

1 State of Arkansas
2 93rd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2021
4

As Engrossed: S3/29/21 S4/5/21

A Bill

SENATE BILL 567

5 By: Senators Bledsoe, K. Hammer
6 By: Representatives McCollum, Carr, Tosh
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For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW GOVERNING THE CONFIDENTIALITY
10 OF CORONERS' REPORTS AND OTHER RECORDS; AND FOR OTHER
11 PURPOSES.
12
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Subtitle

15 TO AMEND THE LAW GOVERNING THE
16 CONFIDENTIALITY OF CORONERS' REPORTS AND
17 OTHER RECORDS.
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20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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22 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 14-15-304 is amended to read as follows:
23 14-15-304. Confidentiality.

24 (a) Records Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, all
25 records gathered ~~and~~ or created during the course of a coroner's
26 investigation ~~shall be~~ are confidential and ~~deemed~~ exempt from the Freedom of
27 Information Act of 1967, § 25-19-101 et seq., ~~but only until such time that~~
28 ~~the coroner issues his or her final report.~~

29 (b) ~~Confidential medical information gathered during the course of the~~
30 ~~investigation shall remain exempt from public inspection and copying except~~
31 ~~as quoted in the coroner's final report.~~ At the conclusion of the
32 investigations by the coroner and by a law enforcement agency, the records
33 gathered or created during the course of a county coroner's investigation are
34 subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act of 1967, § 25-19-101
35 et seq. as follows:

36 (1) The following information is subject to release to the



1 extent reflected in the coroner's final report:

2 (A) The decedent's:

3 (i) Name;

4 (ii) Approximate age;

5 (iii) Sex;

6 (iv) City of residence; and

7 (v) Date of death;

8 (B) The location where the decedent's body was discovered;

9 (C) The cause and manner of the decedent's death, and any

10 other medical information that is:

11 (i) Related to the cause of death; and

12 (ii) Quoted in the coroner's final report, including
13 without limitation the coroner's case narrative; and

14 (D) A list of all other governmental entities, if any,
15 investigating the death; and

16 (2) Except as provided under subsection (c) of this section, any
17 other record shall be disclosed after the county coroner redacts the
18 decedent's and the next of kin's:

19 (A) Social Security number;

20 (B) Address; and

21 (C) Phone number.

22 (c) The following records provided to the coroner during the course of
23 a coroner's investigation shall be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom
24 of Information Act of 1967, § 25-19-101 et seq.:

25 (1) Medical or psychiatric records; and

26 (2) Records provided by the State Crime Laboratory related to
27 the decedent, including without limitation any laboratory reports or other
28 information generated based on the analysis of physical evidence.

29 (d) This section does not:

30 (1) Affect the release of records, files, or information under §
31 12-12-312; or

32 (2) Limit the ability of a coroner, state medical examiner,
33 medical professional, medical school, organ procurement organization, eye and
34 tissue bank, or a state or federal agency to access and use medical
35 information and databases.

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/s/Bledsoe