



Pierce County
WASHINGTON

Disposition Authorization Program

Pierce County Medical Examiner's Office

June 26, 2026

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PCMEDEXAM@piercecountywa.gov | 253.798.6494

- Overview of program
- Overview of request process
- Overview of billing process
- Plenty of time for questions and conversation

The Program

- Established by ordinance of the Pierce County Council
- Codified in [Pierce County Code \(PCC\) at Chapter 8.102](#)
- [PCC 4.58.070](#) attaches \$100 fee per review, with limited exemptions
- Requires that PCME review *all* deaths in County prior to final disposition (excluding fetal deaths)
- Fee, per code is due upon request, though intent is to bill monthly for most funeral homes in Pierce County/surrounding area
- Fee exemptions for unclaimed decedents whose final disposition costs are borne by County, and for any decedent who pre-paid in full for their arrangements prior to 01/01/2026

- You do not need to submit DA requests for deaths certified by PCME
 - Disposition will be authorized in WHALES immediately after certification for deaths we certify
- Valid requests include two documents:
 1. Completed [Disposition Authorization Request Form](#)
 2. Work/proof copy of Death Certificate from WHALES *after* medical certification (even if your part isn't finalized yet – we just need the medical information)
- Submit requests to PCMDXDA@piercecountywa.gov

Pierce County Medical Examiner Disposition Authorization (DA) Request

Decedent Information						
Legal Name:	First	Middle	Last	Suffix	Date of Birth	Date of Death

Disposition Application Information		
(Funeral Home to be invoiced, if applicable)		
Requesting Funeral Home/Crematory	Requesting Funeral Director	Date of Request
Agency Address	City, State & Zip	Contact Phone
Method of Disposition (if known)		

Disposition Authorization Fee Waiver	
Did the decedent pre-pay for disposition in full prior to Jan 1, 2026?	Are you requesting a fee waiver review because the case is a Pierce County Unclaimed Program case?
☐ Yes Contract #: ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments/Information for Medical Examiner

Disposition Authorization Submission Process
1. The medical information section of the death record, to include cause of death, must be certified before submitting this form. 2. Download a proof copy of the electronic death record from WHALES. 3. Email this form with the proof copy death record to PCMDXDA@piercecountywa.gov. 4. For funeral homes that require prepayment, prepay the disposition authorization fee at the time this form is submitted. <i>If the funeral home/crematory of record changes following the approval of the disposition authorization, it is the responsibility of both funeral homes to notify the Pierce County Medical Examiner's Office immediately to avoid errors in billing. Funeral homes taking over the disposition from another funeral home must submit a Disposition Authorization Request form, even if a disposition authorization number has already been assigned. Contact the Medical Examiner's Office immediately upon the change.</i>

For Medical Examiner Use Only		
Invoice and Fee Information ☐ Invoice ☐ Fee waived ☐ Unclaimed ☐ Disposition pre-paid prior to 01/01/2026 ☐ Fee pre-paid ☐ Funeral Home ☐ Next of Kin	Date DA Request Form Received	Reviewed by
	Date Disposition Approved	Approved by
	Disposition Authorization Number	

Email: PCMDXDA@piercecountywa.gov
Phone: (253) 798-6494

- Request inbox is monitored 24/7/365 by administrative and investigative staff; you will see most approvals in WHALES shortly after submission of request
- If you do not see approval in WHALES within 24 hours of request submission, call us
 - This means there is an issue with COD/MOD requiring further investigation, and you may be able to help us resolve it to keep process moving
- Include in comments section on request form if there is a real need to expedite a specific case (e.g., for religious/cultural requirements), and we will do our best to accommodate

- Invoices are generated at the beginning of each month for all disposition authorizations completed in the previous month
- Payment for fees are due upon receipt of invoice
- Monthly statements will be delivered for all accounts with past-due balances
- We retain the ability to change the billing schedule at any time, including to demand payment upon submission of request, prior to authorization
- Submit inquiries about account activity to PCMEDEXAM@piercecountywa.gov or call our main line at (253) 798-6494 during business hours

- Are you aware of our [Public Information Portal](#)?
- This portal provides real-time case updates, including “body status”
 - Check here to see when remains are ready for release from our facility – no need to call

Questions?

- **Luke Vogelsberg – outgoing Director of Operations**
- **Gina Carver – Director of Operations**
- **Angel Tornquist – Administrative Program Manager**

PCME General Contact Information

Ph: 253-798-6494

Email: PCMEDEXAM@piercecountywa.gov

Disposition Authorization Requests

Email to: PCMDXDA@piercecountywa.gov