

1974 WL 27978 (S.C.A.G.)

Office of the Attorney General

State of South Carolina

September 30, 1974

***1 Re: Autopsies**

Clarence E. Coker, Jr., M.D.P.A.
Drawer F—Bozard Street
Manning, SC 29102

Dear Dr. Coker:

You have inquired as to the authority of a coroner to order an autopsy in a case of death under suspicious circumstances, despite opposition to the autopsy by the family of the deceased.

Section 17-90, S. C. Code of Laws (1962), provides:

The coroner of the county in which a body is found dead . . . may order an autopsy or post-mortem examination to be conducted to ascertain the cause of death.

I advise that this section gives the coroner the legal right to order an autopsy without the consent of the family of the deceased.

Very truly yours,

John B. Grimball
Assistant Attorney General

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