

# OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER

## UFISINAN GE'HILO' MEDIKON EKSAMINA



FISCAL YEAR 2011

A Report to Our Citizens

### OCME's Beginnings,

#### Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME)

The office was formed back in 1971 under the guidance of the 11th Guam Legislature and approved by the people of Guam and then Governor Carlos G. Camacho.

It was established to provide a scientific investigative system for the island of Guam on deaths which occurred suddenly without cause or from unnatural circumstances.

The office is controlled by the *Commission on Postmortem Examinations* which is made up of the Attorney General of Guam, the Guam Police Department Chief, Public Health & Social services Director, Guam Memorial Hospital Authority Administrator, the Guam Medical Society President, and the current Chief Medical Examiner. (Guam Code Annotated Title 10 Part 2 Division 4 Chapter 81)



Aurelio A. Espinola, M. D.  
Chief Medical Examiner of Guam

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### Mission

#### "Supporting Guam's Public Health & Safety"

**Our** purpose is to determine a true cause and manner of death by conducting medico-legal\* death investigations, autopsies, toxicology & specimen analysis on all unnatural & unusual deaths, such as but not limited to homicides, suicides, accidents, sudden unexpected deaths that occurred in a suspicious manner or caused by an unrecognizable disease. In addition, postmortem examines must also be done on an individual who had died outside of a hospital facility or less than 24 hours after admission to a hospital facility and whose body is to be shipped off island, cremated, or buried at sea.

### Initiatives & Community Benefits

- ✚ **Proficiently** perform Medico-Legal Death Investigations.
- ✚ **Accurately** establish a reasonable explanation of the evidence obtained for every death investigation.
- ✚ **Maintain** a Neutral and Non-biased interpretation of the evidence found during a medico-legal death investigation.
- ✚ **Increase** public awareness of the importance of a medico-legal death investigation.
- ✚ **Output** statistical reports and medico-legal investigation results to the public through local Medias.

*"The Medical Examiner's office will strive to provide a reasonable explanation to the cause and manner of death for a deceased person based on the evidence obtained during a postmortem examination. We maintain that all interpretations of the evidence uncovered by a medico-legal death investigation are neutral by its nature."*

# OUR PERFORMANCE

## FY 2010 -2011

### "MEDICO-LEGAL INVESTIGATIONS"

**Output** of statistical reports is prepared annually and submitted to Guam's Bureau of Statistics & Planning for their annual publication. In addition, monthly reports on Suicide cases are compiled and submitted to Dept. of Mental Health & Substance Abuse for their Suicide Prevention Program.

#### Distribution by "Manner of Death"

(Autopsy Cases)

Manner of Death	2010	2011	% Diff.
NATURAL	51	46	-3%
SUICIDE	1	4	2%
HOMICIDE	4	7	2%
ACCIDENTAL DROWNING	6	5	-1%
MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT	16	13	-2%
AIRCRAFT OR INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT	1	1	0%
OTHER ACCIDENTS	9	7	-1%
COULD NOT BE DETERMINED	3	2	-1%
<b>TOTAL AUTOPSIED CASES:</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>-3%</b>

#### Distribution by "Manner of Death"

(Non-Autopsy Cases)

Manner of Death	2010	2011	% Diff.
NATURAL	389	393	0.5%
SUICIDE (Sudden or Delayed death)	30	24	-1%
ACCIDENTAL DROWNING (Delayed death)	3	1	-0.2%
MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT (Passengers)	2	3	0.1%
OTHER ACCIDENTS (Delayed death)	6	1	-1%
COULD NOT BE DETERMINED	1	0	-0.1%
Cases REFERRED back to hospital after an exam.	0	1	0.1%
<b>TOTAL NON-AUTOPSIED CASES:</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>-1%</b>

### Other Measurements

In 2011, OCME performed 508 medico-legal death investigations and has issued 509 certification of death reports, 203 medico-legal reports, 280 verification of death letters, and 25 certification of a Non-communicable disease letters upon request at no cost to the recipients.

### "ADDITIONAL DUTIES"

In addition to performing medico-legal death investigations, OCME staff also compiles data for the completion of death certificates which are filed with the Office of Vital Statistics, DPHSS and issues "Verification of Deaths", Certifications of a Non-Communicable Disease, and Autopsy & Non-Autopsy reports to various individuals upon request at no cost to the recipient.



Based on the chart to the right, there was only a 2% increase comparing 2007 from 2011.

#### Medico-Legal Death Investigations

(Calendar Years 2007-2011)

Types of Procedures	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Autopsies	117	127	99	91	85
Non-Autopsies	379	363	429	431	423
Presumptive Death Certificate Issued	1	0	1	0	0
Death Certificate Issued (Military Affiliated)	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total CME Cases</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>509</b>

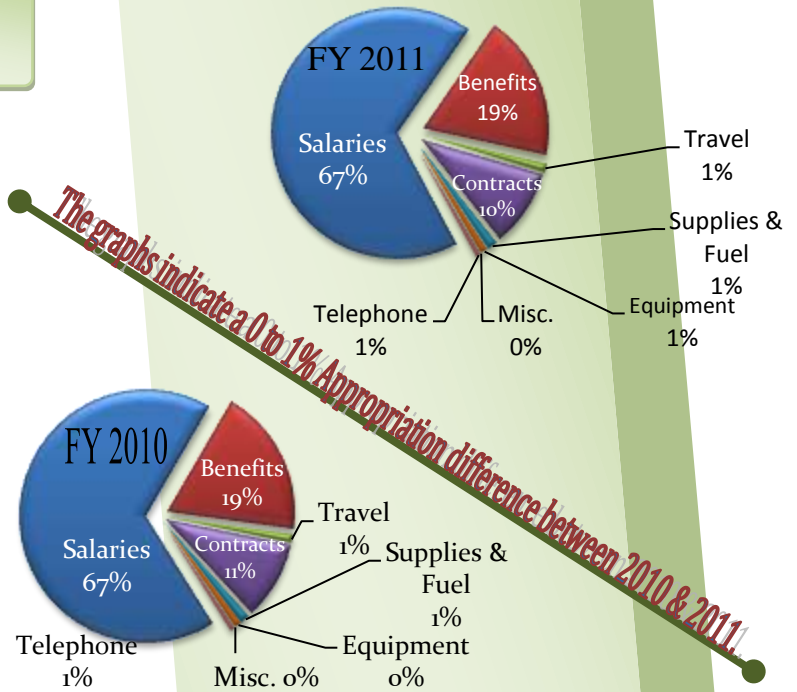
# Financial Facts

## FY 2010 -2011

(100% Funded by the General Funds)

### APPROPRIATIONS

APPROPRIATIONS		
Categories	FY 2011	FY 2010
Salaries	\$269,343	\$256,634
Benefits	75,242	74,346
Travel	4,324	4,580
Contracts	39,382	43,874
Supplies & Fuel	5,248	2,454
Equipment	3,642	0
Miscellaneous	35	0
Telephone	2,594	2,661
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$399,810</b>	<b>\$384,549</b>



### EXPENDITURE REPORT

EXPENDITURES		
Categories	FY 2011	FY 2010
Salaries	\$269,342.88	\$256,634.32
Benefits	75,241.02	71,345.98
Travel	4,323.20	4,579.56
Contracts	39,981.98	43,873.68
Supplies & Fuel	2,691.50	2,453.87
Equipment	0.00	0.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00
Telephone	2,593.66	2,658.25
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$394,174.24</b>	<b>\$381,545.66</b>

In FY 2011, OCME spent 3% or \$12,629 more compared to FY 2010. Expenditures were utilized for salary increments and benefits of two employees and the purchasing of required office supplies which were not funded in FY 2010.

*^Note: Based on the Appropriation amounts above, a 5% Reserve was placed by the Bureau of Budget & Management Research (BBMR) on agency's budget due to the government of Guam's financial deficit. Release of reserve funds were only approved with adequate justification & used as the "last alternative" when all other options to resolve the issue were unsuccessful.*

*Comparing both the Appropriation & Expenditure charts, OCME has continued to spend within its appropriated budget for both years. For both 2010 & 2011, there is no drastic increase in expenditures. No federal funds were appropriated to OCME during FY 2011. Operations are status quo every year as with our budget appropriations approved by the Guam Legislature & Governor of Guam.*

#### **OCME's OPERATIONS:**

- **Off-Island Travel:** Exclusively for the Medical Examiner as per an Employment Contract for one annual Continuing Education Seminar.
- **Locum Tenens Contract:** Acting Medical Examiner Contract per fiscal year to cover the Medical Examiner when absent from duty.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** Contract between Guam Memorial Hospital Authority (GMHA) & OCME for several services.



# Future Challenges & Outlooks

## FY 2010 -2011

### *Moving Forward....*

Just as the government of Guam strives in decreasing its financial deficit, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner will maintain the upmost professional and empathetic services to the people of Guam as we have for over the past 30 years. Throughout the years, we have continued to struggle with difficulties just as any other agency in the Government.

The main hurdle for our agency is BUDGET CUTS. With cuts to our budget, we suffer from the following:

- ★ Inadequate Personnel. Personnel are overworked & stressed.
- ★ Inability of replacing outdated/broken office & morgue equipments. Utilizing personal materials to operate daily office tasks.
- ★ Minimal to no purchasing of needed supplies on a yearly basis.
- ★ Limited & hazardous workspace due to the continuous flow of incoming workload.

With that said, we continue to look for other options in addressing the above issues, like obtaining federal grants and/or getting approval from our Commission & the Guam Legislature in generating revenue by starting a "Fee Schedule" for some of the services we provide to the public.



#### **Hours of Operations**

Monday – Friday

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Closed on:

Weekends & all Govt. of Guam  
Holidays

#### **Location**

*We are located within the Guam  
Memorial Hospital Compound  
alongside the Emergency Room  
area.*

#### **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Do you like this report?

What would you like to see in future reports?

Please let us know by contacting our office by telephone (671) 646-9363/647-2369, email: [cme.guam@gmail.com](mailto:cme.guam@gmail.com), or write us at #325 Duenas Drive, Tamuning, Guam 96913.

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME*

