

# Compensation Study of Forensic Pathologists for the City of Jacksonville, Florida

## FINAL REPORT



Evergreen Solutions, LLC

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# Compensation Study of Forensic Pathologists

## INTRODUCTION

In September 2018, Evergreen Solutions was retained by the City of Jacksonville, Florida, to conduct a Compensation Study of key positions in the Medical Examiner's Office, Duval County - District 4. The study was primarily designed to examine the national market rate for forensic pathologists, including the Chief Medical Examiner and the Forensic Pathologists-Associate Medical Examiners assigned to them.

For positions studied, the examination included a review of:

- base salary, bonuses, incentives, etc.;
- health, dental, vision and life benefits;
- accrued time off;
- holidays;
- retirement plan options;
- other benefits offered;
- estimated future adjustment due to cost of living increases, general wage adjustments and other reasons;
- minimum requirements of the positions included in the study;
- cost of living analysis as compared to Jacksonville, Florida; and
- any other relevant information found during the study.

As part of the study, Evergreen Solutions was tasked with:

- developing a comprehensive survey instrument;
- identifying a comparable group of Medical Examiner offices within Florida and from across the nation;



- conducting salary and benefit surveys and providing feedback to the City of Jacksonville regarding current market competitiveness;
- reviewing benefits offered by the City and comparing benefits to those offered by peer organizations;
- developing strategic positioning recommendations using market data and best practices; and
- developing and submitting draft and final reports which summarized findings and recommendations.

The report is presented in the following sections:

- 1.0 Overview of Peer Organizations
- 2.0 Position Qualifications
- 3.0 Compensation
- 4.0 Benefits
- 5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

## **1.0 OVERVIEW OF PEER ORGANIZATIONS**

In attempting to identify comparable Medical Examiner Offices nationally, Evergreen found that Florida is unique in the use of a District Medical Examiner System, where each of the 19 districts encompasses one or more counties. Sixteen (16) states use countywide or multi-county Medical Examiner Systems—whereas 19 states have a State Medical Examiner Office that oversees the work of regional offices within the state.

According to a report published by the Emory School of Medicine, 28 states use Coroners—with less than a third of those states requiring Coroners to have formal training. Coroners may or may not be a physician or hold a full-time position.

For purposes of this study, only Medical Examiner Systems were examined—with populations served, geographic size, and caseload helping to narrow the field of potential peers.

**Exhibit 1** provides a list of the 27 target peers from which full or partial survey data were obtained for this analysis.

Several of the initially identified peers were unable to respond to the survey as the Medical Examiners' offices were jointly or solely run by universities or hospitals—meaning the salaries and benefits were jointly provided and could not be accurately reported for comparison purposes. Florida - District 8, for example, serves Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy, and Union counties, but works with and through the University of Florida and the University of Florida Health rather than the county. Jefferson County, Alabama, runs its Medical Examiner Office through Cooper Green Mercy Health Services and was consequently unable to participate.



**EXHIBIT 1  
TARGET MARKET PEERS AND COST OF LIVING FACTORS**

MEDICAL EXAMINER SYSTEM TYPE	Market Peers	Cost of Living Index
Florida District System	Duval County - District 4	106.27
	Pinellas County - District 6	113.57
	Lee County - District 21	105.92
	Orange County - District 9	106.29
	Volusia County - District 7	101.78
	Marion County - District 5	99.14
	Palm Beach County - District 15	114.56
	Broward County - District 17	110.04
	Hillsborough County - District 13	107.69
State System	New Hampshire State	127.21
	Mecklenburg County, NC	108.11
	Shelby County, TN	100.91
	Davidson County, TN	104.26
County System	Pima County, AZ	107.60
	Maricopa County AZ	114.43
	Oakland County, MI	105.52
County/ Multi-County/ Jurisdictional System	Cuyahoga County, OH	106.03
	Summit County, OH	100.72
	Dallas County, TX	110.06
	Travis County, TX	104.53
	Collin County, TX	104.59
	El Paso County, TX	94.45
	Bexar County, TX	102.09
	Pierce County, WA	115.95
	Snohomish County, WA	117.53
	Spokane County, WA	112.70
	Jackson County, MO	99.07
	Fulton County, GA	112.37

Shelby County, Tennessee, is run by or closely affiliated with the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, whereas Davidson County, Tennessee, is operated through Forensic Medical Management Services. In these two cases, the affiliated organizations were able to supply the necessary information for the survey. During discussions with peer staff in a number of other locations, Evergreen had frequent questions about grant funding and shared staffing issues pertaining to direct or indirect affiliations with colleges, universities, and other health organizations.

As part of the survey, peers were asked to provide basic information regarding the operations of the Medical Examiner’s Office. **Exhibit 2** provides peer averages in comparison to the operational statistics for the Duval County Medical Examiner’s Office.



**EXHIBIT 2  
CHARACTERISTICS OF MARKET PEERS**

Characteristics	Peer Average	Duval County Medical Examiner
Number of Full-time Employees in the Medical Examiner Office	32.7	26
Number of Part-time Employees in the Medical Examiner Office	1.7	1
Approximate Number of Cases Handled Annually	2,379	2,966
Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2019	\$5,179,780	\$5,200,000
Population of the Service Area	1,301,610	1,300,000
Geographic Size of Service Area (sq. miles)	2,433 Sq. Miles	3,608 Sq. Miles
Certifications/Accreditations held by Medical Examiner Office	88.5%	<i>Accredited by the National Association of Medical Examiners</i>

As shown, the Duval County Medical Examiner and 88.5 percent of the responding peer organizations are accredited by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME)—with a limited number of peers reporting additional accreditations through the American Board of Forensic Toxicology and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. One other peer stated they were in the early stages of the NAME accreditation process. Although information on the exact number of NAME accredited systems in the United States was not readily available, information provided on peer websites would indicate this survey has gathered information from roughly one-third of the 70+ NAME accredited Medical Examiner Systems in the United States. Two state run systems indicated that the regional offices were not accredited nor certified, but were under the control of a statewide governing organization.

**2.0 POSITION QUALIFICATIONS**

Evergreen also requested information regarding the minimum and preferred qualifications of the positions being studied (**Exhibit 3**).

As shown, all reporting peers require both a valid medical license (Doctor of Medicine and/or Doctor of Osteopathy) and Certification in Anatomic and/or Forensic Pathology by the American Board of Pathology for both positions. The Duval County Medical Examiner lists this as a preferred qualification. In the case of the Forensic Pathologists, however, more than half of the peers stipulated that, if not currently held, certification must be obtained within two to three years of date of hire. For the degrees and field of study, the response included additional postgraduate work, specific types of residency programs, and the like.

In addition to the general responses, Evergreen reviewed some of the job descriptions available online or from peers for the Chief Medical Examiners and the Forensic Pathologists. With only a limited number of exceptions, the job descriptions were silent on the required years of experience, or stated that an unspecified amount of experience was required. When asked, several peers said they preferred to leave the experience requirement ambiguous as it left room for negotiation during the hiring process. The numbers shown in the experience columns represent the reported requirements, without regard to those that were silent on the issue.



**EXHIBIT 3  
MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

Minimum Qualifications	Chief Medical Examiner		Forensic Pathologist-Associate Medical Examiner	
	Peers	Duval County	Peers	Duval County
Licensed Physician (MD)	100.00%	State of Florida Medical License	100.00%	State of Florida Medical License
Board or National Certifications	100.00%	n/a	100.00%	Board Certified in Anatomical, Clinical Pathology, with Forensic Pathology within 2 years of hire.
Degrees or Fields of Study	45.8%	Anatomical / Clinical / Forensic Pathology	63.6%	Completion of Anatomical / Clinical Pathology residency
Prior Medical Examiner Experience (Average Years)	4.33	n/a	1.83	n/a
Prior Forensic Pathologist Experience (Average Years)	4.38	n/a	2.29	n/a
Prior Managerial Experience (Average Years)	2.42	n/a	0.00	n/a
Other	52.0%	n/a	54.6%	n/a

The most frequent “Other” requirement was a valid state driver’s license; other responses were generally related to specific state or local requirements.

As shown in **Exhibit 4**, responses pertaining to preferred qualifications were limited. Under preferred licenses, some peers indicated that they accept either a Doctor of Medicine or Doctor of Osteopathy; however, like the Duval County Medical Examiner, two of those peers stated that a Medical Doctor was preferred. One positive response pertained to a preference for a multi-state medical license.

**EXHIBIT 4  
PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS**

Preferred Qualification	Chief Medical Examiner		Forensic Pathologist-Associate Medical Examiner	
	Peers	Duval County	Peers	Duval County
Licenses	11.54%	Medical Doctor	11.54%	Medical Doctor
Board or National Certifications	3.85%	Board Certified in Anatomical, Clinical, & Forensic Pathology	3.85%	Board Certified in Anatomical, Clinical, & Forensic Pathology
Education	0.00%		3.85%	
Experience	3.85%		0.00%	



For the Chief Medical Examiner's position, one of the responding peers stated that additional certifications were preferred for the Chief Medical Examiner, but were not specific about the type. Another peer indicated that managerial experience was preferred for this position.

For the Forensic Pathologist, while several peers indicated that the minimum requirement allowed for the individual to obtain full certification within two years of date of hire; one indicated that full certification was preferred. Another peer indicated that a one-year forensic pathology fellowship was preferred.

### **3.0 COMPENSATION**

**Exhibits 5 and 6** provide a summary of the results of the salary survey. **Exhibit 5** provides a comparison of the published salary ranges for the positions, while **Exhibit 6** compares the average actual salaries for the positions.

**Exhibits 7 and 8** present the same data, but are based exclusively on the salary data obtained from the eight participating Florida districts.

These data represent base salary only and contain the following information:

- **Market Range Minimum, Midpoint, and Maximum.** The survey range minimum indicates the average minimum salary for each classification provided by peer organizations. Survey range midpoint provides the average midpoint of the peer respondents for each classification surveyed. Survey range maximum provides the average maximum of the survey participants for each classification surveyed.
- **Percent Differentials.** The percent differentials are shown for survey market range minimum, midpoint, and maximum. The differentials specify the variance between the Duval County Medical Examiner's current published salary ranges and the market average shown in the exhibit. A positive differential indicates the Duval County Medical Examiner is above market for that classification at the range minimum, midpoint, or maximum. Information is presented on positions that are above average to provide valuable information regarding the Duval County Medical Examiner's competitive edge in the marketplace for those positions. A negative differential indicates the Duval County Medical Examiner is below market for that classification— indicating that these salaries are not as competitive. In the final row of the exhibit, the average percent differentials for the range minimum, midpoint and maximum are provided. This is derived by averaging each classification's percent differential.
- **Market Range Spread.** The range spread, which provides the average range width for each classification surveyed, is the percentage difference between the average minimum and average maximum salaries of the respondents, relative to the minimum. The average range spread for all of the surveyed classifications is provided in the next to last column of the exhibit.





**EXHIBIT 5  
MARKET RESULTS BASED ON SALARY RANGES FOR BENCHMARKED POSITIONS  
ADJUSTED FOR COST OF LIVING**

Classifications	Duval County Medical Examiner				Survey Minimum Market	% Diff	Survey Midpoint Market	% Diff	Survey Maximum Market	% Diff	Market Range Spread	# of Respondents
	Min	Mid	Max	Spread								
Chief Medical Examiner	\$219,091	\$288,396	\$357,700	63.3%	\$187,421	14.5%	\$228,199	20.9%	\$268,977	24.8%	43.7%	16.0
Forensic Pathologist-Associate Medical Examiner	\$149,110	\$196,277	\$243,444	63.3%	\$162,339	-8.9%	\$192,857	1.7%	\$223,375	8.2%	37.9%	21.0
<b>Overall Average</b>						<b>2.8%</b>		<b>11.3%</b>		<b>16.5%</b>	<b>40.8%</b>	<b>18.5</b>

NOTE: Chief Medical Examiner: Ten (10) peers provided average actual salaries only; one did not provide either as the position is vacant.  
Forensic Pathologist: Six (6) peers provided average actual salaries only.

**EXHIBIT 6  
MARKET RESULTS BASED ON AVERAGE ACTUAL SALARIES FOR BENCHMARKED POSITIONS  
ADJUSTED FOR COST OF LIVING**

Classification	Average Actual Salary			# Respondents
	Duval County Medical Examiner	Peers	% Difference	
Chief Medical Examiner	\$280,000	\$277,900	0.7%	24.0
Forensic Pathologist-Associate Medical Examiner	\$212,867	\$209,811	1.4%	22.0
<b>Overall Average</b>			<b>1.1%</b>	<b>23.0</b>

NOTE: Chief Medical Examiner: Two (2) peers provided salary ranges only; one did not provide either as the position is vacant.  
Forensic Pathologist: Five (5) peers provided salary ranges only.



**EXHIBIT 7  
MARKET RESULTS BASED ON SALARY RANGES  
FOR BENCHMARKED POSITIONS FOR FLORIDA DISTRICTS  
ADJUSTED FOR COST OF LIVING**

Classifications	Duval County Medical Examiner				Survey Minimum Market	% Diff	Survey Midpoint Market	% Diff	Survey Maximum Market	% Diff	Market Range Spread	# of Respondents
	Min	Mid	Max	Spread								
Chief Medical Examiner	\$219,091	\$288,396	\$357,700	63.3%	\$217,037	0.9%	\$261,429	9.4%	\$305,821	14.5%	40.9%	4
Forensic Pathologist-Associate Medical Examiner	\$149,110	\$196,277	\$243,444	63.3%	\$167,738	-12.5%	\$198,403	-1.1%	\$229,069	5.9%	36.6%	6
<b>Overall Average</b>						<b>-5.8%</b>		<b>4.1%</b>		<b>10.2%</b>	<b>38.7%</b>	<b>5</b>

**EXHIBIT 8  
MARKET RESULTS BASED ON AVERAGE ACTUAL SALARIES FOR  
BENCHMARKED POSITIONS FOR FLORIDA DISTRICTS  
ADJUSTED FOR COST OF LIVING**

Classification	Average Actual Salary			# Respondents
	Duval County Medical Examiner	Peers	% Difference	
Chief Medical Examiner	\$280,000	\$295,139	-5.4%	8
Forensic Pathologist-Associate Medical Examiner	\$212,867	\$206,010	3.2%	8
<b>Overall Average</b>			<b>-1.1%</b>	<b>8</b>



- **Survey Responses.** The number of survey responses for each classification is provided in the final column, and the average number of responses for the classification category is shown at the bottom along with an overall average for all classification categories.
- **Average Actual Salary.** The average actual market salaries are provided because some peers do not have salary schedules and ranges for key administrative positions, but rather negotiate salaries based on market and other factors. Peer average actuals are shown in comparison to the average actual Duval County Medical Examiner salary. As with the salary ranges, the percent differential is calculated by position and overall by averaging each classification's percent differential.

### **3.1 Market Minimum**

A starting point of the analysis is to compare the peer average market minimum for each classification to range minimums in the Duval County Medical Examiner Office. Market minimums are generally considered as a starting wage for employees who meet the minimum qualifications for the classification. Those employees with salaries at or near the range minimums are generally new to the role and have not acquired the skills and experience necessary to be fully proficient in their classification.

Utilizing the data gathered in the salary survey for the benchmarked positions, the following conclusions can be reached:

- The Duval County Medical Examiner's Office is, on average, 2.8 percent above market minimums across the two job titles surveyed; in comparison to the Florida districts alone, the Duval County Medical Examiner's Office is, on average, 5.8 percent below the Florida minimums.
- Market minimums obtained nationally versus those provided by Florida districts vary as follows:
  - Chief Medical Examiner – 14.5 percent above the average market minimums nationally; 0.9 percent above the Florida market minimum.
  - Forensic Pathologist/Associate Medical Examiner – 8.9 percent below the average market minimums nationally; 12.5 percent below the Florida market minimums.

### **3.2 Market Midpoint**

This subsection explores the comparison between the average peer midpoints and classification midpoints. Midpoint is frequently considered the point where employees who have achieved full proficiency in their job duties could expect their salaries to be placed. It is considered the best point of comparison for analyzing variance between an organization and its market peers.



Utilizing the data gathered in the salary survey for the benchmarked positions, the following conclusions can be reached:

- The Duval County Medical Examiner Office is, on average, 11.3 percent above market midpoints across the two job titles surveyed; in comparison to the Florida districts alone, the Duval County Medical Examiner Office is, on average, 4.1 percent above the Florida midpoints.
- Market midpoints obtained nationally versus those provided by Florida districts vary as follows:
  - Chief Medical Examiner – 20.9 percent above the average market midpoints nationally; 9.4 percent above the Florida market midpoint.
  - Forensic Pathologist/Associate Medical Examiner – 1.7 above the average market midpoints nationally; 1.1 percent below the Florida market midpoints.

### **3.3 Market Maximum**

In this subsection, salary range maximum values are compared to the survey respondent average maximums. Market maximums are often utilized to attract highly qualified employees or retain experienced individuals in a classification.

When comparing peer market pay grade maximums and maximums for the Duval County Medical Examiner classifications, the following can be determined:

- The Duval County Medical Examiner’s Office is, on average, 16.5 percent above market maximums across the two job titles surveyed; in comparison to the Florida districts alone, the Duval County Medical Examiner’s Office is, on average, 10.2 percent above the Florida maximums.
- Market maximums obtained nationally versus those provided by Florida districts vary as follows:
  - Chief Medical Examiner – 24.8 percent above the average market maximums nationally; 14.5 percent above the Florida market maximum.
  - Forensic Pathologist/Associate Medical Examiner – 8.2 percent above the average market maximums nationally; 5.9 percent above the Florida market maximums.

### **3.4 Market Average Actual**

In this section, the average actual salaries paid by the Duval County Medical Examiner are compared to the survey respondent average actual salaries.

Utilizing the data gathered in the salary survey for the benchmarked positions, the following conclusions can be reached:



- The Duval County Medical Examiner Office is, on average, 1.1 percent above market average actual salaries across the two job titles surveyed; in comparison to the Florida districts alone, the Duval County Medical Examiner is, on average, 1.1 percent below the Florida average actual salaries.
- Market average actual salaries obtained nationally versus those provided by Florida districts vary as follows:
  - Chief Medical Examiner – 0.7 percent above the average market average actual salaries nationally; 5.4 percent below the Florida market average salary.
  - Forensic Pathologist/Associate Medical Examiner – 1.4 percent above the average market average actual salaries nationally; 3.2 percent above the Florida Market average actual salaries.

### **3.5 Supplemental Pay**

The survey further examined supplemental pay or other types of compensation that could impact the County’s ability to attract and retain highly qualified individuals for the key positions in the Medical Examiner’s Office (**Exhibit 9**).

Another component of total income is the employee’s ability to earn additional compensation from other sources for work performed outside of their regular Medical Examiner duties. Examples might include consultation services, expert testimony, and autopsies performed for another governmental entity. **Exhibit 10** examines the policies and practices relating to outside employment.

As shown, nearly half of the Medical Examiner systems surveyed allow the Chief Medical Examiner and the Forensic Pathologists to supplement their income through outside employment. Although requested, only one peer organization provided an actual amount of income generated from outside employment. In this situation, the money actually flowed through the main office from outside counties and then was remitted to the Medical Examiner. In all other situations, the employee is paid directly—meaning that the system office would have no direct knowledge of the total amount of income generated by those outside sources.

### **4.0 BENEFITS**

The average cost of benefits provided as a percentage of total compensation is a broad common indicator that agencies use to assess how generous benefits are at individual organizations. Total compensation refers to the total dollar amount an employee receives from the organization, and is generally calculated as the employee’s salary plus all benefits—expressed as a dollar amount. Therefore, benefits as a percentage of total compensation is calculated by dividing benefits expressed as a dollar amount by the amount of total compensation. **Exhibit 11** displays a basic overview of peer organization benefits as a percent of total compensation.



**EXHIBIT 9  
SUPPLEMENTAL PAY**

Supplement, Stipend or Other Compensation	Chief Medical Examiner				Forensic Pathologist-Associate Medical Examiner			
	Peer Average		Duval County		Peer Average		Duval County	
	Percent	Amount	Yes/No	Amount	Percent	Amount	Yes/No	\$ Amount
Specific Certifications	0.0%	• n/a	No		10.0%	• \$10,000 = Upon Board Certification (2)	No	
Levels of Experience	0.0%	• n/a	No		0.0%	• n/a	No	
Additional Education	0.0%	• n/a	No		0.0%	• n/a	No	
Housing, Vehicle or other Allowances	25.0%	• \$4,666 = Auto Allowance (5) • \$50 = Phone Allowance (1)	No		10.0%	• \$5,600 Auto Allowance (2)	No	
Bonuses (Please describe)	5.0%	• Discretionary 10% (1)	No		10.0%	• Discretionary 10% (1) • \$5,000= bonus as budget allows (1)	No	
Medical License Renewal Fees	60.0%	• \$559 = Fixed Amount (4) • Amount Varies (8)	Yes	\$389/ every two years	55.0%	• \$559= Fixed Amount (4) • Amount Varies (8)	Yes	\$389/ every two years
Professional Organization Fees	40.0%	• \$2,100 = Fixed Amount (2) • Amount Varies (6)	Yes	\$445 for NAME & FAME	40.0%	• \$1,750 = Fixed Amount (2) • Amount Varies (6)	Yes	\$445 for NAME & FAME
Continuing Education and Conference Fees	40.0%	• Amount Varies (8)	Yes	One Conference per Year	40.0%	• Amount Varies (8)	Yes	One Conference per Year
Other Incentives or Supplements (Please describe)	15.0%	• \$400 = TTN Professional Privilege Tax (1) • \$22,500 = CME Special Assignment Pay (1) • Varies for Neuropath Cases (1)	No		10.0%	• \$400 = TTN Professional Privilege Tax (1) • Varies for Brain Harvests (1)	Yes	A Service Incentive of \$310 annually for 5-Year increments



**EXHIBIT 10  
OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT AS A COMPONENT OF COMPENSATION**

Does your organization have a “moonlighting” policy or practice whereby the person holding the position may work for an outside entity, and be compensated for the work performed in addition to their normal duties?					
Position	Peers % Yes	If Yes, please describe parameters or attach a copy of the policy	Estimated Annual Income for Additional Work	Duval County Medical Examiner	Duval County Medical Examiner Estimated Annual Income for Additional Work
Chief Medical Examiner	47.8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy outlines parameters (5)</li> <li>• No specific policy but practice is acceptable within parameters (9)</li> <li>• CME prohibited but Forensic Pathologist can accept outside employment</li> <li>• CME may accept faculty teaching position only, but Forensic Pathologist prohibited</li> <li>• Ordinance prohibits outside employment for Medical Examiner staff</li> <li>• By agreement, both positions can perform autopsies for other counties and accept pay for services.</li> <li>• Civil Cases/Expert Witness only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No dollar amount provided (9)</li> <li>• \$33597 = fees from autopsies performed for other counties (1)</li> <li>• Varies (1)</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Yes – Secondary employment is independent from official duties. Parameters outlined in policy and Florida Statute</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Not Tracked</b></p>
Forensic Pathologist-Associate Medical Examiner	45.5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No dollar amount provided (10)</li> <li>• Varies (1)</li> </ul>			

As shown, the Duval County Medical Examiner’s benefits as a percent of total compensation is 33.0 percent, which is significantly higher than the market average of 25.6 percent.

**EXHIBIT 11  
OVERALL BENEFITS INFORMATION**

Total Compensation	Peer Average	Duval County Medical Examiner
Benefits as a percentage of total compensation	25.6%	33.0%



#### **4.1 Insurance Coverages**

The Duval County Medical Examiner Office offers four health plan options while the average for the peer organizations is 2.4.

**Exhibit 12** displays data on the two most prevalent types of health plans\* offered by the peers in comparison to the two most prevalent plans offered by the Duval County Medical Examiner's Office. As shown, in Duval County, the employer pays a higher percent of the 'Employee Only' total premiums than its peers. The percentage of total premiums paid for the Employee Plus Spouse and Employee Plus Family, however, fell below the peer averages. The Duval County Medical Examiner's Office also does not offer a Health Saving Account (HSA), whereas more than half of the peers responding to the survey offer an HSA.

**Exhibit 13** compares the dental and vision plans offered by the peers versus those offered by the Duval County Medical Examiner.

While Duval County offers both a low and high dental plan and a vision plan, on average, peers reported that the employer paid some portion of the premiums. In at least two cases, the vision and a portion of the dental coverages were included in the overall health plan provided by the organization, meaning there was no separate premium for the employee or employer.

**Exhibit 14** examines short and long-term disability coverages. The Duval County Medical Examiner does not have either employer or employee paid short or long-term disability coverages. By comparison, approximately half of the peer organizations offer either an employer or employee paid option for both plan types. Assessing the actual cost to the employer or employee is difficult as some plans are paid based on a percent of the employee's salary, some are calculated based on a nominal rate per \$100 or \$1000 of an employee's income, and others are included in medical or life coverages. For that reason, the reported costs are not presented in this chart.

As shown in **Exhibit 15**, Duval County and the vast majority of peers offer employer paid life insurance to their employees.

The Duval County Medical Examiner's coverage for maximum death benefits appear more generous than those of the majority of peers at (2 x annual salary, with a cap of \$500,000).

Many organizations are now providing Voluntary Term Life and Whole Life options to employees. **Exhibit 16** provides a summary of related findings. Like Duval County, a majority of peers offer Voluntary Term Life to their employees and in most cases to the spouse and dependents. In some instances the maximum death benefit was stated in terms of the employee's salary (such as 2 x salary or 5 x salary), but in most instances there was a stated cap on what may be purchased.

Only three peers provided a Voluntary Whole Life option to employees. One did not provide an option to either spouses or dependents; one did not provide a hard number for the maximum death benefit as the plan has a significant number of variables.

\*NOTE: One peer reported the use of a Consumer-driven healthcare (CDHC) plan that allows members to use health savings accounts (HSAs), Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRAs), or similar medical payment products to pay routine healthcare expenses directly, but a high-deductible health plan protects them from catastrophic medical expenses. This plan type is not easily compared to more traditional plans and was not included in the comparisons.





**EXHIBIT 12  
OVERVIEW OF HEALTH PLANS**

Health Plan Premiums & Deductibles	Peer HMO Average	Peer PPO Average	Peer High Deductible Average	Peer POS Average	Duval County Medical Examiner	Duval County Medical Examiner
Is one offered?	40.91%	66.67%	40.91%	15.00%	<b>HMO</b>	<b>PPO</b>
Total Premium for Employee	\$819	\$895	\$600	\$610	\$593	\$679
Total Premium for Employee + Spouse	\$1,190	\$1,443	\$1,211	\$1,193	\$1,220	\$1,397
Total Premium for Employee + Family	\$1,508	\$1,941	\$1,728	\$1,828	\$1,814	\$2,077
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) paid by the employer for Employee only? (% of total premium)	\$772 (94.3%)	\$733 (82.0%)	\$557 (92.9%)	\$535 (87.7%)	\$563 (95.0%)	\$645 (95.0%)
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) paid by the employer for Employee + Spouse? (% of total premium)	\$1,168 (98.1%)	\$1,229 (85.2%)	\$1,061 (87.6%)	\$1,066 (89.4%)	\$877 (71.9%)	\$1,004 (71.9%)
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) paid by the employer for Employee + Family? (% of total premium)	\$1,418 (94.0%)	\$1,472 (75.8%)	\$1,483 (85.8%)	\$1,650 (90.3%)	\$1,174 (64.7%)	\$1,344 (64.7%)
What is the in-network deductible for Employee Only	\$375	\$644	\$1,964	\$600	\$300	\$750
What is the in-network deductible for Employee + Spouse	\$300	\$1,173	\$3,950	\$1,200	\$600	\$1,500
What is the in-network deductible for Employee + Family?	\$340	\$1,335	\$3,950	\$1,200	\$600	\$1,500
What is the in-network out of pocket (OOP) max for employee only coverage?	\$2,017	\$3,206	\$3,889	\$2,600	\$2,500	\$6,000
What is the in-network OOP max for employee plus spouse?	\$2,840	\$5,320	\$7,407	\$5,200	\$5,000	\$12,000
What is the in-network OOP max for employee plus family coverage?	\$3,040	\$6,812	\$7,407	\$5,200	\$5,000	\$12,000
Does your organization provide a Health Savings Account (HSA)? (% Responding Yes)				55.6%	No	



**EXHIBIT 13  
OVERVIEW OF DENTAL AND VISION PLANS**

<b>DENTAL AND VISION</b>	<b>Dental Low Plan</b>	<b>Dental High Plan</b>	<b>Vision</b>	<b>Duval County Medical Examiner</b>	<b>Duval County Medical Examiner</b>	<b>Duval County Medical Examiner</b>
Is one offered?	95.00%	60.00%	85.00%	<b>Dental Low</b>	<b>Dental High</b>	<b>Vision</b>
Total Premium for Employee	\$34.27	\$45.10	\$6.09	\$12.21	\$39.83	\$7.54
Total Premium for Employee + Spouse	\$47.46	\$61.03	\$9.76	\$21.37	\$79.69	\$12.20
Total Premium for Employee + Family	\$67.61	\$84.27	\$13.12	\$37.83	\$136.06	\$19.68
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) paid by the employer for Employee only?	\$27.23	\$33.61	\$2.54	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) paid by the employer for Employee + Spouse?	\$30.53	\$35.37	\$3.10	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) paid by the employer for Employee + Family?	\$35.65	\$38.26	\$3.31	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00



**EXHIBIT 14  
OVERVIEW OF SHORT- AND LONG-TERM DISABILITY COVERAGES**

Does your organization provide:	Employer-paid short-term disability insurance?	Employee-paid short-term disability insurance?	Employer-paid long-term disability insurance?	Employee-paid long-term disability insurance?
<b>Peers</b>	47.4%	55.6%	61.1%	52.6%
<b>Duval County Medical Examiner</b>	No	No	No	No
If <b>Employer-paid</b> , does the Employer pay the full cost for the <b>basic</b> plan?				
<b>Peers</b>	75.0%		66.7%	
<b>Duval County Medical Examiner</b>				
If <b>yes</b> , does the Employee have the option of buying additional coverage?				
<b>Peers</b>	40.0%		16.7%	
<b>Duval County Medical Examiner</b>				
What percentage of salary does the employee receive				
<b>Peer Average</b>	60.9%	60.0%	59.4%	53.3%
<b>Duval County Medical Examiner</b>				

**EXHIBIT 15  
EMPLOYER PAID LIFE INSURANCE**

Life Insurance	Peer Average	Duval County Medical Examiner
Does your organization provide employer-paid life insurance?	95.7%	Yes
Dollar amount of death benefit for employee coverage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$51,667 (Average of 14)</li> <li>Annual Salary (5)</li> <li>No details provided (2)</li> </ul>	2 X Salary, Max of \$500,000
Cost (monthly) to the employer for employee coverage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$11.66 (Average of 7)</li> <li>Part of Medical (1)</li> <li>Varies (1)</li> <li>\$0.11 per \$1,000 (Average of 2)</li> </ul>	\$0.13 per \$1,000
Dollar amount of death benefit for dependent coverage?	\$12,000 (Average of 5)	n/a
Cost (monthly) to the employer for dependent coverage?	\$0.00	n/a
Is accidental death insurance provided?	84.21%	Yes
Dollar amount of accidental death benefit for employee coverage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$32,778 = Average (9)</li> <li>Varies (2)</li> <li>Annual Salary (2)</li> <li>2 or 3 X Annual Salary (2)</li> </ul>	2 X Salary, Max of \$500,000
Cost (monthly) to the employer for accidental death coverage for employee?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$1.34 per \$1,000 (Avg. of 4)</li> <li>Part of another plan (2)</li> <li>Varies (1)</li> <li>\$.015 per 1000 (1)</li> <li>No cost provided (8)</li> </ul>	Included in premium above



**EXHIBIT 16  
VOLUNTARY TERM AND WHOLE LIFE INSURANCE**

	Peers	Duval County Medical Examiner	Maximum Death Benefit	
			Peers	Duval County Medical Examiner
<b>Does your organization offer Voluntary Term Life Insurance for:</b>				
Employee	81.8%	Yes	\$377,273	\$300,000
Spouse	76.2%	Yes	\$105,536	\$20,000
Dependent(s)	76.2%	Yes	\$8,300	\$10,000
<b>Does your organization offer Whole Life Insurance for:</b>				
Employee	13.6%	No	\$75,000	n/a
Spouse	9.5%	No	\$100,000	n/a
Dependent(s)	4.8%	no	\$10,000	n/a

**4.2 Retirement**

**Exhibit 17** examines the various retirement options. As shown, all but one peer organization participates in either a state or county/local plan. The one exception is a privately run office that has a profit sharing program. The type of plan offered appears evenly split between Defined Contribution and Defined Benefit offerings. A limited number of peers offered the employee a choice of plans—as is the case with the Duval County Medical Examiner. As noted in the chart, the majority of peers that reported offering a choice were Florida districts.

The peer average for employer and employee contributions expressed as a percent of salary appear slightly lower than those reported by the Duval County Medical Examiner.

Again, the vast majority of peers and the Duval County Medical Examiner offer some type of deferred compensation or supplemental retirement plan; however, 47.1 percent of the peers reported that the employer made some type of contribution to those plans, either as a match to what the employee put in or in some other increment.

In all, the retirement and deferred compensation plans offered by the Duval County Medical Examiner appear to be comparable to peers in nearly all respects.

**4.3 Leave and Holidays**

**Exhibit 18** provides the average minimum and maximum accrual rates, the average years of service required to become eligible for Annual/Vacation Leave, Sick Leave, Paid Time Off (PTO) and Personal Leave for peers. As shown, the Duval County Medical Examiner offers employees Annual/Vacation leave rather than Sick leave—thereby giving the employee more flexibility in the use of time.

One organization offered the PTO as an option, but still offered both sick and annual/vacation leave. For comparison purposes, both accrual rates were considered in the averages.



**EXHIBIT 17  
OVERVIEW OF RETIREMENT PLANS**

Does your organization offer a state, local or private retirement plan for these positions?			
	State	Local	Other
Peer % Responding Yes	85.7%	14.3%	0.00%
Duval County Medical Examiner		Yes	
What type of plan is this?	Defined Contribution	Defined Benefit	Other
Peer % Responding Yes	65.0%	60.0%	28.6%
Duval County Medical Examiner	Yes		
Is there more than one option available to these employees?	Yes/No	Comments	
Peer % Responding Yes	28.6%	Some Florida Districts participating in the State Plan said their employees could elect to be in the defined benefit or defined contribution plans	
Duval County Medical Examiner	Yes	Each position may opt for Social Security	
What is the employee/employer required to contribute?	Employee		Employer
Peer % Responding Yes	6.1%		10.0%
Duval County Medical Examiner	8.0%		12.0%
Does your organization offer optional 401K, 457, or other retirement/ deferred compensation type plans?	Yes/No		Type of plans
Peer % Responding Yes	95%		401K (2) 457 or 457b (10) No details (7)
Duval County Medical Examiner	Yes		457b
Does the employer contribute to any of these optional plans on behalf of the employee?	Yes/No		Comments
Peer % Responding Yes	47.1%		Typically an employer match or partial match
Duval County Medical Examiner	No		



**EXHIBIT 18  
LEAVE TIME ACCRUAL**

Leave Accrual	Organization	A. Offered? (Yes/No)	Years of Service to Become Eligible for Leave	Min Hours Accrued per Month	Max Hours Accrued per Month	Accrual Cap (hours)
Annual/ Vacation Leave	Peer Percentage Yes/Average	80.0%	0.1	8.8	15.4	325
	<b>Duval County Medical Examiner</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>480</b>
Sick Leave	Peer Percentage Yes/Average	76.0%	0.1	8.9	9.3	624
	<b>Duval County Medical Examiner</b>	<b>No</b>				
Paid-Time Off	Peer Percentage Yes/Average	36.4%	0.0	12.1	18.7	441
	<b>Duval County Medical Examiner</b>	<b>Yes</b>				
Personal Leave	Peer Percentage Yes/Average	28.6%	0.25	2.7	2.7	36
	<b>Duval County Medical Examiner</b>	<b>No</b>				

**Exhibit 19** summarizes respondent policies regarding sick leave payout and shows how the Duval County Medical Examiner treats the accumulated leave.

As shown, 37.0 percent of peers indicated that they pay out sick leave at voluntary separation and 26.1 percent pay out sick leave upon involuntary separation; 66.2 percent pay out sick leave at the time of retirement. While all peers reported that upon retirement employees are paid for Annual Leave/Vacation and Paid Time Off at the employee’s current rate of pay, restrictions on the payout of sick leave varied.

Four peers paid accumulated leave at 25 percent of base pay, with certain caveats for the number of hours accrued. For example, the employee may be paid at a rate of 25 percent for time accrued above 200 hours. Another had a graduated scale, whereby the employee would receive 75 percent of pay if the hours accumulated were over a certain amount; that percentage was bracketed to 50 or 25 percent for fewer accumulated hours.

Additionally, like the Duval County Medical Examiner, only a limited number of peers restricted the maximum that would be paid out in total at the time of employee separation.

The percentage of peers that offer various holidays are shown in **Exhibit 20**. On average, peers offer 10.7 holidays to employees, compared to 12 offered by the Duval County Medical Examiner.



**EXHIBIT 19  
LEAVE PAYOUT UPON SEPARATION**

Is unused leave paid out:	Sick Leave		Annual/Vacation		Paid Time Off	
	Peer Average	Duval County Medical Examiner	Peer Average	Duval County Medical Examiner	Peer Average	Duval County Medical Examiner
upon voluntary separation? (% Yes)	37.0%	No	70.4%	Yes	33.3%	Yes - PTO Defined as Emergency Comp Leave
maximum number of hours that can be paid/used?	216.0		306.0	480.0	504.6	No Cap
upon involuntary separation? (% Yes)	26.1%	No	78.3%	Yes	33.3%	Yes
maximum number of hours that can be paid/used?	186.7		305.1	480.0	504.6	No Cap
upon retirement? (% Yes)	65.2%	No	87.0%	Yes	33.3%	Yes
maximum number of hours that can be paid/used?	438.0		321.1	480.0	453.5	No Cap
% that pay current rate of pay upon retirement?	60.0%		100.0%	Current rate of pay	100.0%	Current rate of pay
Is there a maximum dollar amount or number of hours of all types of leave that will be paid to an employee upon separation?						
		<b>% Yes</b>		<b>Max Hours</b>		<b>Max \$ Amount</b>
<b>Duval County Medical Examiner</b>		No				
<b>Peer Average</b>		29.17%		279.2		n/a

**EXHIBIT 20  
HOLIDAYS**

Paid Holidays	Peer Average	Duval County Medical Examiner
New Year's Day	100.0%	Yes
New Year's Eve	11.1%	No
Martin Luther King, Jr Day	88.9%	Yes
Lincoln's Birthday	0.0%	No
Washington's Birthday/ Presidents Day	55.6%	Yes
Memorial Day	96.3%	Yes
Independence Day	100.0%	Yes
Labor Day	100.0%	Yes
Veteran's Day	77.8%	Yes
Thanksgiving Day	100.0%	Yes
Day after Thanksgiving	92.6%	Yes
Christmas Eve	40.7%	Yes
Christmas Day	100.0%	Yes
Columbus Day	18.5%	No
Employee's Birthday	7.4%	No
Good Friday	18.5%	No
Floating/Local Holiday	29.6%	Yes
Truman's Birthday	3.7%	No
Cesar Chavez Day	3.7%	No
Juneteenth	3.7%	No
<b>Total Number of Holidays</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>12</b>



## 5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the Duval County Medical Examiner’s salary and benefit package was found to be comparable to the market with respect to total compensation. The results were not surprising in that when salary and benefits were analyzed in isolation, some of the offerings appeared more or less generous than those offered by peers. However, when taken as a whole, the total package appeared to be in alignment with the market.

### FINDING

Salaries and salary ranges, as shown in **Exhibits 5 to 8**, appear to be at or near the peer averages nationally, but the minimum salary for the Forensic Pathologist- Associate Medical Examiner classification is lower than the composite information nationally and in the eight Florida districts.

The average actual salaries for these positions are currently competitive; however, setting a salary range with a reasonable starting salary for the Forensic Pathologist-Associate Medical Examiner classification that is competitive nationally, and within Florida, should allow the Duval County Medical Examiner to recruit and retain highly qualified applicants for these positions.

### RECOMMENDATION 1:

**Adopt the recommended salary plan for the Forensic Pathologist-Associate Medical Examiner, which is highly competitive both nationally and within the State of Florida.**

CLASSIFICATION	Min	Mid	Max	Spread
Forensic Pathologist-Associate Medical Examiner	\$163,000	\$203,750	\$244,500	50.0%

The recommended salary range is not radically different from the current pay plan, but the minimum salary is increased to a more competitive rate.

### FINDING

The job description for the Chief Medical Examiner and the Forensic Pathologist-Associate Medical Examiner appear clear on the job duties; however, the minimum and preferred qualifications are not as well defined as those found in peer organizations. When asked, peers stated that some ambiguity is desirable, as salaries are typically negotiated at time of hire. Yet, the majority of peers required the Chief Medical Examiner to be Board Certificated in some combination of Anatomical, Clinical, and Forensic Pathology. The Duval County Medical Examiner’s job description states this as a preferred qualification.

In addition, the years of experience are left unstated, yet when screening and hiring someone for the Chief Medical Examiner position, it is reasonable to assume that they must have at least a minimal number of years of experience in forensic pathology and in the supervision and management of staff. Minimum qualifications are generally set to screen out obviously





unqualified candidates, whereas preferred qualifications may be those factors on which salary negotiations for pay above the minimum rate may be determined.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:**

**Clarify the actual minimum requirements for both positions in the job descriptions so that clear and measurable criteria are available for qualifying candidates during the hiring process and for justifying the starting pay at the time of hire.**

**FINDING**

The salary supplements provided by the Duval County Medical Examiner in comparison to the peer organizations appear, on the surface, to be competitive. The survey, however, has identified some incentives for the Forensic Pathologists to obtain their certifications, car allowances, and the like that the Duval County Medical Examiner may wish to explore to address specific concerns or encourage employee productivity.

**RECOMMENDATION 3:**

**Examine the survey responses and determine if additional stipends, one-time awards, or allowances are appropriate for the Duval County Medical Examiner.**

**FINDING**

Overall benefits, as outlined in this report, are not specific to the Duval County Medical Examiner, and for the most part, the Duval County Medical Examiner is unable to deviate from the benefit package provided by the City of Jacksonville. It is clear, however, that the benefits as a percentage of total compensation provided by the City at 33 percent is generous—as compared to the 25.6 percent reported by peer organizations.

Outlining the benefits and the value of each component, along with the types of supplemental assistance provided in paying for medical license renewals, continuing education and conferences, could be used as powerful recruitment tools when attempting to fill vacancies in these key positions.

**RECOMMENDATION 4:**

**Prepare a document outlining the value of benefits and supplements as recruitment tools when posting and filling future vacancies.**

**FINDING**

In order to maintain competitiveness, the City should continue adjusting its pay plan on an annual basis, as required, based on cost of living factors. Rather than relying only on consumer price index (CPI) values for cost of living adjustments, the City would benefit from



contacting the local peer group and determining the approach to pay plan adjustments made by peers—in addition to considering economic indicators.

The City may find it struggles to navigate through changing economic conditions and with organizations competing for the same human resources. For this reason, the City should conduct an external compensation study every five years.

**RECOMMENDATION 5:**

**Conduct a compensation study every five years.**

