

# Kent County Council

## Job Description: *Coroners Investigation Officer*

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<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Growth, Environment and Transport</b>
<b>Unit/Section:</b>	<b>Growth, Communities and Environment – Coroners</b>
<b>Grade:</b>	<b>KR8</b>
<b>Responsible to:</b>	<b>Coroners Office Manager</b>

### **Purpose of the Job:**

In accordance with the relevant legislation and policies and on behalf of Kent County Council, to promote and support the coroner services in Kent and Medway by performing all relevant duties concerning violent or unnatural deaths, deaths of unknown cause and deaths that have occurred in custody or state detention, placing bereaved people at the center of everything we do.

### **Main duties and responsibilities:**

1. Work flexibly and collaboratively with the coroners, other coroners investigation officers, coroners court officers, coroners administration officers and coroners court ushers to effectively deliver continuity of the investigative functions to support the obligations of the coroner services in Kent and Medway to ensure that all matters are dealt with efficiently and effectively according to local policy, national guidance and statutory requirements.
2. Perform a professional and empathic family liaison function utilising effective communication mechanisms throughout to provide timely advice and support to bereaved people and ensure all interested persons are fully informed at all stages of the investigation in accordance with local policy and statutory requirements.
3. Develop effective working relationships with all professional partners and volunteers to ensure that the purpose of the coroner's investigation is understood and that the correct procedures are followed so that the coroner service provides a positive contribution to serve the residents of Kent and Medway.
4. Undertake directed and self-directed learning during and outside of work to develop and maintain broad knowledge and understanding of all relevant legislation, chief coroners and other official guidance including KCC policies and judicial direction in order to effectively work as a reflective practitioner using appropriate problem

- solving, taking responsibility for own actions and managing personal workload, to achieve the required standard according to local policy and statutory requirements.
5. Establish a coroners specific database record for every death reported, capture all relevant information and produce documents as necessary to ensure that each case has a complete record in order that the coroner is in full possession of all the relevant facts, information and evidence upon which to make fully informed judicial decisions and conduct an inquest where necessary.
  6. Work collaboratively with the coroners court officers to co-ordinate the arrangements for all court hearings, notify and summons all the relevant persons, book the date and prepare the file including disclosure where directed, to ensure that the coroner is able to progress the case to its conclusion.
  7. Ensure the ability to travel to meet the requirements of the service delivery in a timely way at all times. Although it is an office based role it is necessary to attend forensic post-mortems and obtain statements. Once trained you will participate in the countywide standby duty rota, to attend or provide service cover during evenings, weekends and bank holidays; exceptionally it may be necessary to attend some scenes of death to ensure that the coroner is able to deal promptly and effectively with matters including those concerning post-mortems, organ donation and mass fatalities.
  8. Ensure impartiality, integrity, fairness and consideration of the needs of others is integral to all of your actions to achieve professional and equitable working practices

Footnote: This job description is provided to assist the job holder to know what his/her main duties are. It may be amended from time to time without change to the level of responsibility appropriate to the grade of post.

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### Person Specification: *Coroners Investigation Officer*

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The following outlines the criteria for this post. Applicants who have a disability and who meet the criteria will be shortlisted.

Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

	<b>CRITERIA</b>
<b>QUALIFICATIONS</b>	English GCSE grade C or above; 2 A levels grade C or above, or equivalent ECDL or equivalent or demonstrable equivalent level of skill.
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	<p>Recent experience working with people suffering emotional distress and in an unpredictable and pressured environment requiring confidentiality, responsibility and self motivation and a flexible approach because of competing demands.</p> <p>Previous experience working in a coroner's office or recent relevant experience in a nursing, medical, paramedicine, biomedical, legal or investigative role with demonstrable experience working with some autonomy and initiative to question a wide range of people to gather, synthesize and evaluate information and effectively manage own caseload.</p> <p>Demonstrable experience of current standard IT applications including data input, word processing, spread-sheets and electronic diaries and a willingness to learn and use specialist databases and software applications.</p>

<b>SKILLS AND ABILITIES</b>	<p>Ability to use methodical questioning and enquiring approach to gather, record and interpret information from the range of appropriate sources with a proven ability to present information that is appropriately organised with strong attention to detail using accurate and appropriate written style.</p> <p>Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively with integrity and empathy, using appropriate styles to establish good relationships and achieve the necessary but appropriate outcome when working with bereaved people, colleagues, professional partners or managers. Commitment to equalities and the promotion of diversity in all aspects of working.</p> <p>Demonstrate high levels of personal resilience and ability to adapt and respond positively to change, maintain self-motivation with a desire to drive personal development and knowledge and skills at the same time show awareness of others roles and responsibilities to work in the team flexibly and contributively including out of hours and ability to travel to meet the requirements of the service at multiple sites whilst reliably adhering to policy, procedures and direction.</p> <p>Exhibit high levels of organisational skills to consistently manage own work to high standards and strict time limits in a demand led and highly pressured environment, often working with frequent interruptions and competing pressures, must demonstrate the capability to remain calm and resilient and maintain concentration under pressure with the ability to absorb and assess information quickly.</p> <p>Demonstrate well developed self-awareness of the specific requirements of a sensitive public facing role, such as appropriate appearance and behaviours along with the ability to assume strategies to protect own health and well-being and to dissociate from the emotional aspects of dealing with death and potentially distressing information on a daily basis in order to attend post-mortems, scenes of death and work effectively with bereaved people to provide appropriate information that is clear, accurate and unambiguous and demonstrates commitment to equalities and the promotion of diversity in all aspects of working.</p>
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**KNOWLEDGE**

Broad knowledge of: coroners' law, other relevant legislation and official guidance and procedures; investigative and evidential procedures including statement taking; construction and meanings of medical terms, the medical record, anatomy and physiological function of the human body, common diseases and disorders, diagnostic procedures, treatments and potential complications relevant to causes of death; theories of grief and bereavement and impact on effective communication; religious and cultural observances relevant to death.

Knowledge and understanding of own communication styles and preferences, highly developed understanding of interpersonal communication.

Awareness of data protection and confidentiality issues. Staff will be expected to have an awareness of and work within national legislation and corporate and directorate policies and procedures related to health and safety.

**KENT VALUES AND  
CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES**

**Kent Values:**

- We are **brave**. We do the right thing, we accept and offer challenge
- We are **curious** to innovate and improve
- We are **compassionate**, understanding and respectful to all
- We are **strong together** by sharing knowledge
- We are all **responsible** for the difference we make

Our values enable us to build a culture that is:

**Flexible/agile** - willing to take (calculated) risks and want people that are flexible and agile

**Curious** - constantly learning and evolving

**Compassionate and Inclusive** - compassionate, understanding and respectful to all

**Working Together** - building and delivering for the best interests of Kent

**Empowering** - Our people take accountability for their decisions and actions

**Externally Focused** - Residents, families and communities at the heart of decision making