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**ATTORNEY GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

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CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03301

JOHN M. FORMELLA
ATTORNEY GENERAL



JAMES T. BOFFETTI
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

December 17, 2025

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Her Excellency, Governor Kelly A. Ayotte
and the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Your Excellency and Members of the Council:

REQUESTED ACTION

That approval be and hereby is given to the Attorney General to reappoint Susan Watkins (Position #9U331, Appropriation #02-20-20-202010-1033-014-500134), as Chief Forensic Investigator at a salary level of \$96,735, effective upon Governor and Executive Council approval or January 24, 2026, whichever is later, for a term ending January 24, 2031. 80% General Funds and 20% Agency Income.

EXPLANATION

Ms. Watkins, a Sanbornville resident, began working with the Department of Justice, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in 2012 and was promoted to Planning Analyst/Data Systems in 2013. While serving in that role, Ms. Watkins assisted in hiring and training Assistant Deputy Medical Examiners, and was responsible for the inventory, control, and chain of custody for all specimens and physical evidence from autopsy and external exam cases. Ms. Watkins was appointed Chief Forensic Investigator in 2024. This reappointment provides another five-year term. Her salary as Chief Forensic Investigator is \$96,735, which will remain the same. A copy of her resume is attached.

I am pleased to offer Ms. Watkins' reappointment for your approval and respectfully urge your favorable consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John M. Formella".

John M. Formella
Attorney General

#5340877

Susan Watkins

Employment Experience:

**Chief Forensic Investigator, New Hampshire Medical Examiner's Office,
2024 to present, Concord, NH**

Deputy Chief Forensic Investigator, 2013 to 2024, NH OCME, Concord, NH

Summary of Current Position: Oversees the hiring and training of Assistant Deputy Medical Examiners. Responsible for the inventory, control, and chain of custody for all specimens and physical evidence of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) autopsy and external exam cases. Oversees and analyzes statistical data and the methods of collection, processing, and dissemination of such data necessary to implement and coordinate all aspects of the MDI Log and toxicology databases for the OCME.

Responsibilities:

- Directs the hiring, training, scheduling, and supervising of Assistant Deputy Medical Examiners, (ADMEs) who investigate death scene in New Hampshire. Available 24/7 for case questions from ADMEs.
- Responsible for training OCME staff and ADME investigators on MDI Log case management system. Create NH OCME custom reports, mapping of ProLaw data to MDI Log and custom searches for specific data requests.
- Established monthly drug data documentation for publication. Tracks overdose death data, identifies trends, and creates monthly publication in conjunction with Chief Forensic Investigator.
- Assists in the hiring and training of OCME staff and interns on various data collection and data entry systems within the office.
- Establishes and maintains chain of custody and proper storage for all specimens and physical evidence from external exam and autopsy cases. Oversees the proper and safe shipping of biological specimens to various labs throughout the country.
- Assisted in the design and implementation of the electronic death certification system (eCOD) as it relates to the OCME and ADMEs. Trains ADMEs on using the eCOD system.
- Creates and implements training programs for ADME investigators on all procedures, toxicology, death certification, evidence collection, digital images, and other investigative matters.
- Evaluates toxicology, and data collection systems regularly, to ensure proper procedures, including proper chain of evidence entry and reporting.
- Shares information regarding OCME operations, the ADME role and death investigation processes, through presentations to high schools, colleges and other agencies.
- Communicates with decedents' families, Police, funeral homes, and other state agencies regarding death certification, toxicology, identification and policies of the OCME.
- Responsible for sudden infant death and sudden unexplained infant death case toxicology and submission to the biorepository for testing.

Assistant Deputy Medical Examiner, NH Office of Chief Medical Examiner, 2012 to present

- Responsible for the forensic death investigations of medicolegal deaths within several counties throughout the state of NH.
- Document and photograph death scenes and perform external examinations on decedents.

- Gather medical information, scene and social history from multiple sources and communicate findings with on-call doctor to determine cases requiring autopsy or death certificate certification on scene.
- Work closely with decedent's family, police, fire, EMS and state agencies to collect and interpret information to assist in determination of the cause and manner of death.
- Complete ADME Investigation reports on autopsy, external exam and decline cases. Draws blood, vitreous and Covid swabs for toxicology studies on all cases deemed appropriate.

Exeter Hospital Emergency Department, Exeter, NH, 2006 - 2012 Unit Coordinator, 6/11- 2/12, NR-Paramedic 2006 to 2011, Exeter, NH

- Provide administrative support to emergency department physicians and nurses. Maintain work flow of diagnostic tests, lab work, x-rays, ultrasounds, CAT Scans, etc.
- Coordinate trauma and medical, ground and air transports, and initiate physician contact at receiving facilities. Responsible for preparing patient medical records for hospital admissions and discharges.

NR-EMT-Paramedic

- Working as part of a two-paramedic team, respond to 911 calls for medical, trauma and psychiatric incidents. Working within NH Protocols providing patient assessments, EKG interpretation, medication administration, advanced airway and trauma skills.
- Maintain patient billing information, tracking Medicare patients, interfacing with the towns billing services and handling all billing problems regarding the Paramedic billing. MediTech, Excel and ACCESS software programs.
- Responsible for the monthly paramedic schedule: Schedule 14 full-time and 7 per diem paramedics. VSSPro and KRONOS software programs Initiated, created and designed a bi-monthly newsletter for the Emergency Department

Advertising Director, Prudential Rush Realty, 8/01- 9/06, Hampton, NH (prior to that time, worked for Prudential Rush for several years covering maternity leaves, sick times, and periodic absences of staff)

- Responsible for all aspects of real estate advertising and marketing for five real estate offices, with over 70 agents and 300 active listings.
- Designed and maintained relational database in ACCESS to schedule and track all listings, budgets, and advertising submissions.
- Implemented marketing strategy to increase market share, promote company, agents and properties. Created print marketing materials, website content, radio, and trade show materials.
- Developed and maintained budgets for individual listings, real estate developments, special projects and high-end homes.
- Weekly ad submission for three daily newspapers, four monthly magazines, and website material. Tracked status changes for all listings to maintain accuracy of ads and communicated changes company wide.
- Negotiated arrangement with local newspaper for weekly real estate column. Researched and ghost wrote column for company CEO.

EDUCATION:

Associate Degree, Paramedic Medicine, New Hampshire Technical Institute, 2005 to 2007

Business Management courses, with a concentration in Marketing, New Hampshire College, 1986 to 1989