

State of Arizona
Senate
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Second Regular Session
1996

FILED

Jane Dee Hull
Secretary of State

CHAPTER 96

SENATE BILL 1137

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 11-593, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO COUNTY MEDICAL EXAMINERS.

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:
2 Section 1. Section 11-593, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:
4 11-593. Reporting of certain deaths; failure to report;
5 classification
6 A. Any person having knowledge of the death of a human being including
7 a fetal death SHALL PROMPTLY NOTIFY THE NEAREST PEACE OFFICER OF ALL
8 INFORMATION IN THE PERSON'S POSSESSION REGARDING THE DEATH AND THE
9 CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING IT under any of the following circumstances:
10 1. Death when not under the current care of a physician for a
11 potentially fatal illness or when an attending physician is unavailable to
12 sign the death certificate;~~or.~~
13 2. Death resulting from violence;~~or.~~
14 3. Death occurring suddenly when in apparent good health;~~or.~~
15 4. Death occurring in a prison;~~or.~~
16 5. Death of a prisoner;~~or.~~
17 6. Death occurring in a suspicious, unusual or unnatural manner;~~or.~~
18 7. Death from disease or accident believed to be related to the
19 deceased's occupation or employment;~~or.~~
20 8. Death believed to present a public health hazard;~~or.~~
21 9. Death occurring during anesthetic or surgical procedures. ~~shall~~
22 ~~promptly notify the nearest peace officer of all information in his~~
23 ~~possession regarding the death and the circumstances surrounding it.~~

1 B. The peace officer shall ~~in turn~~ promptly notify the county medical
2 examiner and, except in deaths occurring during surgical or anesthetic
3 procedures from natural diseases, shall promptly make or cause to be made an
4 investigation of the facts and circumstances surrounding the death and report
5 the results to the medical examiner. If there is no county medical examiner
6 appointed and serving within the county, the county sheriff shall be notified
7 by the peace officer and the sheriff shall in turn notify and secure a
8 licensed physician to perform the medical examination or autopsy.

9 C. AN AUTOPSY IS NOT REQUIRED FOR DEATHS DUE TO NATURAL DISEASES THAT
10 OCCUR DURING SURGICAL OR ANESTHETIC PROCEDURES, EXCEPT WHERE THE MEDICAL
11 EXAMINER DETERMINES AN AUTOPSY IS NECESSARY BECAUSE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING
12 EXIST:

- 13 1. A PUBLIC HEALTH RISK.
- 14 2. EVIDENCE OF A CRIME.
- 15 3. EVIDENCE OF INADEQUATE HEALTH CARE.
- 16 4. NO CLINICALLY EVIDENT CAUSE OF DEATH.

17 ~~B-~~ D. Every person who knows of the existence of a body where death
18 occurred as specified in subsection A of this section and who knowingly fails
19 to notify the nearest peace officer as soon as possible unless the person has
20 good reason to believe that notice has already been given is guilty of a
21 class 2 misdemeanor.

22 ~~E-~~ E. If the deceased was under treatment for accident or illness by
23 prayer or spiritual means alone, in accordance with the tenets and practices
24 of a well-recognized church or religious denomination, and death occurred
25 without a physician in attendance, the person who has knowledge of the death
26 shall report all information in his possession regarding the death and
27 circumstances surrounding it directly to the county medical examiner or the
28 person performing the duties of a county medical examiner who may waive an
29 autopsy if he is satisfied that the death of such person resulted from
30 natural causes.

31 ~~F-~~ F. Each county shall provide to the criminal identification
32 section of the department of public safety fingerprints of all deceased
33 persons whose deaths are required to be investigated pursuant to this
34 section. These fingerprints shall be on a form provided by the criminal
35 identification section and shall be accompanied by such other information
36 regarding the physical description and the date and place of death as the
37 criminal identification section may require. Fingerprints taken pursuant to
38 this section shall be used only for the purpose of purging criminal history
39 files. All information and data in the criminal identification section of
40 the department of public safety furnished in compliance with this section is
41 confidential and may be disclosed only upon written approval of the director
42 of public safety to the juvenile court, social agencies, public health and
43 law enforcement agencies, licensed or regulated by this state.

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR APRIL 5, 1996 .

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE APRIL 8, 1996