



# HOUSE BILL 814: The William C. Lindley, Jr. SUDEP Law

2015-2016 General Assembly

**Committee:** Senate Judiciary II  
**Introduced by:** Reps. Riddell, Ross  
**Analysis of:** Third Edition

**Date:** July 14, 2015  
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**SUMMARY:** *House Bill 814 requires the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to direct county medical examiners to complete continuing education training that includes training regarding Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP).*

**CURRENT LAW:** G.S. 130A-385 outlines the duties of a medical examiner. A medical examiner is responsible for making inquiries regarding the cause and manner of death for each body in his or her charge, reducing the findings to writing, and making a full report to the Chief Medical Examiner. Medical examiners are authorized to inspect and copy medical records of the decedent. Upon completion of the investigation, the medical examiner is required to complete a death certificate, which includes the cause, means or manner of death, including if such a cause, means, or manner is undeterminable.

**BILL ANALYSIS:** House Bill 814 amends G.S. 130A-382 in the following ways:

- Requires the Chief Medical Examiner to appoint two or more county medical examiners for each county.
- Eliminates coroners from the list of medical professionals whom the Chief Medical Examiner may appoint as county medical examiners.
- Requires continuing education training for county medical examiners based upon established and published guidelines.
- Requires the continuing education training to include training on sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP).
- Requires the continuing education training guidelines to be published and annually updated on the Web site of the Office of Chief Medical Examiner.
- Requires newly appointed county medical examiners to complete mandatory orientation training as directed by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner within 90 days of their appointment.
- Allows the Chief Medical Examiner to revoke a county medical examiner's appointment for failure adequately to perform the duties of the office after giving written notice of the basis for the revocation and an opportunity to respond.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This act becomes effective January 1, 2016.

**BACKGROUND:** According to the Epilepsy Foundation, SUDEP "is said to occur when a person with epilepsy dies unexpectedly and was previously in their usual state of health. The death is not known to be related to an accident or seizure emergency such as status epilepticus. When an autopsy is done, no other of cause of death can be found. Each year, more than 1 out of 1,000 people with epilepsy die from SUDEP." <sup>1</sup>

*Former Staff Attorney Amy Jo Johnson and Theresa Matula, Staff to Senate Health Care, substantially contributed to this summary.*

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.epilepsy.com/sudep-institute>

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