

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY ADAMS AND TAYLOR

2

HOUSE BILL NO. 345

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to coroners' inquests; and providing

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for an effective date."

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

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* Section 1. AS 12.65.020 is amended to read:

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Sec. 12.65.020. DUTIES. When a person dies unattended by a
11 physician, or when no physician is prepared to execute the certificate
12 of death prescribed by AS 18.50 (Vital Statistics Act) [THE VITAL
13 STATISTICS ACT], the coroner assigned to serve the place where the
14 death occurs may, by written order, direct a medical examiner to view
15 the remains of the deceased person and to perform the post mortem
16 examination, including an autopsy, necessary to make a proper deter-
17 mination of the cause of death and to execute the prescribed death
18 certificate. Upon the completion of the examination, the examiner
19 shall, without delay, submit a report of the findings and conclusions
20 to the coroner. The coroner may [SHALL] order an inquest under this
21 chapter if the findings and conclusions of the medical examiner,
22 together with other information available to the coroner, warrant the
23 inquest. Otherwise the coroner shall enter an order dispensing with
24 the inquest and shall record the certificate of death as prescribed by
25 law.

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* Sec. 2. AS 12.65.040 is amended to read:

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Sec. 12.65.040. INQUIRY INTO CAUSE OF DEATH. When [THE CORONER

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SHALL, WHEN] informed that a person has been killed by another or has
29 suddenly died under such circumstances as to afford a reasonable

1 ground to suspect that the death has been occasioned by criminal means
2 or the person has committed suicide, the coroner may inquire by the
3 intervention of a jury into the cause and manner of the death, and
4 shall perform other related duties in the manner prescribed by law,
5 unless the death is or will be inquired into by the grand jury, in
6 which case an inquest by jury under this section is not required. The
7 coroner shall go to the place where the dead person is, or, in the
8 alternative, arrange for a peace officer to do so and report peace
9 officer's findings to the coroner, on the basis of which the coroner
10 may proceed with an inquest if an inquest is warranted.

11 * Sec. 3. This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c)