



HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MAYOR

WESTON WAMP

For Immediate Release

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Hamilton County Unveils New Regional Forensic Center

Renovated Facility Replaces Outdated Office with Expanded Capacity and Modern Technology

HAMILTON COUNTY, TN (August 4, 2026) — Hamilton County Mayor Weston Wamp, State Senator Bo Watson, District Attorney General Coty Wamp, and other county leaders today cut the ribbon on the new Hamilton County Medical Examiner's Office and Regional Forensic Center. A \$12 million state grant was used to purchase a former medical office building and renovate it into an expanded, modernized Medical Examiner's Office that will better serve Hamilton County and the surrounding region.

At the corner of 3rd Street and Holtzclaw Avenue, this new 13,342-square-foot facility replaces the former 5,800-square-foot Medical Examiner's Office on Amnicola Highway, which was built in the 1980s. The county purchased and renovated the Holtzclaw Avenue building in 2023, saving taxpayers millions of dollars compared to the estimated cost of constructing a new forensic center.

"When I came into office, the county had plans to construct a brand new building at a much higher cost. Instead, we found a way to deliver a high-functioning Medical Examiner's Office while saving local taxpayers an estimated \$5 million," said **Mayor Wamp**. "This newly renovated, modernized facility will help keep our community safe by providing law enforcement with the information needed to solve violent crimes."

The new facility is equipped with modern technology that helps investigators identify individuals more quickly and accurately while preserving important evidence. This means families can receive answers sooner, law enforcement can move investigations forward more efficiently, and staff can perform their work in a safer environment. The result is a more responsive, reliable system that improves the level of service for the community and the region.

"Every day, our team is called upon to provide answers during some of the most difficult moments for families," said **Hamilton County Medical Examiner Dr. Steven Cogswell**. "With more space, modern technology, and

purpose-built work areas, we can better support our law enforcement partners, District Attorney General Coty Wamp's office, and the communities we serve."

Recognizing the need to replace the county's aging Medical Examiner's Office, State Senator Bo Watson advocated on Hamilton County's behalf to help secure state funding for a modern facility.

"The State of Tennessee has always highly valued our citizens' quality of life, from the time it begins to the time it ends," said **Senator Watson**. "Our funding for this facility directly benefits not only the staff working there, but all of the individuals who it will service, as well as their families, giving them the utmost care and respect."

The facility will also support the next generation of forensic professionals through a partnership with the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, allowing anthropology students to gain hands-on experience examining skeletal remains and identifying evidence of trauma as part of their forensic training.

The new Medical Examiner's Office will officially begin operations on August 7 as staff begin moving in.

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