in U.S.), Health (#4 in U.S.) and Public Safety (#6 in U.S.). If you want to enjoy your quality of life, it is the right time to move to Connecticut. Connecticut is family friendly and has some of the country's best schools and educational systems.

The OCME is housed in a stand-alone, modern three-story building with a large, open autopsy space which allows the fellows to be working on cases in close proximity to a senior ME. The autopsy facility is fully equipped, and the autopsy workstations are large, well lit, and designed for ease of use. The two fellows share one office, and each has an assigned desk with a desktop personal computer, microscope, and internet access. There is adequate parking for all staff.

## **PHILOSOPHY, PURPOSE, AND GOALS:**

The mission of the Connecticut OCME is to provide accurate, timely, dignified, compassionate, and professional death investigative services for the citizens of Connecticut, together with education, consultation, and research from the local and national medical, legal, academic, and law enforcement communities. The fellowship program is designed to provide an already trained pathologist with fundamental forensic reasoning, skills, and knowledge needed to conduct proper medicolegal death investigations. The fellows will learn that the autopsy is an important tool but is only one part of the investigation. Particular emphasis is placed on the correlation of history and scene observations with autopsy and toxicological findings. The program will enable the graduate to complete investigations with expediency, accuracy, and precision.

## **COURSE OF STUDY:**

The accredited fellowship is 12-months of study. The initial week is orientation to the OCME procedures and staff. The fellows will be assigned autopsy duty 2-3 days per week and the other days will be for scene investigation, observation of trial testimony, teaching, study, and paperwork. During the year, the fellows will perform on average 225 autopsies (on all manners of death, including homicides), and conduct scene investigations.

There are dedicated rotations for toxicology, the crime scene unit, scene investigations, anthropology, and the crime lab. A series of lectures and demonstrations occur throughout the year. The medical school library is on our campus, but we also have a forensic library in-house and the fellows' office has a working library of common forensic textbooks.

Fellow evaluations are conducted by the attending staff and the Program Director on an individual basis.

## **DAILY WORK SCHEDULE:**

The fellows are assigned to the same number of autopsy and paper days each month as the senior MEs (approximately 10 autopsy days per month). The fellows will perform autopsies on one weekend per month with a senior ME. Following the morning triage meeting, the cases are assigned, and autopsies start. After autopsy, there is ample time in the afternoon for dictation of reports and the case review conference.

Autopsies are capped at 3 per day for MEs and fellows. Fellows are always scheduled to work with at least one other senior ME. As the year progresses, the fellows will get gradual on-call exposure. During on-call duties and scene investigations, fellows will learn how to triage cases and respond to organ/tissue donor requests.

## **SUPPORT STAFF:**

Full-time, experienced investigators work 24/7 to investigate reported deaths and attend scenes. Support staff include excellent mortuary technicians, laboratory assistants, and photographers. NMS Laboratories performs the majority of our toxicology testing with an average turn-around-time of 12 days. The Connecticut Division of Scientific Services perform our DNA and evidence analysis. Digital radiology and histology are completed in-house. Reports are transcribed by a contracted service with a turnaround time of 24 hours. An electronic case management system, available on your desktop, contains all case information, including all images, radiology, medical records, and reports. It has search and management functions for a complete archive of cases going back over 20 years. We consistently meet NAME's requirements of 90% of reports finalized within 60 days.

## **MEETINGS, CONSULTATIONS, AND DIDACTICS:**

A case triage conference is held at the beginning of each weekday and a case review conference on each weekday afternoon. Problem cases, cases of interest, and pending cases are presented. Consultants are available: Neuropathologist, cardiac pathologist, in-house forensic anthropologist, and forensic odontologist are available (see below).

Each fellow will attend one funded National meeting and leave can be arranged to take the American Board of Pathology examination. Specialized lectures in specific topics are available to the fellows and staff during the year.

## **TOXICOLOGY/CRIME LAB/CRIME SCENE/INVESTIGATIONS:**

The toxicology laboratory rotation is a one-week off-site rotation at NMS Lab, which is located outside of Philadelphia. Travel and lodging are provided by the agency. The fellows will become familiar with toxicological evidence procedures, and learn the fundamentals of the common methods used to identify drugs, volatiles, and other poisons. Most importantly, the fellows will develop a sense of when to consider poisoning and drug overdose as well as the limitations involved with toxicology. The one week Crime Lab rotation is at the Connecticut Division of Scientific Services in Meriden, CT. Crime scene experience is received by scene investigations with our 24/7 in-house investigative staff and the State's Central Major Crime Squad.

## NEUROPATHOLOGY:

In addition to two of our MEs being board certified in FP and NP (one full-time and one part-time ME), we also have a consultant neuropathologist with over 30 years of NP and Forensic NP experience. We have neuropathology conferences once or twice a month, which allows the fellows the opportunity to increase their understanding and interpretation of neurological diseases as they arise in forensic context.

Through our Neuropathologist and ME staff, the fellows will receive direct, detailed training in the proper handling and processing of adult and pediatric neuropathology specimens. This additional neuropathology education will assist the fellows in acquiring confidence and competence in approaching and handling neurological specimens and acquire the skills to examine and dissect the complete central nervous system in a systematic manner. The fellows will learn accurate, detailed report writing that will document all abnormalities, as well as the absence of abnormalities, which are useful to clinicians, attorneys, and families.

## CARDIAC PATHOLOGY:

Cardiac diseases and congenital cardiac anomalies account for the vast majority of sudden, unexpected natural deaths. The fellows will have the opportunity to consult with a recognized cardiac specialist. The fellows will receive direct training in the proper handling and processing of cardiac specimens, both pediatric and adult. The fellows will learn accurate, detailed report writing that will document all abnormalities as well as the absence of abnormalities useful to clinicians, attorneys, and families.

## ANTHROPOLOGY:

We have a part-time, in-house, board-certified forensic anthropologist. Fellows will rotate in the anthropology laboratory and receive didactic sessions with hands on examination of a variety of human and non-human specimens.

## RESEARCH:

The fellows are not required to conduct research projects, and are not required to publish papers, although these activities are encouraged. The medical examiner staff will readily assist the fellows if interested.

### [Inquiries or Questions:](#)

**Michelle Carroll, Fellowship Liaison**  
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<https://health.uconn.edu/graduate-medical-education/forensic-pathology-fellowship-welcome-program-director/forensic-pathology-fellowship/>

