
SENATE BILL 6295

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Senators Hasegawa and McCoy

Read first time 01/14/16. Referred to Committee on Law & Justice.

1 AN ACT Relating to clarifying the venue in which coroner's
2 inquests are to be convened and payment of related costs; and
3 amending RCW 36.24.020.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 36.24.020 and 2009 c 549 s 4032 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 Any coroner, in his or her discretion, may hold an inquest if the
8 coroner suspects that the death of a person was unnatural, or
9 violent, or resulted from unlawful means, or from suspicious
10 circumstances, or was of such a nature as to indicate the possibility
11 of death by the hand of the deceased or through the instrumentality
12 of some other person: PROVIDED, That, except under suspicious
13 circumstances, no inquest shall be held following a traffic death.

14 The coroner in the county where an inquest is to be convened
15 pursuant to this chapter shall notify the superior court to provide
16 persons to serve as a jury of inquest to hear all the evidence
17 concerning the death and to inquire into and render a true verdict on
18 the cause of death. Jurors shall be selected and summoned in the same
19 manner and shall have the same qualifications as specified in chapter
20 2.36 RCW.

1 At the coroner's request, the superior court shall provide a
2 courtroom in which the inquest may be convened, a bailiff, reporter,
3 and any security deemed reasonably necessary by the coroner. The
4 inquest must take place on a date mutually agreed upon by the coroner
5 and the superior court, within one year of the date the coroner's
6 request to the court was made. If the superior court cannot
7 accommodate the inquest for good cause shown, the court must
8 designate an alternative venue for the inquest in an adjoining
9 county.

10 The prosecuting attorney having jurisdiction shall be notified in
11 advance of any such inquest to be held, and at his or her discretion
12 may be present at and assist the coroner in the conduct of the same.
13 The coroner may adjourn the inquest from time to time as he or she
14 may deem necessary.

15 The costs of inquests, including any costs incurred by the
16 superior court, shall be borne by the county in which the inquest is
17 held.

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