



County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Board Report

File #: 19-0845, **Version:** 1

Approve and authorize the Contracts/Purchasing Officer or the Contracts/Purchasing Supervisor to sign amendment #1 by and between Amar Forensics for the provision forensic pathology services and autopsy reports, adding two (2) years and \$880,000.00 to the existing agreement, for a total not to exceed amount of \$1,728,000.00.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

Approve and authorize the Contracts/Purchasing Officer or the Contracts/Purchasing Supervisor to sign amendment #1 by and between Amar Forensics for the provision forensic pathology services and autopsy reports, adding two (2) years and \$880,000.00 to the existing agreement, for a total not to exceed amount of \$1,728,000.00.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

The board previously approved the original agreement with Board Action A-13884; however, the approved Board Report will not cover the cost of the amendment(s). The Monterey County Sheriff's Office/Coroner processed in excess of 360 bodies for calendar year 2018 and more than 216 bodies thus far for calendar year 2019, at a current per autopsy fee of \$1,060.00. The cost of the autopsy will go up \$40.00 for a new cost of \$1,100.00 per exam. We anticipate the cost going up in two years to \$1,200.00 per exam. The Sheriff is a combined Sheriff/Coroner's Office and is therefore responsible for provision and supervision of the Coroner function. The Sheriff fulfills the coroner duties by utilizing the services of the independent contractor who performs the forensic pathology function for Monterey County. The Coroner is charged with the investigation and the Forensic Pathologist with the autopsy of any reportable or inexplicable deaths and must determine the cause and manner of the death. The pathologist performs all autopsy and post-mortem examinations, which include external examination, internal dissection and microscopic examination. These findings are then compiled into an autopsy report. A team of detectives and deputies act upon any cases requiring investigation or prosecution. If the death is ruled a homicide, the information gathered will be used in future court proceedings.

A forensic pathologist has a very specific and specialized type of practice. Nationwide, fewer than fifty physicians a year chose to become forensic pathologists, and this limited supply of new providers is not keeping up with the need created by retirements and the increased demand for services. Since 1959, the United States has certified 1,400 forensic pathologists, currently there are only about 500 full-time pathologist in the U.S. There are only 37 accredited forensic pathology programs in the U.S., leaving some states without a way to train pathologists.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The agreement has been approved by County Counsel as to legal form and by the Auditor- Controller as to fiscal terms. The Insurance meets the County's limits, but is non-standard in that the coverage between \$2.0 million to \$3.0 million comes out of a shared pool. This type of shared pool coverage has been approved in the

past by the Board of Supervisors, and the Sheriff respectfully requests that it continue to be accepted for this contract.

FINANCING:

This Agreement was included in the FY 2019-20 approved budget. There will be no increase in General Fund Contribution resulting from this Board action.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

This contract meets the Board's strategic initiatives by providing Forensic Pathology services on a per autopsy basis, which ties the operational costs of the Office to actual provision of services. This helps reduce overall costs to the County, because the County only pays for the services it needs, versus having a full-time, benefitted position.

Mark a check to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives

Economic Development

✓ Administration

Health & Human Services

Infrastructure

✓ Public Safety

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Approved by: Steve Bernal, Sheriff/Coroner, Extension #3750

Attachments: Attachment A - Amar Forensics Board Report A-13884 and Original Agreement
Attachment B - Amendment #1 Amar Forensics