

FIRST REGULAR SESSION
SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
SENATE BILL NO. 34
100TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Reported from the Committee on Professional Registration, March 14, 2019, with recommendation that the Senate Committee Substitute do pass.

0384S.03C

ADRIANE D. CROUSE, Secretary.

AN ACT

To repeal sections 58.095, 58.451, 58.720, and 193.145, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof six new sections relating to coroners.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Sections 58.095, 58.451, 58.720, and 193.145, RSMo, are
2 repealed and six new sections enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as sections
3 58.035, 58.095, 58.208, 58.451, 58.720, and 193.145, to read as follows:

**58.035. 1. There is hereby established within the department of
2 public safety a "Coroner Standards and Training Commission" which
3 shall be composed of eight members, appointed by the governor, with
4 the advice and consent of the senate. The governor shall take into
5 account the diversity of the state when making the appointments to this
6 commission. The commission shall consist of:**

- 7 **(1) Two coroners elected from counties of the third classification;**
- 8 **(2) One coroner elected from a county of the first, second, or
9 fourth classification;**
- 10 **(3) One currently appointed medical examiner;**
- 11 **(4) One child death pathologist;**
- 12 **(5) One elected prosecuting attorney;**
- 13 **(6) One elected sheriff;**
- 14 **(7) The director of the department of health and senior services,
15 or his or her designee, who shall serve as a nonvoting member of the
16 commission.**

17 **Each member of the coroner standards and training commission shall**

EXPLANATION—Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in this bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

18 have been at the time of his appointment a citizen of the United States
19 and a resident of this state for a period of at least one year, and
20 members who are coroners shall be qualified as established by chapter
21 58.

22 2. The members of the commission shall serve for the following
23 terms:

24 (1) Every member of the commission who holds elected office
25 shall serve an initial term of two years;

26 (2) Every member of the commission who does not hold elected
27 office shall serve an initial term of four years;

28 (3) Every member of the commission shall serve for a term of
29 four years after the initial term has been served.

30 3. Annually the commission shall elect one of the members as
31 chairperson. The coroner standards and training commission shall
32 meet at least twice each year as determined by the director of public
33 safety, the chairperson, or a majority of the members to perform its
34 duties. A majority of the members of the coroner standards and
35 training commission shall constitute a quorum.

36 4. No member of the coroner standards and training commission
37 shall receive any compensation for the performance of his or her
38 official duties.

39 5. The coroner standards and training commission shall establish
40 training standards, by rule, relating to the office of county coroner.
41 These standards shall relate to the operation of the office, the legal
42 responsibilities of the office, and the technical skills and knowledge
43 required of the office.

44 6. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that term is defined in section
45 536.010, that is created under the authority delegated in this section
46 shall become effective only if it complies with and is subject to all of
47 the provisions of chapter 536, and, if applicable, section 536.028. This
48 section and chapter 536 are nonseverable and if any of the powers
49 vested with the general assembly pursuant to chapter 536 to review, to
50 delay the effective date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are
51 subsequently held unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking
52 authority and any rule proposed or adopted after August 28, 2019, shall
53 be invalid and void.

54 7. Once the commission has developed standards, the commission

55 **shall issue a report detailing the standards. This report shall be**
 56 **submitted to the speaker of the house of representatives and the**
 57 **president pro tempore of the senate, and shall be published on the**
 58 **website of the department of health and senior services.**

58.095. 1. The county coroner in any county[, other than in a first
 2 classification chartered county,] **not having a charter form of government**
 3 shall receive an annual salary computed on a basis as set forth in the following
 4 schedule. The provisions of this section shall not permit or require a reduction
 5 in the amount of compensation being paid for the office of coroner on January 1,
 6 1997:

	Assessed Valuation		Salary
7			
8	\$ 18,000,000	to 40,999,999	\$ 8,000
9	41,000,000	to 53,999,999	8,500
10	54,000,000	to 65,999,999	9,000
11	66,000,000	to 85,999,999	9,500
12	86,000,000	to 99,999,999	10,000
13	100,000,000	to 130,999,999	11,000
14	131,000,000	to 159,999,999	12,000
15	160,000,000	to 189,999,999	13,000
16	190,000,000	to 249,999,999	14,000
17	250,000,000	to 299,999,999	15,000
18	300,000,000	or more	16,000

19 2. One thousand dollars of the salary authorized in this section shall be
 20 payable to the coroner only if the coroner has completed at least twenty hours of
 21 classroom instruction each calendar year [relating to the operations of the
 22 coroner's office when approved by a professional association of the county
 23 coroners of Missouri] **as established by the coroners standards and**
 24 **training commission** unless exempted from the training by the [professional
 25 association] **Missouri Coroners' and Medical Examiners' Association for**
 26 **good cause.** The [professional association approving the program] **Missouri**
 27 **Coroners' and Medical Examiners' Association** shall provide a certificate
 28 of completion to each coroner who completes the training program and shall send
 29 a list of certified coroners to the treasurer of each county **and the department**
 30 **of health and senior services. The coroners standards and training**
 31 **commission may certify training programs that satisfy the**
 32 **requirements of this section in lieu of the training provided by the**

33 **Missouri Coroners' and Medical Examiners' Association. Certified**
34 **training completion shall be submitted to the Missouri Coroners' and**
35 **Medical Examiners' Association, which, upon validating the certified**
36 **training, shall submit the individuals name to the county treasurer and**
37 **department of health and senior services indicating the individual is**
38 **compliant with the training requirements.** Expenses incurred for attending
39 the training session may be reimbursed to the county coroner in the same manner
40 as other expenses as may be appropriated for that purpose. All elected or
41 appointed coroners, deputy coroners, and assistants to the coroner shall complete
42 the annual training described in this subsection within six months of election or
43 appointment.

44 3. The county coroner in any county, other than a first classification
45 charter county, shall not, except upon two-thirds vote of all the members of the
46 salary commission, receive an annual compensation in an amount less than the
47 total compensation being received for the office of county coroner in the particular
48 county for services rendered or performed on the date the salary commission
49 votes.

50 4. For the term beginning in 1997, the compensation of the coroner, in
51 counties in which the salary commission has not voted to pay one hundred
52 percent of the maximum allowable salary, shall be a percentage of the maximum
53 allowable salary established by this section. The percentage applied shall be the
54 same percentage of the maximum allowable salary received or allowed, whichever
55 is greater, to the presiding commissioner or sheriff, whichever is greater, of that
56 county for the year beginning January 1, 1997. In those counties in which the
57 salary commission has voted to pay one hundred percent of the maximum
58 allowable salary, the compensation of the coroner shall be based on the maximum
59 allowable salary in effect at each time a coroner's term of office commences
60 following the vote to pay one hundred percent of the maximum allowable
61 compensation. Subsequent compensation shall be determined as provided in
62 section 50.333.

63 5. Effective January 1, 1997, the county coroner in any county[, other
64 than a county of the first classification with a charter form of government,] **not**
65 **having a charter form of government** may, upon the approval of the county
66 commission, receive additional compensation for any month during which
67 investigations or other services are performed for three or more decedents in the
68 same incident during such month. The additional compensation shall be an

69 amount that when added to the regular compensation the sum shall equal the
70 monthly compensation of the county sheriff.

**58.208. 1. For any death certificate issued under section 193.265
2 there shall be a fee of one dollar, which shall be deposited into the
3 Missouri state coroners' training fund established under subsection 2
4 of this section. Moneys in such fund shall be used by the Missouri
5 Coroners' and Medical Examiners' Association:**

6 **(1) For in-state training, equipment, and necessary supplies; and**

7 **(2) To provide aid to training programs approved by the
8 Missouri Coroners' and Medical Examiners' Association.**

9 **2. (1) There is hereby created in the state treasury the "Missouri
10 State Coroners' Training Fund", which shall consist of moneys collected
11 under subsection 1 of this section. The state treasurer shall be
12 custodian of the fund. In accordance with sections 30.170 and 30.180,
13 the state treasurer may approve disbursements. The fund shall be a
14 dedicated fund and, upon appropriation, moneys in the fund shall be
15 used solely for the administration of subsection 1 of this section.**

16 **(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080 to the
17 contrary, any moneys remaining in the fund over the amount of five
18 hundred thousand dollars shall revert to the credit of the general
19 revenue fund.**

20 **(3) The state treasurer shall invest moneys in the fund in the
21 same manner as other funds are invested. Any interest and moneys
22 earned on such investments shall be credited to the fund.**

23 **3. Local registrars may, during states of emergency or disaster,
24 request reimbursement from the fund for copies of death certificates
25 issued to individuals who are unable to afford the associated fees.**

**58.451. 1. When any person, in any county in which a coroner is required
2 by section 58.010, dies and there is reasonable ground to believe that such person
3 died as a result of:**

4 **(1) Violence by homicide, suicide, or accident;**

5 **(2) Criminal abortions, including those self-induced;**

6 **(3) Some unforeseen sudden occurrence and the deceased had not been
7 attended by a physician during the thirty-six-hour period preceding the death;**

8 **(4) In any unusual or suspicious manner;**

9 **(5) Any injury or illness while in the custody of the law or while an
10 inmate in a public institution;**

11 the police, sheriff, law enforcement officer or official, or any person having
12 knowledge of such a death shall immediately notify the coroner of the known facts
13 concerning the time, place, manner and circumstances of the death. Immediately
14 upon receipt of notification, the coroner or deputy coroner shall take charge of the
15 dead body and fully investigate the essential facts concerning the medical causes
16 of death, including whether by the act of man, and the manner of death. The
17 coroner or deputy coroner may take the names and addresses of witnesses to the
18 death and shall file this information in the coroner's office. The coroner or deputy
19 coroner shall take possession of all property of value found on the body, making
20 exact inventory of such property on the report and shall direct the return of such
21 property to the person entitled to its custody or possession. The coroner or
22 deputy coroner shall take possession of any object or article which, in the
23 coroner's or the deputy coroner's opinion, may be useful in establishing the cause
24 of death, and deliver it to the prosecuting attorney of the county.

25 2. When a death occurs outside a licensed health care facility, the first
26 licensed medical professional or law enforcement official learning of such death
27 shall immediately contact the county coroner. Immediately upon receipt of such
28 notification, the coroner or the coroner's deputy shall make the determination if
29 further investigation is necessary, based on information provided by the
30 individual contacting the coroner, and immediately advise such individual of the
31 coroner's intentions.

32 3. **Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection 2 of this section**
33 **to the contrary, when a death occurs under the care of a hospice, no**
34 **investigation shall be required if the death is certified by the treating**
35 **physician of the deceased or the medical director of the hospice as a**
36 **natural death due to disease or diagnosed illness. The hospice shall**
37 **provide written notice to the coroner within twenty-four hours of the**
38 **death.**

39 4. Upon taking charge of the dead body and before moving the body the
40 coroner shall notify the police department of any city in which the dead body is
41 found, or if the dead body is found in the unincorporated area of a county
42 governed by the provisions of sections 58.451 to 58.457, the coroner shall notify
43 the county sheriff or the highway patrol and cause the body to remain unmoved
44 until the police department, sheriff or the highway patrol has inspected the body
45 and the surrounding circumstances and carefully noted the appearance, the
46 condition and position of the body and recorded every fact and circumstance

47 tending to show the cause and manner of death, with the names and addresses
48 of all known witnesses, and shall subscribe the same and make such record a part
49 of the coroner's report.

50 [4.] 5. In any case of sudden, violent or suspicious death after which the
51 body was buried without any investigation or autopsy, the coroner, upon being
52 advised of such facts, may at the coroner's own discretion request that the
53 prosecuting attorney apply for a court order requiring the body to be exhumed.

54 [5.] 6. The coroner may certify the cause of death in any case where
55 death occurred without medical attendance or where an attending physician
56 refuses to sign a certificate of death or when a physician is unavailable to sign
57 a certificate of death.

58 [6.] 7. When the cause of death is established by the coroner, the coroner
59 shall file a copy of the findings in the coroner's office within thirty days.

60 [7.] 8. If on view of the dead body and after personal inquiry into the
61 cause and manner of death, the coroner determines that a further examination
62 is necessary in the public interest, the coroner on the coroner's own authority may
63 make or cause to be made an autopsy on the body. The coroner may on the
64 coroner's own authority employ the services of a pathologist, chemist, or other
65 expert to aid in the examination of the body or of substances supposed to have
66 caused or contributed to death, and if the pathologist, chemist, or other expert is
67 not already employed by the city or county for the discharge of such services, the
68 pathologist, chemist, or other expert shall, upon written authorization of the
69 coroner, be allowed reasonable compensation, payable by the city or county, in the
70 manner provided in section 58.530. The coroner shall, at the time of the autopsy,
71 record or cause to be recorded each fact and circumstance tending to show the
72 condition of the body and the cause and manner of death.

73 [8.] 9. If on view of the dead body and after personal inquiry into the
74 cause and manner of death, the coroner considers a further inquiry and
75 examination necessary in the public interest, the coroner shall make out the
76 coroner's warrant directed to the sheriff of the city or county requiring the sheriff
77 forthwith to summon six good and lawful citizens of the county to appear before
78 the coroner, at the time and place expressed in the warrant, and to inquire how
79 and by whom the deceased died.

80 [9.] 10. (1) When a person is being transferred from one county to
81 another county for medical treatment and such person dies while being
82 transferred, or dies while being treated in the emergency room of the receiving

83 facility the place which the person is determined to be dead shall be considered
84 the place of death and the county coroner or medical examiner of the county from
85 which the person was originally being transferred shall be responsible for
86 determining the cause and manner of death for the Missouri certificate of death.

87 (2) The coroner or medical examiner in the county in which the person is
88 determined to be dead may with authorization of the coroner or medical examiner
89 from the original transferring county, investigate and conduct postmortem
90 examinations at the expense of the coroner or medical examiner from the original
91 transferring county. The coroner or medical examiner from the original
92 transferring county shall be responsible for investigating the circumstances of
93 such and completing the Missouri certificate of death. The certificate of death
94 shall be filed in the county where the deceased was pronounced dead.

95 (3) Such coroner or medical examiner of the county where a person is
96 determined to be dead shall immediately notify the coroner or medical examiner
97 of the county from which the person was originally being transferred of the death
98 of such person, and shall make available information and records obtained for
99 investigation of the death.

100 (4) If a person does not die while being transferred and is
101 institutionalized as a regularly admitted patient after such transfer and
102 subsequently dies while in such institution, the coroner or medical examiner of
103 the county in which the person is determined to be dead shall immediately notify
104 the coroner or medical examiner of the county from which such person was
105 originally transferred of the death of such person. In such cases, the county in
106 which the deceased was institutionalized shall be considered the place of death.
107 If the manner of death is by homicide, suicide, accident, criminal abortion
108 including those that are self-induced, child fatality, or any unusual or suspicious
109 manner, the investigation of the cause and manner of death shall revert to the
110 county of origin, and this coroner or medical examiner shall be responsible for the
111 Missouri certificate of death. The certificate of death shall be filed in the county
112 where the deceased was pronounced dead.

113 [10.] 11. There shall not be any statute of limitations or time limits on
114 the cause of death when death is the final result or determined to be caused by
115 homicide, suicide, accident, child fatality, criminal abortion including those
116 self-induced, or any unusual or suspicious manner. The place of death shall be
117 the place in which the person is determined to be dead. The final investigation
118 of death in determining the cause and matter of death shall revert to the county

119 of origin, and the coroner or medical examiner of such county shall be responsible
120 for the Missouri certificate of death. The certificate of death shall be filed in the
121 county where the deceased was pronounced dead.

122 [11.] 12. Except as provided in subsection [9] 10 of this section, if a
123 person dies in one county and the body is subsequently transferred to another
124 county, for burial or other reasons, the county coroner or medical examiner where
125 the death occurred shall be responsible for the certificate of death and for
126 investigating the cause and manner of the death.

127 [12.] 13. In performing the duties, the coroner or medical examiner shall
128 comply with sections 58.775 to 58.785 with respect to organ donation.

58.720. 1. When any person dies within a county having a medical
2 examiner as a result of:

- 3 (1) Violence by homicide, suicide, or accident;
- 4 (2) Thermal, chemical, electrical, or radiation injury;
- 5 (3) Criminal abortions, including those self-induced;
- 6 (4) Disease thought to be of a hazardous and contagious nature or which
7 might constitute a threat to public health; or when any person dies:
 - 8 (a) Suddenly when in apparent good health;
 - 9 (b) When unattended by a physician, chiropractor, or an accredited
10 Christian Science practitioner, during the period of thirty-six hours immediately
11 preceding his death;
 - 12 (c) While in the custody of the law, or while an inmate in a public
13 institution;
 - 14 (d) In any unusual or suspicious manner;

15 the police, sheriff, law enforcement officer or official, or any person having
16 knowledge of such a death shall immediately notify the office of the medical
17 examiner of the known facts concerning the time, place, manner and
18 circumstances of the death. Immediately upon receipt of notification, the medical
19 examiner or his designated assistant shall take charge of the dead body and fully
20 investigate the essential facts concerning the medical causes of death. He may
21 take the names and addresses of witnesses to the death and shall file this
22 information in his office. The medical examiner or his designated assistant shall
23 take possession of all property of value found on the body, making exact inventory
24 thereof on his report and shall direct the return of such property to the person
25 entitled to its custody or possession. The medical examiner or his designated
26 assistant examiner shall take possession of any object or article which, in his

27 opinion, may be useful in establishing the cause of death, and deliver it to the
28 prosecuting attorney of the county.

29 2. When a death occurs outside a licensed health care facility, the first
30 licensed medical professional or law enforcement official learning of such death
31 shall contact the county medical examiner. Immediately upon receipt of such
32 notification, the medical examiner or the medical examiner's deputy shall make
33 a determination if further investigation is necessary, based on information
34 provided by the individual contacting the medical examiner, and immediately
35 advise such individual of the medical examiner's intentions.

36 3. **Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection 2 of this section**
37 **to the contrary, when a death occurs under the care of a hospice, no**
38 **investigation shall be required if the death is certified by the treating**
39 **physician of the deceased or the medical director of the hospice as a**
40 **natural death due to disease or diagnosed illness. The hospice shall**
41 **provide written notice to the medical examiner within twenty-four**
42 **hours of the death.**

43 4. In any case of sudden, violent or suspicious death after which the body
44 was buried without any investigation or autopsy, the medical examiner, upon
45 being advised of such facts, may at his own discretion request that the
46 prosecuting attorney apply for a court order requiring the body to be exhumed.

47 [4.] 5. The medical examiner shall certify the cause of death in any case
48 where death occurred without medical attendance or where an attending
49 physician refuses to sign a certificate of death, and may sign a certificate of death
50 in the case of any death.

51 [5.] 6. When the cause of death is established by the medical examiner,
52 he shall file a copy of his findings in his office within thirty days after notification
53 of the death.

54 [6.] 7. (1) When a person is being transferred from one county to another
55 county for medical treatment and such person dies while being transferred, or
56 dies while being treated in the emergency room of the receiving facility, the place
57 which the person is determined to be dead shall be considered the place of death
58 and the county coroner or the medical examiner of the county from which the
59 person was originally being transferred shall be responsible for determining the
60 cause and manner of death for the Missouri certificate of death.

61 (2) The coroner or medical examiner in the county in which the person is
62 determined to be dead may, with authorization of the coroner or medical

63 examiner from the transferring county, investigate and conduct postmortem
64 examinations at the expense of the coroner or medical examiner from the
65 transferring county. The coroner or medical examiner from the transferring
66 county shall be responsible for investigating the circumstances of such and
67 completing the Missouri certificate of death. The certificate of death shall be filed
68 in the county where the deceased was pronounced dead.

69 (3) Such coroner or medical examiner, or the county where a person is
70 determined to be dead, shall immediately notify the coroner or medical examiner
71 of the county from which the person was originally being transferred of the death
72 of such person and shall make available information and records obtained for
73 investigation of death.

74 (4) If a person does not die while being transferred and is
75 institutionalized as a regularly admitted patient after such transfer and
76 subsequently dies while in such institution, the coroner or medical examiner of
77 the county in which the person is determined to be dead shall immediately notify
78 the coroner or medical examiner of the county from which such person was
79 originally transferred of the death of such person. In such cases, the county in
80 which the deceased was institutionalized shall be considered the place of death.
81 If the manner of death is by homicide, suicide, accident, criminal abortion
82 including those that are self-induced, child fatality, or any unusual or suspicious
83 manner, the investigation of the cause and manner of death shall revert to the
84 county of origin, and this coroner or medical examiner shall be responsible for the
85 Missouri certificate of death. The certificate of death shall be filed in the county
86 where the deceased was pronounced dead.

87 [7.] 8. There shall not be any statute of limitations or time limits on
88 cause of death when death is the final result or determined to be caused by
89 homicide, suicide, accident, criminal abortion including those self-induced, child
90 fatality, or any unusual or suspicious manner. The place of death shall be the
91 place in which the person is determined to be dead, but the final investigation of
92 death determining the cause and manner of death shall revert to the county of
93 origin, and this coroner or medical examiner shall be responsible for the Missouri
94 certificate of death. The certificate of death shall be filed in the county where the
95 deceased was pronounced dead.

96 [8.] 9. Except as provided in subsection [6] 7 of this section, if a person
97 dies in one county and the body is subsequently transferred to another county,
98 for burial or other reasons, the county coroner or medical examiner where the

99 death occurred shall be responsible for the certificate of death and for
100 investigating the cause and manner of the death.

101 [9.] 10. In performing the duties, the coroner or medical examiner shall
102 comply with sections 58.775 to 58.785 with respect to organ donation.

193.145. 1. A certificate of death for each death which occurs in this state
2 shall be filed with the local registrar, or as otherwise directed by the state
3 registrar, within five days after death and shall be registered if such certificate
4 has been completed and filed pursuant to this section. All data providers in the
5 death registration process, including, but not limited to, the state registrar, local
6 registrars, the state medical examiner, county medical examiners, coroners,
7 funeral directors or persons acting as such, embalmers, sheriffs, attending
8 physicians and resident physicians, physician assistants, assistant physicians,
9 advanced practice registered nurses, and the chief medical officers of licensed
10 health care facilities, and other public or private institutions providing medical
11 care, treatment, or confinement to persons, shall be required to use and utilize
12 any electronic death registration system required and adopted under subsection
13 1 of section 193.265 within six months of the system being certified by the
14 director of the department of health and senior services, or the director's
15 designee, to be operational and available to all data providers in the death
16 registration process. However, should the person or entity that certifies the cause
17 of death not be part of, or does not use, the electronic death registration system,
18 the funeral director or person acting as such may enter the required personal
19 data into the electronic death registration system and then complete the filing by
20 presenting the signed cause of death certification to the local registrar, in which
21 case the local registrar shall issue death certificates as set out in subsection 2 of
22 section 193.265. Nothing in this section shall prevent the state registrar from
23 adopting pilot programs or voluntary electronic death registration programs until
24 such time as the system can be certified; however, no such pilot or voluntary
25 electronic death registration program shall prevent the filing of a death certificate
26 with the local registrar or the ability to obtain certified copies of death
27 certificates under subsection 2 of section 193.265 until six months after such
28 certification that the system is operational.

29 2. If the place of death is unknown but the dead body is found in this
30 state, the certificate of death shall be completed and filed pursuant to the
31 provisions of this section. The place where the body is found shall be shown as
32 the place of death. The date of death shall be the date on which the remains

33 were found.

34 3. When death occurs in a moving conveyance in the United States and
35 the body is first removed from the conveyance in this state, the death shall be
36 registered in this state and the place where the body is first removed shall be
37 considered the place of death. When a death occurs on a moving conveyance
38 while in international waters or air space or in a foreign country or its air space
39 and the body is first removed from the conveyance in this state, the death shall
40 be registered in this state but the certificate shall show the actual place of death
41 if such place may be determined.

42 4. The funeral director or person in charge of final disposition of the dead
43 body shall file the certificate of death. The funeral director or person in charge
44 of the final disposition of the dead body shall obtain or verify and enter into the
45 electronic death registration system:

46 (1) The personal data from the next of kin or the best qualified person or
47 source available;

48 (2) The medical certification from the person responsible for such
49 certification if designated to do so under subsection 5 of this section; and

50 (3) Any other information or data that may be required to be placed on a
51 death certificate or entered into the electronic death certificate system including,
52 but not limited to, the name and license number of the embalmer.

53 5. The medical certification shall be completed, attested to its accuracy
54 either by signature or an electronic process approved by the department, and
55 returned to the funeral director or person in charge of final disposition within
56 seventy-two hours after death by the physician, physician assistant, assistant
57 physician, **or** advanced practice registered nurse in charge of the patient's care
58 for the illness or condition which resulted in death. In the absence of the
59 physician, physician assistant, assistant physician, advanced practice registered
60 nurse or with the physician's, physician assistant's, assistant physician's, or
61 advanced practice registered nurse's approval the certificate may be completed
62 and attested to its accuracy either by signature or an approved electronic process
63 by the physician's associate physician, the chief medical officer of the institution
64 in which death occurred, or the physician who performed an autopsy upon the
65 decedent, provided such individual has access to the medical history of the case,
66 views the deceased at or after death and death is due to natural causes. The
67 person authorized to complete the medical certification may, in writing, designate
68 any other person to enter the medical certification information into the electronic

69 death registration system if the person authorized to complete the medical
70 certificate has physically or by electronic process signed a statement stating the
71 cause of death. Any persons completing the medical certification or entering data
72 into the electronic death registration system shall be immune from civil liability
73 for such certification completion, data entry, or determination of the cause of
74 death, absent gross negligence or willful misconduct. The state registrar may
75 approve alternate methods of obtaining and processing the medical certification
76 and filing the death certificate. The Social Security number of any individual
77 who has died shall be placed in the records relating to the death and recorded on
78 the death certificate.

79 6. When death occurs from natural causes more than thirty-six hours after
80 the decedent was last treated by a physician, physician assistant, assistant
81 physician, advanced practice registered nurse, the case shall be referred to the
82 county medical examiner or coroner or physician or local registrar for
83 investigation to determine and certify the cause of death. If the death is
84 determined to be of a natural cause, the medical examiner or coroner or local
85 registrar shall refer the certificate of death to the attending physician, physician
86 assistant, assistant physician, **or** advanced practice registered nurse for such
87 certification. If the attending physician, physician assistant, assistant physician,
88 advanced practice registered nurse refuses or is otherwise unavailable, the
89 medical examiner or coroner or local registrar shall attest to the accuracy of the
90 certificate of death either by signature or an approved electronic process within
91 thirty-six hours.

92 7. If the circumstances suggest that the death was caused by other than
93 natural causes, the medical examiner or coroner shall determine the cause of
94 death and shall [complete and attest to the accuracy], either by signature or an
95 approved electronic process, **complete and attest to the accuracy of** the
96 medical certification within seventy-two hours after taking charge of the case.

97 8. If the cause of death cannot be determined within seventy-two hours
98 after death, the attending medical examiner, coroner, attending physician,
99 physician assistant, assistant physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or
100 local registrar shall give the funeral director, or person in charge of final
101 disposition of the dead body, notice of the reason for the delay, and final
102 disposition of the body shall not be made until authorized by the medical
103 examiner, coroner, attending physician, physician assistant, assistant physician,
104 advanced practice registered nurse, or local registrar.

105 9. When a death is presumed to have occurred within this state but the
106 body cannot be located, a death certificate may be prepared by the state registrar
107 upon receipt of an order of a court of competent jurisdiction which shall include
108 the finding of facts required to complete the death certificate. Such a death
109 certificate shall be marked "Presumptive", show on its face the date of
110 registration, and identify the court and the date of decree.

111 10. (1) The department of health and senior services shall notify all
112 physicians, physician assistants, assistant physicians, and advanced practice
113 registered nurses licensed under chapters 334 and 335 of the requirements
114 regarding the use of the electronic vital records system provided for in this
115 section.

116 (2) On or before August 30, 2015, the department of health and senior
117 services, division of community and public health shall create a working group
118 comprised of representation from the Missouri electronic vital records system
119 users and recipients of death certificates used for professional purposes to
120 evaluate the Missouri electronic vital records system, develop recommendations
121 to improve the efficiency and usability of the system, and to report such findings
122 and recommendations to the general assembly no later than January 1, 2016.

123 **11. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, if a**
124 **coroner or deputy coroner is not current with or is without the**
125 **approved training under chapter 58, the department of health and**
126 **senior services shall prohibit such coroner from attesting to the**
127 **accuracy of a certificate of death. No person elected or appointed to**
128 **the office of coroner can assume such elected office until the training,**
129 **as established by the coroner standards and training commission under**
130 **the provisions of section 58.035, has been completed and a certificate**
131 **of completion has been issued. In the event a coroner cannot fulfill his**
132 **or her duties or is no longer qualified to attest to the accuracy of a**
133 **death certificate, the sheriff of the county shall appoint a medical**
134 **professional to attest death certificates until such time as the coroner**
135 **can resume his or her duties or another coroner is appointed or elected**
136 **to the office.**

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