



# COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION  
DRIVE, ROOM 102A  
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

## SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 5/11/2021

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**To:** Board of Supervisors of Sonoma County  
**Department or Agency Name(s):** Sheriff's Office  
**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Melissa MacDonald, 565-3922  
**Vote Requirement:** Majority  
**Supervisory District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**

Agreement for Body Removal Services

**Recommended Action:**

Authorize the Sheriff to execute an Agreement with NorthBay Mortuary Services LLC, for the term of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024, with the option to extend for two additional one-year terms for a total not to exceed contract cost of \$1,250,000.

**Executive Summary:**

California Government Code Section 27491 mandates that the Coroner shall investigate circumstances, manner, and cause of death for deceased persons in Sonoma County. In order to make these determinations, the Sheriff's Office removes deceased persons from the location of death and transports them to the Central Morgue Facility. Body Removal Services are provided by contracted vendors who are authorized to operate in the State of California. This Agreement for Body Removal Services submitted to the Board for approval will ensure uninterrupted provision of mandated services.

**Discussion:**

California Government Code Section 27491 requires the Sheriff's Office to remove deceased persons from the location of death and transport them to the Central Morgue Facility in Santa Rosa, if the death occurs within Sonoma County and if designated by Coroner Bureau investigators. If a County citizen dies outside of Sonoma County in a manner that may involve future prosecution, the County may transport the deceased to the Morgue for autopsy. In addition, the County is responsible for the remains of County citizens in indigent burial cases and transports the remains back to Sonoma County when necessary. Removals must be handled in a professional manner, with appropriate consideration given to the decedent's family and friends, who may be present at the time of removal.

Since 1989, Sonoma County has contracted with vendors for transport service of deceased persons. The number of body removals for the past three fiscal years and an estimated number of removals for the current fiscal year are shown below.

	FY 17-18 Actual	FY 18-19 Actual	FY 19-20 Actual	FY 20-21 (Projected)
Removals	509	492	566	560
Expenditures	\$138,552	\$126,714	\$158,962	\$163,118

Request for Proposal (RFP). An RFP for body removal services was issued in January 2021. Two vendors submitted proposals in response to the RFP. The evaluation of the proposals by Sheriff's Office and District Attorney's Office personnel considered criteria such as the ability to perform body removal services as defined in the RFP, cost relative to scope of services, and a demonstrated history of providing similar services to comparable entities.

Both vendors who submitted proposals used the same pricing structure, based on attendants and location of pick-up. Based on projected removals and historical distribution of removal locations, there was a cost difference of roughly 1-3% per year between the two proposals. The lower cost vendor, however, did not demonstrate any history of providing the quantity of required services to other agencies or any history of providing removal services to a law enforcement or public safety agency.

NorthBay Mortuary Services demonstrated a history of providing the quantity and quality of required services, both to local mortuaries, and to a law enforcement agency. NorthBay Mortuary is currently providing body removal services to the Sheriff's Office, and has been the service provider since 2016. Because of their demonstrated experience and expertise, the evaluation committee determined that NorthBay Mortuary's proposal was the best fit for the County. Its staff are also locally based, have significant experience with removal services in Sonoma County, and are familiar with the operations of the Central Morgue Facility making them the preferred vendor.

**Prior Board Actions:**

The Board has approved Agreements and Amendments for body removal services since 2001, most recently on March 15, 2016.

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY 20-21 Adopted</b>	<b>FY21-22 Projected</b>	<b>FY 22-23 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses	\$153,451	\$173,661	\$178,871
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$153,451</b>	<b>\$173,661</b>	<b>\$178,871</b>
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF	\$153,451	\$173,661	\$178,871
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>\$153,451</b>	<b>\$173,661</b>	<b>\$178,871</b>

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

Body removal services are an annual Sheriff's Office operating expense. The Sheriff's Office FY 20-21 Adopted Budget and FY 21-22 Recommended Budget both include funds for body removal services. No additional

funding is requested at this time.

The FY 20-21 Adopted budget for body removal services was based on an estimated number of removals and the vendor's costs. The estimated number of removals was 494, this estimate was based on prior year removals and the FY 19-20 projected removals. As of March 2021, removals are projecting out closer to 560, accounting for a significant increase in expenditures. The FY 21-22 projection is 533 removals, which is based on the average number of removals for FY 17-18, FY 18-19, and FY 19-20, and the FY 20-21 projection. The estimated expense includes a 2% cost increase which is consistent with the annual service rates.

<b>Staffing Impacts:</b>			
<b>Position Title (Payroll Classification)</b>	<b>Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)</b>	<b>Additions (Number)</b>	<b>Deletions (Number)</b>

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

There are no staffing impacts associated with this Agreement.

**Attachments:**

Agreement for Body Removal Services

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**

N/A