



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Justice	Coroner	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
82-16919	Yellowknife	Directorate/HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Coroner provides professional investigative expertise to the NWT Coroner Service, relevant to the management of sudden and unexpected death investigations and the completion of investigations according to the *Coroners Act*, R.S.N.W.T., 1988 c. C-20, and in accordance with investigative and forensic best practices, death investigations standards and ethical guidelines.

SCOPE

The Coroner is located in Yellowknife and reports directly to the Chief Coroner. The incumbent investigates deaths in the NWT with a majority of the investigations occurring in the North Slave region where they will provide frontline and on scene services to the public, grieving family members and investigative partners. The incumbent will provide support by managing document flow, body removal, external examination, overseeing the collection of Toxicological samples, preparing remains for transport, preparing a variety of administrative documents, answering and directing calls to the Office of the Chief Coroner.

The incumbent acts as a resource to Relief Community Coroners from across the NWT on an as needed basis by providing support, advice and assistance to ensure that they carry out their responsibilities in accordance with applicable legislation, policies and procedures.

The Coroner must perform the professional and legal duties set out in the *Coroners Act*, also in accordance with the *Evidence Act*, *Canada Evidence Act*, *Vital Statistics Act*, *Public Health Act*, *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* with such ancillary or incidental duties as may be reasonably expected of or pertain to the effective performance of the Coroner and the NWT Coroner Service.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Managing investigations of sudden and unexpected deaths reportable under the *Coroners Act*, ensuring all deaths are investigated thoroughly by:**
 - Interpreting and applying the Coroners Act and all other relevant legislation
 - Keeping the Deputy Chief Coroner and Chief Coroner apprised of pertinent case details as they evolve, especially when determining the manner of death
 - Overseeing the preparation of documentation including case notes, file management, report writing and providing suggested recommendations to the chief Coroner
 - Debriefing difficult and complex cases and managing crisis situations to limit burnout and trauma
 - Liaising with family members of the deceased
- 2. Exercises the statutory powers and responsibilities of a Coroner pursuant to the *Coroners Act* and acting as a resource for Relief Community Coroners by:**
 - Receiving notice of reportable deaths, attending death scenes, taking possession of the body and conducting an investigation and reporting to the Chief Coroner or Deputy Chief Coroner
 - Directing the death investigation and providing leadership and coordination at the scene, interviewing witnesses as required
 - Issuing warrants for the collection of remains and evidence as it pertains to the manner or cause of death
 - Makes findings on the cause of death, manner of death and making recommendations for review by the Chief Coroner when warranted
 - Performing external post-mortem examinations and collection of bodily fluid samples or authorizes autopsies after consulting with the Chief Coroner or Deputy Chief Coroner
 - Interpreting and analyzing autopsy, toxicology and other medical reports and relaying the information to the family
 - Providing support, advice and assistance to families and relatives of the deceased
- 3. Manages the inventory of the Mobile Coroner Service transport vehicle & its maintenance.**
 - Ensures that all maintenance appointments are met, and that the vehicle is kept in excellent working condition
 - Maintains maintenance records
 - Ensures onboard inventories of safety equipment and materials are maintained at a sufficient level
 - Weekly intensive disinfection of all areas within the vehicle and cargo/body hold
- 4. Prepares ADM briefing materials for cases.**

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

There is a combination of field and office work.

Physical effort is required to access and retrieve body and body parts approximately 40 to 50 times per year for about 5 hours per occurrence. With assistance, lift and carry deceased persons from the death scene. If necessary, prepare the deceased for transportation by placing the deceased in a shipping container.

The incumbent will be required to search scenes and handle evidence which may include severed body parts. Scenes include houses, commercial buildings, industrial settings, roadways, highways, lakes, rivers, and remote wilderness in all forms of weather and seasons. Evidence exhibits may include large cumbersome objects.

External Examinations must be completed on human remains, which require lifting, pulling and pushing to turn human remains onto their side or onto their back/frontside. This is done either alone or with the assistance of another person, human remains can be heavy. While working at the scene or morgue the incumbent must be able to lift, stretch, and pull and push remains and must be able to stand for long periods of time without sitting.

Human remains are often flown into Yellowknife for shipment to Edmonton. The Coroner is required to ensure that these remains are transported, which may include the lifting of remains and shipping containers.

Environmental Conditions

There could be exposure to communicable diseases, bodily fluids, strong foul odors, decomposing bodies or body parts in various states of decay multiple times per year. Investigations will be performed in all weather conditions. The incumbent is frequently required to travel on small aircraft, helicopters or boats to reach remote death scenes.

Death investigations will be performed in all weather conditions in remote environments on land or ice. Primitive sleeping accommodations may be provided, from a tent to the floor of an RCMP detachment.

Sensory Demands

The incumbent will be required to use the combined senses of touch, sight, and smell throughout an investigation.

Mental Demands

The incumbent will be exposed to graphic details of death and be expected to be called out at any time of the day or night. This may cause a significant disruption to the incumbent's family and social life. The incumbent is expected to be on-call 24 hours a day for approximately a third of the year and is expected to travel to a death scene on very short notice.

The incumbent will be required to remain calm, professional and supportive to individuals who are emotionally distraught. Some families can be very aggressive, potentially abusive, volatile or in crisis, raising questions about personal safety.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- In-depth knowledge of the *Coroners Act, Canada Evidence Act, Vital Statistics Act, Public Health Act* and regulations, investigative procedures and best practices and policies
- Ability to direct and conduct death investigations including an ability to identify issues and weigh facts to draw supportable and appropriate conclusions
- Knowledge of medical/legal terminology to facilitate the ability to make findings of cause of death or to interpret reports
- Ability to organize investigations and lead multi-faceted teams at death scenes
- Proven evaluation, analytical and problem solving skills
- Proven verbal and written communication skills to effectively deal with the public, concerned parties, and Investigative partners.
- Ability to listen, understand and respond in a helpful empathetic manner
- Proven ability to work cooperatively in a team approach with peers, subordinates, the public, and community agencies/groups
- Ability to work in a cross-cultural environment in the north
- Proven organization and time management skills to manage a diverse workload
- Proven ability to prioritize conflicting demands for attention, and unexpected changes in priorities and assignments
- Proven knowledge and ability to use MS Operating Systems, MS Office, Internet and Email applications
- Confident interviewing abilities while ensuring that only evidence related to the investigation is being gathered

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A diploma in criminology, forensics, sociology, investigations, nursing or a related field, and at least 5 years of directly related experience. These skills may also be obtained through a combination of education and experience. The incumbent is required to have a valid class 5 NWT Driver's license. The incumbent must be eligible to receive a statutory appointment as a Coroner to perform the duties of this position.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security (check one)

No criminal records check required

- Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

French Language (check one if applicable)

- French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)

- French preferred

Indigenous Language: Select Language

- Required
- Preferred