

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas
93rd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2021

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

A Bill

SENATE BILL 567

By: Senators Bledsoe, K. Hammer
By: Representatives McCollum, Carr, Tosh

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW GOVERNING THE CONFIDENTIALITY
OF CORONERS' REPORTS AND OTHER RECORDS; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO AMEND THE LAW GOVERNING THE
CONFIDENTIALITY OF CORONERS' REPORTS AND
OTHER RECORDS.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 14-15-304 is amended to read as follows:
14-15-304. Confidentiality.

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

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

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



extent reflected in the coroner's final report:

(A) The decedent's:

(i) Name;

(ii) Approximate age;

(iii) Sex;

(iv) City of residence; and

(v) Date of death;

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

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

other medical information that is:

(i) Related to the cause of death; and

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

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

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

(A) Social Security number;

(B) Address; and

(C) Phone number.

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

(1) Medical or psychiatric records; and

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

(d) This section does not:

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

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

/s/Bledsoe