


**Department of Transformation and Shared Services**

Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders

Secretary Leslie Fiskens

March 19, 2025

The Honorable Breanne Davis, Co-Chairperson  
 The Honorable Jim Wooten, Co-Chairperson  
 Uniform Personnel Classification and  
 Compensation Plan Subcommittee  
 Joint Budget Committee  
 Arkansas General Assembly  
 Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Senator Davis and Representative Wooten:

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) submits a request from the Arkansas Department of Public Safety (DPS), Division of Arkansas State Crime Lab, for your review.

DPS requests to establish a labor market rate of \$350,000 for the classification of L004N, Crime Lab Associate Medical Examiner, MP09, and increase four (4) incumbent's salary to the below-requested rates. This request is granted authority by Arkansas Code Annotated 21-5-209 (g)(2)(ii) wherein it states:

"The Office of Personnel Management may establish the salary of a specialized physician position or classification that is up to fifty percent (50%) above the maximum pay level for the grade assigned to the classification."

<b>LMR REQUESTED</b>				
<b>CLASS CODE</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>GRADE</b>	<b>ENTRY</b>	<b>NEW ENTRY</b>
L004N	Crime Lab Associate Medical Examiner	MP09	\$156,804	\$350,000

<b>SALARIES TO BE INCREASED</b>					
<b>POSITION NUMBER</b>	<b>FIRST NAME</b>	<b>LAST NAME</b>	<b>CURRENT SALARY</b>	<b>REQUESTED RATE</b>	<b>INCREASE AMOUNT</b>
22090702	ADAM	CRAIG	\$247,818	\$300,000	\$52,182
22090714	JENNIFER	FORSYTH	\$302,096	\$350,000	\$47,904
22090722	TEDDI	TUBRE	\$275,834	\$350,000	\$74,166
22134046	STEPHEN	ERICKSON	\$323,131	\$350,000	\$26,869

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Page 2

**JUSTIFICATION**

DPS states that the current starting salary is far too low, as cited by multiple applicants, to attract candidates to this classification. The Arkansas State Crime Lab currently is on their third year of probationary accreditation due to a limit of no more than 250 autopsies per doctor per year being exceeded as they cannot attract candidates. In January 2025, the Arkansas State Crime Lab performed 152 autopsies. This sets them up to exceed the accreditation's ratio of autopsies performed per doctor causing them to lose accreditation entirely. The Arkansas State Crime Lab believes that this Labor Market Rate will allow them to bring in future medical examiners at a starting salary of \$300,000 and have the flexibility to pay up to the requested rate of \$350,000 for those with specialties or extensive experience. The turnover rate for this classification was 16.67% within the past year. The total cost to increase these salaries to the requested Labor Market Rate would be approximately \$247,942, including matching. These funds will be 100% from General Revenue.

OPM has reviewed this request from DPS and **recommends** the establishment of a labor market rate for the classification of L004N, Crime Lab Associate Medical Examiner, MP09, and to bring the four incumbents listed above to the salaries indicated in the table. DPS guarantees our office that it has sufficient funding to support this request.

Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated.

Karin Fairbank 3/4/25  
STATE PERSONNEL DIRECTOR DATE

2097

FEB 12 2025



State of Arkansas  
Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

1 State Police Plaza Drive  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72209  
Office: (501) 618-8235

COL. MIKE A. HAGAR  
Secretary

7 February 2025

Kay Barnhill  
State Personnel Administrator  
501 Woodlane, Suite 205C  
Little Rock, AR 72201

RE: Medical Examiner Pay

Ms. Barnhill:

The Arkansas Department of Public Safety (DPS), division of Arkansas State Crime Lab (ASCL) would like to request salary increases for the doctors in the medical examiner's office. Three of the four would increase to \$350,000 and one would increase to \$300,000. This would then allow ASCL to recruit with an entry salary of \$300,000 up to \$350,000 based on credentialing. This is in accordance with ACA 21-5-209(g)(2)(A)(ii). Below are the affected employees with costing:

Position Number	Authorized Job	Authorized Grade	Authorized Title	PERN	Last Name	First Name	Annual Salary	Requested salary	Increase amount
22090702	L004N	MP09	CRIME LAB ASSOC MEDICAL EXAMINER	26922	CRAIG	ADAM	\$ 247,818	\$ 300,000	\$ 52,182
22090714	L004N	MP09	CRIME LAB ASSOC MEDICAL EXAMINER	98375	FORSYTH	JENNIFER	\$ 302,096	\$ 350,000	\$ 47,904
22090722	L004N	MP09	CRIME LAB ASSOC MEDICAL EXAMINER	149485	TUBRE	TEDDI	\$ 275,834	\$ 350,000	\$ 74,166
22134046	L004N	MP09	CRIME LAB ASSOC MEDICAL EXAMINER	26632	ERICKSON	STEPHEN	\$ 323,131	\$ 350,000	\$ 26,869
								Salary	\$201,121
								Matching	\$ 46,621
								<b>Total</b>	<b>\$247,942</b>

Recently, Crime Lab was able to bring on a deputy medical examiner who will start in March. She has been working to recruit additional personnel, with no success. All have indicated that the starting salary is too low. Another issue coupled with that is that there were 1800 autopsies performed last calendar year with 6 doctors performing those autopsies. That equates to 300 autopsies per year per doctor. The accrediting body, NAME, allows no more than 250 autopsies per year per doctor. For each doctor performing more than the 250 autopsies, there will be a phase I violation. After 15 phase I violations, the medical examiner's office will lose accreditation. If any doctor performs more than 325 autopsies in a year, the office will receive a phase II violation which will result in the immediate loss of accreditation.

In January of 2025, the medical examiner's office performed 152 autopsies. This sets them on pace to perform 1800+ autopsies again this year. The above doctors all have either 10+ years of experience as medical examiners or hold a specialty certification that makes them highly sought after. This will be funded through General Revenue and crime lab has sufficient funding for the request.

I appreciate your consideration on this request. If you have any questions, please contact Phillip Warriner for any additional information or clarification.

Sincerely,

*Col. Mike A. Hagar #275*

Colonel Mike Hagar  
Secretary - Arkansas Department of Public Safety