



CENTRAL DISTRICT:
400 E. Jackson St.
Richmond, Virginia 23219-3694
(804) 786-3174
FAX (804) 371-8595

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Health**

Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
400 E. Jackson Street
Richmond, VA 23219

TIDEWATER DISTRICT:
830 Southampton Ave., Suite 100
Norfolk, Virginia 23510
(757) 683-8366
FAX (757) 683-2589

WESTERN DISTRICT:
6600 Northside High School Road
Roanoke, Virginia 24019
(540) 561-6615
FAX (540) 561-6619

NORTHERN VA. DISTRICT:
10850 Pyramid Place, Suite 121
Manassas, Virginia 20110-1700
(703) 530-2600
FAX (703) 530-0510

March 2, 2020

Lacy Whittaker
Virginia Funeral Directors Association
P.O. Box 395
Henrico, VA 23069

RE: Local medical examiner verification

Dear Ms. Whittaker,

Section 32.1-282 of the Code of Virginia authorizes the Chief Medical Examiner to appoint local medical examiners throughout the Commonwealth. The appointment term for local medical examiners is three years or up to the end of the current appointment term. The current appointment term expires September 30, 2020. A part of the appointment process is to assess local medical examiners' performance and need for local medical examiners in a specific jurisdiction. Therefore, reappointment for local medical examiners is not automatic.

An important role of the local medical examiners is to authorize cremations in accordance with section 32.1-309.3 of the Code of Virginia. It is important for funeral homes to ensure that the local medical examiner authorizing the cremation is an active local medical examiner. In an effort to prevent unauthorized and invalid cremation examinations, funeral home staff members should request that the local medical examiner performing the cremation examination show their current Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) Identification Card. I have attached a sample of the OCME Identification Card for your reference. If the local medical does not have their identification card, or the card has expired, then you can call your respective district office to determine if the medical examiner is active. If an unauthorized local medical examiner authorizes a cremation, the cremation certificate is invalid and another examination and cremation authorization will need to be performed by a currently appointed local medical examiner.

If you should have any questions, please contact Keshia Singleton, our State Project Manager, at keshia.singleton@vdh.virginia.gov or 804.786.1032.

Sincerely,

William T. Gormley, MD
Chief Medical Examiner

Enclosure (1)

Example of OCME Identification Card issued by the DMV:

The ID should have the local medical examiner's name, date of birth, issued date, expiration date, signature and photo ID.

