
HOUSE BILL 2132

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Representative Schmick

Prefiled 01/04/24.

1 AN ACT Relating to reducing training costs for small county
2 offices of coroners or medical examiners; and amending RCW 36.24.205,
3 36.24.210, and 43.101.480.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 36.24.205 and 2021 c 127 s 1 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 Within 12 months of being elected or appointed to the office, a
8 coroner or medical examiner in a county with a population of more
9 than 40,000 people must have a certificate of completion of
10 medicolegal forensic investigation training that complies with the
11 standards adopted for the medicolegal training academy adopted by the
12 criminal justice training commission in conjunction with the
13 Washington association of coroners and medical examiners and a
14 practicing physician selected by the commission pursuant to RCW
15 43.101.480. This requirement does not apply to an elected prosecutor
16 acting as the ex officio coroner in a county. All medicolegal
17 investigative personnel employed by any coroner's or medical
18 examiner's office in a county with a population of more than 40,000
19 people must complete medicolegal forensic investigation training as
20 required under RCW 43.101.480. A county in which the coroner or
21 county medical examiner is required to and has not obtained such

1 certification within 12 months of assuming office may have its
2 reimbursement from the death investigations account reduced as
3 provided under RCW 68.50.104.

4 **Sec. 2.** RCW 36.24.210 and 2021 c 127 s 2 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 Except those run by a county prosecutor, all county coroner's
7 offices and medical examiner's offices in a county with a population
8 of more than 40,000 people must be accredited by either the
9 international association of coroners and medical examiners or the
10 national association of medical examiners no later than July 1, 2025,
11 and maintain continued accreditation thereafter. A county that
12 contracts for its coroner or medical examiner services with an
13 accredited coroner or medical examiner's office in another county
14 does not need to maintain accreditation.

15 **Sec. 3.** RCW 43.101.480 and 2021 c 127 s 3 are each amended to
16 read as follows:

17 (1) The following requirements apply only in counties with a
18 population of more than 40,000 people:

19 (a) (~~All-elected~~) Elected coroners, appointed coroners, persons
20 serving as coroners, medical examiners, and (~~all~~) other full-time
21 medicolegal investigative personnel employed by a county coroner's or
22 medical examiner's office must successfully complete medicolegal
23 forensic investigation training through the medicolegal training
24 academy program within 12 months of being elected, appointed, or
25 employed unless otherwise exempted by the commission or statute. This
26 section does not apply to elected prosecutors who are coroners in
27 their counties.

28 (b) (~~All-part-time~~) Part-time medicolegal investigative
29 personnel employed by a county coroner's or medical examiner's office
30 must successfully complete medicolegal forensic investigation
31 training through the medicolegal training academy program within 18
32 months of being employed unless otherwise exempted by the commission.

33 (2) The commission, in conjunction with the Washington
34 association of coroners and medical examiners and a practicing
35 physician selected by the commission, shall develop the medicolegal
36 forensic investigation training curriculum and adopt the standards
37 for the medicolegal training academy and any exemption from the
38 requirement to complete the medicolegal forensic investigation

1 training. The commission shall exempt from this requirement any
2 coroner, medical examiner, or medicolegal investigative personnel who
3 has obtained training comparable to the medicolegal forensic
4 investigation training by virtue of educational or professional
5 training or experience.

6 (3) The commission must certify successful completion of the
7 medicolegal forensic investigation training or exemption from the
8 medicolegal training requirement within 60 days from the receipt of
9 proof of completion or request for exemption.

10 (4) The medicolegal forensic investigation training required
11 under this section must:

12 (a) Meet the recommendations of the national commission on
13 forensic science for certification and accreditation; and

14 (b) Satisfy the requirements for training on the subject of
15 sudden, unexplained child death including, but not limited to, sudden
16 infant death syndrome developed pursuant to RCW 43.103.100 and
17 missing persons protocols pursuant to RCW 43.103.110.

18 (5) Certification under this section is a condition of continued
19 employment in a coroner's or medical examiner's office.

20 (6) A county in which a coroner, person serving as coroner,
21 medical examiner, or other medicolegal investigative employee, who
22 has not otherwise been exempted by the commission, is not certified
23 within 12 months of being elected, appointed, or employed as required
24 by this section, may have its reimbursement from the death
25 investigations account reduced as provided under RCW 68.50.104 until
26 the office is in compliance with all requirements under this section.

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