

**SUSPICIOUS DEATHS, PRESCRIBING PUBLIC OFFICERS DUTIES**

**Act of Apr. 16, 1907, P.L. 92, No. 78**

**Cl. 16**

AN ACT

Defining the duty of coroners, where death is sudden or violent, or is of a suspicious nature and character, and of police, and health authorities, in this Commonwealth, in reference to the disposition of bodies of persons whose cause of death may be the subject of inquiry by the coroner, but where it appears the cause of death is not surrounded by suspicious circumstances. (Title amended Jul. 12, 1935, P.L.710, No.274)

Section 1. Be it enacted, &c., That it shall be the duty of the coroner or the deputy coroner of any county in this Commonwealth, in all cases where death is sudden or violent or is of a suspicious nature and character, to cause a careful investigation of the facts concerning said death to be made, to ascertain whether the death was due to other than natural causes, and to make or cause to be made such an autopsy as the facts of the case may demand.

(1 reenacted and amended July 12, 1935, P.L.710, No.274)

**Compiler's Note:** Section 2901 of Act 130 of 1955 provided that section 1 is repealed insofar as it relates to counties of the third to eighth class.

**Compiler's Note:** Section 3301 of Act 230 of 1953 provided that section 1 is repealed insofar as it relates to counties of the second class.

Section 2. That in all cases of sudden or violent death, where it appears the cause of death is not surrounded by any suspicious circumstances, the body of the deceased shall be sent immediately by the police or health authorities, if the death shall occur away from the home or residence of the deceased, to the same, or to such relatives or friends who may claim the body; or, in absence of any knowledge as to the person, his or her home, residence, relatives or friends, the health board or police authorities of any county, city, borough or township shall take possession of such body, and keep the same in such place as may be provided by said authorities, for the purpose of remaining for a limited time for identification; and any effects found on the body shall be handed over by said police or health authorities to the coroner or deputy coroner who shall be notified of the death, and the effects found on the body shall be given by the coroner or deputy coroner to those legally entitled to the same: Provided, That the coroner shall have the right to view any such body, and to investigate the facts or causes of said death, if in his opinion the same is required.

(2 reenacted and amended Jul. 12, 1935, P.L.710, No.274)