



AMERICAN BOARD OF MEDICOLEGAL DEATH INVESTIGATORS

2024



www.abmdi.org



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INTRODUCTION

Bethany Smith, MPA, D-ABMDI
Executive Director

Bridget Kinnier, F-ABMDI
President



FOUNDATION



Job Requirements Undefined in the Past

Not professionally trained/educated
No recognized certification available
No continuing education required



National Institute of Justice

Death Investigation: A Guide for
the Scene Investigator
Published February 12, 1998
Revisions: 2011, 2024



ABMDI Incorporated

February 4, 1998

ABOUT THE ABMDI



National, non-profit, independent professional certification board



Established to promote highest standards of practice for medicolegal death investigators



Accredited by the Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board (FSAB) in 2005. Reaccredited in 2010, 2015, and 2020.

Purpose

- Encourage adherence to high standards of professional and ethical conduct when conducting medicolegal death investigations
- Recognize qualified individuals who have voluntarily applied for basic and advanced levels of professional certification
- Grant and issue certificates to individuals who have demonstrated their mastery of investigational techniques and who have successfully completed rigorous examination of their knowledge and skills in the field of medicolegal death investigation.

Goal

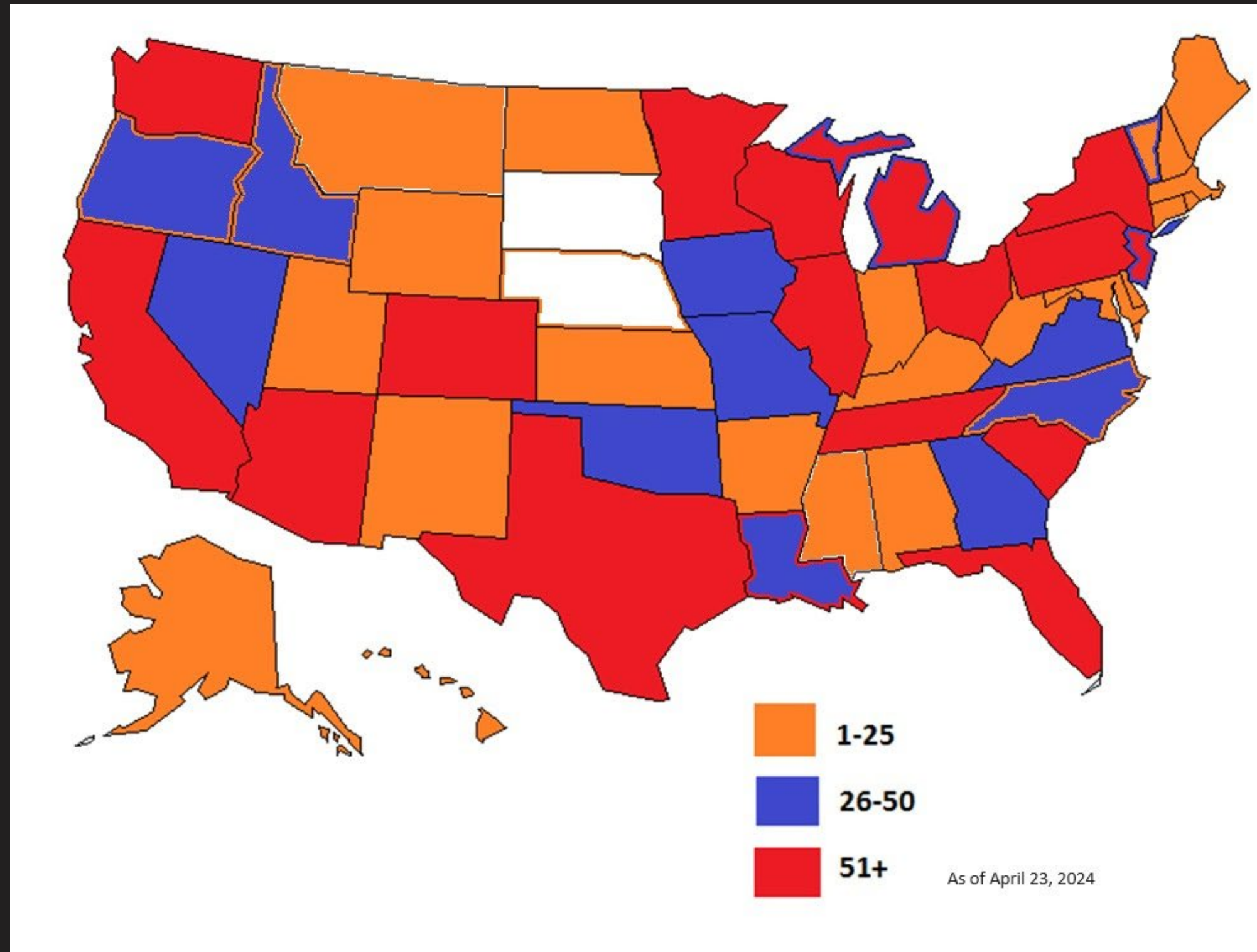
- Promote the highest standards of practice for medicolegal death investigators



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- Voluntary Board of Directors including five Officers
- A diverse Advisory Council consisting of representation of Medical Examiner and Coroner offices from different jurisdictions

ABMDI CERTIFICANTS BY STATE



CERTIFICATION

- Registry Certification
 - Associate status or
 - Diplomate status
- Board Certification
 - Fellow status

Registry Certification

- Initial certification that provides official recognition that an individual has acquired basic knowledge and demonstrated proficiency in the standards of practice necessary to properly conduct a thorough medicolegal death investigation
- Two tracks
 - Associate (A-ABMDI)
 - Diplomat (D-ABMDI)



REGISTRY CERTIFICATION

- ✓ At least 18 years of age
- ✓ High school diploma or equivalent
- ✓ Currently employed by a Medical Examiner/Coroner office with the job responsibility to independently conduct medicolegal death investigations, or supervise such investigations
- ✓ At least 640 hours of experience or points

REGISTRY ASSOCIATE, A - ABMDI



Independently completes an investigative report and all other facets of medicolegal death investigation, other than scene investigation.



To “supervise such investigations” means the applicant must have prior experience conducting medicolegal death investigations.

REGISTRY DIPLOMATE, D- ABMDI



Independently conducts medicolegal death scene investigations, in person on location at the death scene.

This includes but is not limited to:

- completing a body examination (documenting injuries and personally assessing postmortem changes.
- photographing the scene
- completing an investigative report



To “supervise such investigations” means the applicant must have prior experience conducting medicolegal death investigations.

HOW TO OBTAIN 640 POINTS

-  Full or part time employment, one hour = one point
-  On-call employment
 - Diplomate: MINIMUM 100 points required from deaths with scene investigation
-  Advanced degree
-  Education/Training
-  Viewing autopsies

REGISTRY CERTIFICATION

- ✓ Employment Verification Form
- ✓ Fundamental Tasks of Medicolegal Death Investigation
- ✓ Signed Code of Ethics and Conduct
- ✓ 240 multiple choice examination, up to 4 hours
 - Interagency Communication
 - Communication with Families
 - Scene Response and Documentation
 - Body Assessment and Documentation
 - Completing the Investigation
 - Additional Medicolegal Death Investigator Duties
 - Forensic and Medical Knowledge

Board Certification

- Experienced Registry Diplomate medicolegal death investigators who prove their mastery of all aspects of medicolegal death investigation
- Not available to Registry Associates, without first obtaining the Registry Diplomate certification.



BOARD CERTIFICATION

- ✓ Current Diplomate, in good standing for at least six months
- ✓ Associates Degree or higher
- ✓ Currently employed by a Medical Examiner/Coroner office with the job responsibility to independently conduct medicolegal death scene investigations, or supervise such investigations
- ✓ At least 4,000 hours of experience

BOARD CERTIFICATION

- ✓ Employment Verification Form
- ✓ Reaffirm the Code of Ethics and Conduct
- ✓ References from:
 - Forensic Science Specialist
 - Law Enforcement
 - Administrator/Supervisor
- ✓ 2 part examination, up to 5.5 hours
 - 240 multiple choice questions
 - Performance section – 3 medicolegal death scene scenarios

RECERTIFICATION

- ✓ Must recertify every five years
- ✓ Be in good standing
- ✓ Demonstrate continued competency
 - Employment Verification Form or
 - If not currently employed, a one time extension is available through a recertification exam
- ✓ 45 hours of approved continuing education
- ✓ Reaffirm the Code of Ethics and Conduct

WHY GET CERTIFIED?

- Official recognition by an independent professional certification body that is FSAB accredited
- Certifies that an individual has acquired the specialized knowledge and demonstrated proficiency in the standards of practice
- Employers know that ABMDI certificants are held to the highest quality of professional and personal conduct through the ABMDI Code of Ethics and Conduct



ABMDI IMPACT

- Continuing Education required for employment
- Several state laws passed requiring ABMDI certification
- NAME and IACME include ABMDI certification in their accreditation standards
- Many jurisdictions require ABMDI certification as a condition of employment, or for career advancement and pay increase incentives





QUESTIONS?

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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