

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 2nd Session of the 60th Legislature (2026)

3 SENATE BILL 1485

By: Bergstrom

6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to medicolegal investigations;  
8 amending 63 O.S. 2021, Section 1-317d, which relates  
9 to sudden unexplained infant death investigations;  
10 defining terms; broadening applicability of certain  
11 requirements; describing investigations; requiring  
12 certain documentation and reporting of specified  
13 cases; amending 63 O.S. 2021, Section 938, as amended  
by Section 3, Chapter 263, O.S.L. 2024 (63 O.S. Supp.  
2025, Section 938), which relates to types of deaths  
to be investigated; requiring investigation of  
certain deaths; updating statutory reference;  
providing for recodification; and providing an  
effective date.

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15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

16 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 63 O.S. 2021, Section 1-317d, is  
17 amended to read as follows:

18 Section 1-317d. A. As used in this section:

19 1. "Sudden arrhythmic death syndrome" (SADS) means the sudden  
20 and unexpected death due to cardiac arrhythmia, as determined by  
21 performance of an investigation, of a young, apparently healthy  
22 individual with no previously diagnosed structural heart disease;

23 2. "Sudden death in the young" (SDY) means the sudden and  
24 unexpected death of an individual younger than twenty (20) years of

1 age due to natural causes including, but not limited to, sudden  
2 cardiac death or sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP), which  
3 death remains unexplained after investigation;

4 3. "Sudden infant death syndrome" (SIDS) means the sudden death  
5 of an infant younger than one year of age that remains unexplained  
6 after investigation;

7 4. "Sudden unexpected infant death" (SUID) means the sudden and  
8 unexpected death of an infant younger than one (1) year of age,  
9 whether explained or unexplained, including, but not limited to,  
10 death caused by SIDS, accidental suffocation, or other potential  
11 causes; and

12 5. "Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) and Sudden Death in  
13 the Young (SDY) Case Registry" means the national surveillance  
14 system coordinated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
15 and the National Institutes of Health which collects standardized  
16 data on sudden and unexpected deaths in individuals younger than  
17 twenty (20) years of age.

18 B. 1. When the death of an infant occurs or child dies  
19 suddenly and unexpectedly in this state and the cause of death is  
20 considered undetermined, including cases of SIDS, SUID, or SDY, a  
21 medical examiner shall conduct a sudden unexplained infant death  
22 investigation (SUIDI) an investigation not more than forty-eight  
23 (48) hours after the death has occurred. The medical examiner or a  
24 medical examiner investigator currently certified by the American

1 Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators shall investigation shall  
2 include:

- 3 a. an autopsy if deemed necessary by the medical examiner  
4 to determine the cause of death,
- 5 b. microscopic and toxicology studies,
- 6 c. a review of the infant's or child's immunization and  
7 medical records, as available through the state's  
8 immunization registry, from the infant's or child's  
9 pediatrician or primary care practitioner, or from  
10 other sources, and
- 11 d. an interview of the parent, legal guardian or  
12 caregiver of, or person who last had contact with, the  
13 deceased infant and shall fill out the Centers for  
14 Disease Control and Prevention's SUIDI reporting form  
15 accordingly or child.

16 2. The medical examiner shall document in the investigative  
17 report any immunizations or emergency countermeasures administered  
18 to the infant or child within ninety (90) days before the infant's  
19 or child's death, report the case to the SUID and SDY Case Registry  
20 in accordance with protocols established by the Board of Medicolegal  
21 Investigations and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,  
22 and forward such report to the State Department of Health.

1       C. 1. When a sudden death of an individual of any age that is  
2       suspected to be caused by SADS occurs, a medical examiner shall  
3       conduct an investigation. The investigation shall include:

4           a. an autopsy if deemed necessary by the medical examiner  
5            to determine the cause of death,  
6           b. microscopic and toxicology studies, and  
7           c. a review of the individual's immunization and medical  
8           records, as available through state health databases  
9           or other sources.

10       2. The medical examiner shall document in the investigative  
11       report any immunizations or emergency countermeasures administered  
12       to the individual within ninety (90) days before his or her death,  
13       report the case to the SUID and SDY Case Registry if the individual  
14       was younger than twenty (20) years of age at the time of death, in  
15       accordance with protocols established by the Board of Medicolegal  
16       Investigations and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,  
17       and forward such report to the State Department of Health.

18       D. The State Department of Health shall retain a copy of each  
19       completed SUIDI reporting form in order to compile report for the  
20       purpose of compiling accurate and reliable data on SUIDI SIDS, SUID,  
21       SDY, and SADS to aid and inform the policies of the Department, and  
22       the Department shall provide a copy of each completed SUIDI  
23       reporting form to the Child Death Review Board.

1       B. As used in this section, "medical examiner" means the Chief  
2       Medical Examiner, the Deputy Chief Medical Examiner or a medical  
3       examiner appointed by the Chief Medical Examiner pursuant to Section  
4       937 of Title 63 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

5       SECTION 2.       AMENDATORY       63 O.S. 2021, Section 938, as  
6       amended by Section 3, Chapter 263, O.S.L. 2024 (63 O.S. Supp. 2025,  
7       Section 938), is amended to read as follows:

8       Section 938. A. All human deaths of the types listed herein  
9       shall be investigated as provided by law:

10       1. Violent deaths, whether apparently homicidal, suicidal, or  
11       accidental;

12       2. Deaths under suspicious, unusual, or unnatural  
13       circumstances;

14       3. Deaths related to disease which might constitute a threat to  
15       public health;

16       4. Deaths unattended by a licensed physician for a fatal or  
17       potentially fatal illness;

18       5. Deaths that are medically unexpected and that occur in the  
19       course of a therapeutic procedure;

20       6. Deaths of any persons detained or occurring in custody of  
21       the Department of Corrections or a county jail;

22       7. Deaths of persons whose bodies are to be cremated,  
23       transported out of the state, donated to educational entities, to

1 include limited portions of the body, or otherwise made ultimately  
2 unavailable for pathological study; and

3       8. Maternal deaths that occur during pregnancy or within one  
4 (1) year of termination of pregnancy reported by a hospital or  
5 birthing center under ~~Section 2 of this act~~ Section 1-702f of this  
6 title; and

7       9. Deaths involving sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), sudden  
8 unexpected infant death (SUID), sudden death in the young (SDY), or  
9 sudden arrhythmic death syndrome (SADS) as provided by Section 1-  
10 317d of this title.

11       B. The Chief Medical Examiner shall state on the certificate of  
12 death of all persons whose death was caused by execution pursuant to  
13 a lawful court order that the cause of death was the execution of  
14 such order.

15       SECTION 3.       RECODIFICATION       63 O.S. 2021, Section 1-317d,  
16 as amended by Section 1 of this act, shall be recodified as Section  
17 941c of Title 63 of the Oklahoma Statutes, unless there is created a  
18 duplication in numbering.

19       SECTION 4. This act shall become effective November 1, 2026.

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