

CHAPTER NO. 472

SENATE BILL NO. 2202

By Burks

Substituted for: House Bill No. 2158

By Hargrove

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 38, Chapter 7, Part 1, relative to medical examiners and assistant medical examiners.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 38-7-104, is amended by adding the following new subsection:

(g) (1) The legislative body of any county may establish, by resolution, the position of medical investigator to assist the county medical examiner. If such a position is established, the medical investigator shall be a licensed EMT, paramedic, registered nurse, physician's assistant or a person registered by or a diplomat of the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators and approved by the county medical examiner as qualified to serve as medical investigator.

(2) If the county has an elected coroner, the coroner shall serve as the medical investigator for the county provided such coroner meets the qualifications for a medical investigator set out in subdivision (1). If the coroner is not qualified to serve as medical investigator, then the county legislative body shall by resolution either authorize the county medical examiner to appoint a medical investigator subject to confirmation by the county legislative body or provide for this function through a contract for service approved by the county medical examiner and the county legislative body. Provided, however, if the county has an elected coroner who has served in that capacity for ten (10) years or more, such coroner shall serve as the medical investigator for the county regardless of whether the coroner meets the qualifications set out in subdivision (1).

(3) The county medical investigator may conduct investigations when a death is reported as provided in § 38-7-108 under the supervision of the county medical examiner. The county medical investigator may make pronouncements of death and may recommend to the county medical examiner that an autopsy be ordered. However, the county medical investigator shall not be empowered to sign a death certificate. The county medical examiner may delegate to the county medical investigator the authority to order an autopsy.

SECTION 2. For purposes of a county legislative body adopting a resolution creating the position of county medical investigator, this act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it. For all other purposes it shall take effect on July 1, 2005, the public welfare requiring it.

PASSED: May 26, 2005


JOHN S. WILDER
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE


JIMMY NAIFEH, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROVED this 18th day of June 2005


PHIL BREDESEN, GOVERNOR