

**WHATCOM COUNTY
EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE**
County Courthouse
311 Grand Ave. Suite #108
Bellingham, WA 98225



Satpal Singh Sidhu
County Executive

TO: Whatcom County Council

THROUGH: Satpal S. Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive

FROM: Melissa Keeley, HR Manager
Kayla Schott-Bresler, Deputy Executive
Kara Turner, Turner HR Services

DATE: October 24, 2024

RE: Medical Examiner Appointment

BACKGROUND

Whatcom County Charter **Article 3: The Executive Branch, Section 3.62 County Medical Examiner** states that *“The County Medical Examiner shall be appointed by the County Executive from applicants approved by the Whatcom County Medical Society and the County Sheriff and shall be confirmed by the County Council. The Medical Examiner shall have an M.D. or D.O. degree and be licensed to practice medicine in this state. The Medical Examiner shall perform duties as prescribed by general law or by ordinances or resolutions adopted by the Council and shall receive compensation as determined by the Council. The Council shall declare by ordinance that the responsibility for property of the deceased be delegated to an officer of the court or county other than the Medical Examiner.”*

REQUESTING COUNCIL CONFIRMATION OF DR. ALDO FUSARO

The County Executive strongly recommends Council confirmation of Dr. Aldo Fusaro as the next Whatcom County Medical Examiner.

Dr. Fusaro has served as Whatcom County’s interim Medical Examiner since September 2024. He brings nearly three decades of experience as a forensic pathologist, having started his career in the Cook County Medical Examiner’s Office in Illinois in 1997. He later served as Associate Medical Examiner for King County (2005–2017) and as Deputy Medical Examiner for the Montana State Medical Examiner’s Office (2017–present).

Dr. Fusaro received his Bachelor's Degree at Grinnell College and subsequently attended medical school at Des Moines University, where he earned his Doctorate of Osteopathic Medicine. He did a one-year clinical internship at Chicago Osteopathic, a four-year residency at St. Luke’s Medical Center and then a one-year fellowship at Cook County’s Office of Medical Examiner. He has co-authored multiple articles and taught at the University of Washington School of Medicine and Rush Medical College.

Dr. Fusaro is licensed to practice in the State of Washington and is a respected member of the Medical Examiner community, serving on a number of professional boards and committees and presenting at association meetings.

SELECTION PROCESS

Whatcom County began a nation-wide search for a Medical Examiner in early September 2024. Human Resources retained Kara Turner, of Turner HR Services, to help with this process. The recruitment process included advertising nationwide on various websites, with trade associations and in-person at a national ME conference. There is a tight competition for talent with 40-50 Medical Examiner vacancies nation-wide. Whatcom County initially received interest and applications from six individuals. Dr. Aldo Fusaro, successfully completed all phases of the selection process as outlined below.

Screening Virtual Interviews – October 4, 2024

- Medical Panel (including representatives of the NW Medical Society, ME Advisory Council, Health Officer)
- Whatcom County Leaders (Executive Branch, Sheriff, Councilmembers Elenbaas and Scanlon)

Onsite Interviews – October 14 & 15, 2024

Dr. Fusaro participated in four selection process activities which included:

- Community Partners Panel Interview (Law Enforcement, Fire, Support Officers)
- Whatcom County Leaders Panel Interview (Executive Branch, Prosecuting Office)
- Medical Panel Discussion (including representatives of the NW Medical Society)
- Executive Office Discussion

CHARTER REQUIREMENTS

We have been in close contact with the Sheriff and Northwest Washington Medical Society throughout this process and are grateful for their support and time commitment toward finding a new Medical Examiner. Formal letters from the Whatcom County Sheriff and Northwest Washington Medical Society are attached, in accordance with Whatcom County Charter Requirements.

CONTACT

Kara Turner is available to answer any questions regarding the selection process and can be reached at kara@turnerhrservices.com.