

SENATE BILL 1202

By Crowe

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 38,  
Chapter 7, relative to post-mortem examinations.

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

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 38-7-106(a), is amended by deleting the subsection and substituting instead the following:

The district attorney general may order, and the county medical examiner may perform, an autopsy on the body of any person in a case involving a homicide; suspected homicide; a suicide; a violent, unnatural or suspicious death; an unexpected apparent natural death in an adult; sudden unexpected infant and child deaths; deaths believed to represent a threat to public health or safety; and executed prisoners. The chief medical examiner may order an autopsy in such cases on the body of a person if the district attorney general fails to act. The authority ordering the autopsy shall notify the next of kin about the impending autopsy if the next of kin is known or reasonably ascertainable. The sheriff or other law enforcement agency of the jurisdiction shall serve process containing such notice and return such process within twenty-four (24) hours.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 38-7-104(f)(3), is amended by deleting the subdivision and substituting instead the following:

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 district attorney general that an autopsy be ordered. However, the county medical investigator shall not be empowered to sign a death certificate.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019, the public welfare requiring it.