

SB 131 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation

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Meeting Dates: 1/25, 2/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Adds supervisors of youth correction facilities and juvenile community supervision officers to the list of persons who must cooperate during a death investigation under the direction of the district medical examiner and the district attorney for the county where the death occurred. Adds medical-legal death investigator as a person requiring cooperation for death investigations. Provides that cooperating with the medical examiner or medical-legal death investigator does not violate the requirements for disclosing privileged reports and materials in ORS 419A.257.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Delays in providing records to the medical examiner
- Clarifies authority of medical examiner staff
- Medical examiner offices' location within district attorney offices
- Scope of documents, data, materials required to be provided to the medical examiner

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Death investigations are performed by county medical examiners' offices. Trained investigators called medical-legal death examiners (MDIs) may staff a county medical examiner's office and may be assigned to cases. MDIs must complete a certification process. MDIs work collaboratively with law enforcement agencies, emergency services personnel, medical providers and other agencies during the investigation.

SB 131 clarifies that in addition to supervisors of penal institutions and hospitals or institutions caring for the ill or helpless, supervisors of youth correction facilities and juvenile community supervision officers must cooperate in a death investigation, and must cooperate with not only the medical examiner but MDIs as well.