

1 **RECOVERY DOG TRAINING AMENDMENTS**

2 2015 GENERAL SESSION

3 STATE OF UTAH

4 **Chief Sponsor: Dixon M. Pitcher**

5 Senate Sponsor: Ann Millner

7 **LONG TITLE**

8 **General Description:**

9 This bill amends provisions to related an unclaimed dead body.

10 **Highlighted Provisions:**

11 This bill:

12 ▶ allows the medical examiner to retain tissue from an unclaimed body in order to
13 donate the tissue to an individual for the purpose of training a dog to search for
14 human remains.

15 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

16 None

17 **Other Special Clauses:**

18 None

19 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

20 AMENDS:

21 **26-4-4**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2007, Chapter 60

22 **35A-3-401**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2004, Chapter 29

23 **53B-17-301**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 1987, Chapter 167

24 REPEALS AND REENACTS:

25 **26-4-25**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 1998, Chapter 153

27 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

28 Section 1. Section **26-4-4** is amended to read:

29 **26-4-4. Chief medical examiner -- Appointment -- Qualifications -- Authority.**

30 (1) The executive director, with the advice of an advisory board consisting of the
31 chairman of the Department of Pathology at the University of Utah medical school and the
32 dean of the law school at the University of Utah, shall appoint a chief medical examiner who
33 shall be licensed to practice medicine in the state and shall meet the qualifications of a forensic
34 pathologist, certified by the American Board of Pathologists.

35 (2) (a) The medical examiner shall serve at the will of the executive director.

36 (b) The medical examiner has authority to:

37 (i) employ medical, technical and clerical personnel as may be required to effectively
38 administer this chapter, subject to the rules of the department and the state merit system;

39 (ii) conduct investigations and pathological examinations;

40 (iii) perform autopsies authorized in this title;

41 (iv) conduct or authorize necessary examinations on dead bodies; and

42 (v) notwithstanding the provisions of Subsection 26-28-122(3), retain tissues and
43 biological samples:

44 (A) for scientific purposes [~~and those the medical examiner considers~~];

45 (B) where necessary to accurately certify the cause and manner of death[-]; or

46 (C) for tissue from an unclaimed body, subject to Section 26-4-25, in order to donate
47 the tissue or biological sample to an individual who is affiliated with an established search and
48 rescue dog organization, for the purpose of training a dog to search for human remains.

49 (c) In the case of an unidentified body, the medical examiner shall authorize or conduct
50 investigations, tests and processes in order to determine its identity as well as the cause of
51 death.

52 (3) The medical examiner may appoint regional pathologists, each of whom shall be
53 approved by the executive director.

54 Section 2. Section 26-4-25 is repealed and reenacted to read:

55 **26-4-25. Burial of an unclaimed body -- Request by the school of medicine at the**
56 **University of Utah -- Medical examiner may retain tissue for dog training.**

57 (1) Except as described in Subsection (2) or (3), a county shall provide, at the county's

58 expense, decent burial for an unclaimed body found in the county.

59 (2) A county is not responsible for decent burial of an unclaimed body found in the
60 county if the body is requested by the dean of the school of medicine at the University of Utah
61 under Section ~~53B-17-301~~.

62 (3) For an unclaimed body that is temporarily in the medical examiner's custody before
63 burial under Subsection (1), the medical examiner may retain tissue from the unclaimed body
64 in order to donate the tissue to an individual who is affiliated with an established search and
65 rescue dog organization, for the purpose of training a dog to search for human remains.

66 Section 3. Section **35A-3-401** is amended to read:

67 **35A-3-401. General Assistance.**

68 (1) (a) General Assistance may be provided to individuals who are not receiving cash
69 assistance under Part 3, Family Employment Program, or Supplemental Security Income, and
70 who are unemployable according to standards established by the department.

71 (b) (i) General Assistance may be provided by payment in cash or in kind.

72 (ii) The office may provide an amount less than the existing payment level for an
73 otherwise similarly situated client of cash assistance under Part 3, Family Employment
74 Program.

75 (c) The office shall establish asset limitations for General Assistance clients.

76 (d) (i) General Assistance may be granted to meet special nonrecurrent needs of an
77 applicant for the federal Supplemental Security Income program, if the applicant agrees to
78 reimburse the division for assistance advanced while awaiting the determination of eligibility
79 by the Social Security Administration.

80 (ii) General Assistance payments may not be made to a current client of cash assistance
81 or Supplemental Security Income.

82 (e) (i) General Assistance may be used for the reasonable cost of burial for a client, if
83 heirs or relatives are not financially able to assume this expense.

84 (ii) Notwithstanding Subsection (1)(e)(i), if the body of a person is unclaimed, Section
85 [~~53B-17-301~~] 26-4-25 applies.

86 (iii) The department shall fix the cost of a reasonable burial and conditions under
87 which burial expenditures may be made.

88 (2) The division may cooperate with any governmental unit or agency, or any private
89 nonprofit agency in establishing work projects to provide employment for employable persons.

90 Section 4. Section **53B-17-301** is amended to read:

91 **53B-17-301. Unclaimed dead bodies -- Notice to school of medicine at the**
92 **University of Utah -- Preservation of dead bodies.**

93 [~~(1) Any person who has charge over an unclaimed dead body that is to be buried at~~
94 ~~public expense shall notify the dean of the School of Medicine at the University of Utah within~~
95 ~~24 hours after taking charge of the body.]~~

96 (1) A county shall, within 24 hours after assuming custody of an unclaimed body for
97 which the county is required to provide burial under Section [26-4-25](#), provide notice of the
98 county's custody of the body to the dean of the school of medicine at the University of Utah.

99 (2) The notice described in Subsection (1) shall specify the body's probable cause of
100 death.

101 (3) [~~At the dean's request, the person shall~~] Subject to Section [26-4-25](#), the county
102 shall, at the request of the dean of the school of medicine at the University of Utah, forward the
103 body to the university, at [its] the university's expense, within 24 hours of receiving the dean's
104 request.

105 [~~(4) The delivered body shall be properly embalmed and preserved for not less than 60~~
106 ~~days. If a personal friend or relative of the deceased person requests the body for a private~~
107 ~~burial, during this time period, the person is given possession of the body.]~~

108 (4) The school of medicine at the University of Utah shall, for a body it receives under
109 Subsection (3):

110 (a) properly embalm and preserve the body for at least 60 days; and

111 (b) upon request, release the body to a person with priority to control the disposition of
112 the body under Section [58-9-602](#).