

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 275**

---

---

**Introduced by Assembly Member Solorio  
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Portantino)**

February 12, 2009

---

---

An act to amend Section 14250 and 14251 of the Penal Code, relating to missing persons, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 275, as introduced, Solorio. Missing persons: DNA database.

Existing law requires the Department of Justice to develop a DNA database for all cases involving the report of an unidentified deceased person or a high-risk missing person, as defined, and provides for the collection of DNA samples from unidentified deceased persons and from potential sources for comparison, as specified. Existing law requires that, until January 1, 2010, the database be funded by a \$2 increase on death certificates issued by a local government agency or by the State of California. Existing law specifies the procedure for identifying the backlog of unidentified remains.

This bill would further detail the protocol for DNA sample collection and handling. It would delete the expiration date for the provision authorizing the collection of the \$2 increase on death certificates. This bill would also make clarifying changes to the procedure for identifying any backlog of unidentified remains or donated familial samples. By requiring the collection of the increase on death certificates issued by local officials, the bill would also impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote:  $\frac{2}{3}$ . Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.

State-mandated local program: yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 14250 of the Penal Code is amended to  
2 read:

3 14250. (a) (1) The Department of Justice shall develop a DNA  
4 ~~data base~~ *database* for all cases involving the report of an  
5 unidentified deceased person or a high-risk missing person.

6 (2) The ~~data base~~ *database* required in paragraph (1) shall be  
7 comprised of DNA data from genetic markers that are appropriate  
8 for human identification, but have no capability to predict  
9 biological function other than gender. These markers shall be  
10 selected by the department and may change as the technology for  
11 DNA typing progresses. The results of DNA typing shall be  
12 compatible with and uploaded into the CODIS DNA data base  
13 established by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The sole  
14 purpose of this data base shall be to identify missing persons and  
15 shall be kept separate from the ~~data base~~ *database* established  
16 under Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 295) of Title 9 of Part  
17 1.

18 (3) The Department of Justice shall compare DNA samples  
19 taken from the remains of unidentified deceased persons with DNA  
20 samples taken from personal articles belonging to the missing  
21 person, or from the parents or appropriate relatives of high-risk  
22 missing persons.

23 (4) For the purpose of this ~~data base~~ *database*, “high-risk  
24 missing person” means a person missing as a result of a stranger  
25 abduction, a person missing under suspicious circumstances, a  
26 person missing under unknown circumstances, or where there is

1 reason to assume that the person is in danger, or deceased, and  
2 that person has been missing more than 30 days, or less than 30  
3 days in the discretion of the investigating agency.

4 (b) The department shall develop standards and guidelines for  
5 the preservation and storage of DNA samples. Any agency that is  
6 required to collect samples from unidentified remains for DNA  
7 testing shall follow these standards and guidelines. These  
8 guidelines shall address all scientific methods used for the  
9 identification of remains, including DNA, anthropology,  
10 odontology, and fingerprints.

11 (c) (1) ~~A~~*If the coroner or medical examiner with the aid of*  
12 *fingerprints, dental charts, dental X-rays and any other identifying*  
13 *findings is unable to establish the identity of the body or human*  
14 *remains, the coroner or medical examiner shall collect samples*  
15 *for DNA testing from the remains of all unidentified persons and*  
16 *shall send those samples, within 90 days of the date the body or*  
17 *human remains were discovered, to the Department of Justice for*  
18 *DNA testing and inclusion in the DNA data bank databank. After*  
19 *the department has taken a sample from the remains for DNA*  
20 *analysis and analyzed it completed all DNA testing, the remaining*  
21 *evidence shall be returned to the appropriate local coroner.*

22 (2) After a report has been made of a person missing under  
23 high-risk circumstances, the responsible investigating law  
24 enforcement agency shall inform the parents or other appropriate  
25 relatives that they may give a voluntary sample for DNA testing  
26 or may collect a DNA sample from a personal article belonging  
27 to the missing person if available. The samples shall be taken,  
28 *within 90 days of the date a family member volunteers to submit*  
29 *samples, by the appropriate law enforcement agency in a manner*  
30 *prescribed by the Department of Justice. The responsible*  
31 *investigating law enforcement agency shall wait no longer than*  
32 *30 days after a report has been made to inform the parents or other*  
33 *relatives of their right to give a sample.*

34 (3) The Department of Justice shall develop a standard release  
35 form that authorizes a mother, father, or other relative to voluntarily  
36 provide the sample. The release shall explain that DNA is to be  
37 used only for the purpose of identifying the missing person and  
38 that the DNA sample and profile will be destroyed upon request.  
39 No incentive or coercion shall be used to compel a parent or  
40 relative to provide a sample.

1 (4) The Department of Justice shall develop a model kit that  
2 law enforcement shall use when taking samples from parents and  
3 relatives.

4 (5) Before submitting the sample to the department for analysis,  
5 law enforcement shall reverify the status of the missing person.  
6 After 30 days has elapsed from the date the report was filed, law  
7 enforcement shall send the sample to the department for DNA  
8 testing and inclusion in the DNA ~~data base~~ *database*, with a copy  
9 of the crime report, and any supplemental information.

10 (6) All retained samples and DNA extracted from a living  
11 person, and profiles developed therefrom, shall be used solely for  
12 the purpose of identification of the deceased's remains. All samples  
13 and DNA extracted from a living person, and profiles developed  
14 therefrom, shall be destroyed after a positive identification with  
15 the deceased's remains is made and a report is issued, unless any  
16 of the following has occurred:

17 (A) The coroner has made a report to a law enforcement agency  
18 pursuant to Section 27491.1 of the Government Code, that he or  
19 she has a reasonable ground to suspect that the identified person's  
20 death has been occasioned by another by criminal means.

21 (B) A law enforcement agency makes a determination that the  
22 identified person's death has been occasioned by another by  
23 criminal means.

24 (C) The evidence is needed in an active criminal investigation  
25 to determine whether the identified person's death has been  
26 occasioned by another by criminal means.

27 (D) A governmental entity is required to retain the material  
28 pursuant to Section 1417.9.

29 (7) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section, upon  
30 the request of any living person who submits his or her DNA  
31 sample and profile pursuant to this section, including the parent  
32 or guardian of a child who submits a DNA sample of the child,  
33 the DNA sample shall be removed from the DNA ~~data base~~  
34 *database*.

35 (d) All DNA samples and profiles developed therefrom shall  
36 be confidential and shall only be disclosed to personnel of the  
37 Department of Justice, law enforcement officers, coroners, medical  
38 examiners, district attorneys, and persons who need access to a  
39 DNA sample for purposes of the prosecution or defense of a  
40 criminal case, except that a law enforcement officer or agency may

1 publicly disclose the fact of a DNA profile match after taking  
2 reasonable measures to first notify the family of an unidentified  
3 deceased person or the family of a high-risk missing person that  
4 there has been an identification.

5 (e) All DNA, forensic identification profiles, and other  
6 identification information retained by the Department of Justice  
7 pursuant to this section are exempt from any law requiring  
8 disclosure of information to the public.

9 (f) (1) Any person who knowingly discloses DNA or other  
10 forensic identification information developed pursuant to this  
11 section to an unauthorized individual or agency, or for any purpose  
12 other than for identification or for use in a criminal investigation,  
13 prosecution, or defense, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

14 (2) A person who collects, processes, or stores DNA or DNA  
15 samples from a living person that are used for DNA testing  
16 pursuant to this section who does either of the following is liable  
17 in civil damages to the donor of the DNA in the amount of five  
18 thousand dollars (\$5,000) for each violation, plus attorney's fees  
19 and costs:

20 (A) Fails to destroy samples or DNA extracted from a living  
21 person pursuant to paragraph (6) of subdivision (c).

22 (B) Discloses DNA samples in violation of subdivision (d).

23 (g) (1) If a disclosure or failure to destroy samples described  
24 in paragraph (2) of subdivision (f) is made by an employee of the  
25 Department of Justice, the department shall be liable for those  
26 actions of its employee.

27 (2) Notwithstanding any other law, the remedy in this section  
28 shall be the sole and exclusive remedy against the department and  
29 its employees available to the donor of the DNA against the  
30 department and its employees.

31 (3) The department employee disclosing DNA or other forensic  
32 identification information or otherwise violating this section shall  
33 be absolutely immune from civil liability under this or any other  
34 law.

35 (h) It is not an unauthorized disclosure or violation of this  
36 section to release DNA and other forensic identification  
37 information as part of a judicial or administrative proceeding, to  
38 a jury or grand jury, or in a document filed with a court or  
39 administrative agency, or for this information to become part of  
40 the public transcript or record of proceedings.

1 (i) In order to maintain computer system security, the computer  
2 software and data base structures used by the DNA laboratory of  
3 the Department of Justice to implement this chapter are  
4 confidential.

5 SEC. 2. Section 14251 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

6 14251. (a) The “Missing Persons DNA Data Base” shall be  
7 funded by a two dollar (\$2) fee increase on death certificates issued  
8 by a local government agency or by the State of California. The  
9 issuing agencies may retain up to 5 percent of the funds from the  
10 fee increase for administrative costs. ~~This fee shall remain in effect~~  
11 ~~only until January 1, 2010.~~

12 (b) Funds shall be directed on a quarterly basis to the “Missing  
13 Persons DNA Data Base Fund,” hereby established, to be  
14 administered by the department for establishing and maintaining  
15 laboratory infrastructure, DNA sample storage, DNA analysis, and  
16 labor costs for cases of missing persons and unidentified remains.  
17 Funds may also be distributed by the department to various counties  
18 for the purposes of pathology and exhumation consistent with this  
19 title. The department may also use those funds to publicize the  
20 database for the purpose of contacting parents and relatives so that  
21 they may provide a DNA sample for training law enforcement  
22 officials about the database and DNA sampling and for outreach.

23 ~~(c) The department shall create an advisory committee,~~  
24 ~~comprised of coroners and appropriate law enforcement officials,~~  
25 ~~and interested stakeholders to prioritize the identification of the~~  
26 ~~any backlog of unidentified remains. The identification of the~~  
27 ~~backlog human remain samples or samples donated by a family~~  
28 ~~member or from a personal article belonging to the missing person~~  
29 may be outsourced to other laboratories at the department’s  
30 discretion.

31 ~~(d) (1) The death certificate fee increase shall begin and funds~~  
32 ~~shall be directed to the Missing Persons DNA Data Base Fund~~  
33 ~~beginning January 1, 2001. Funding for year one shall be used to~~  
34 ~~develop the database and laboratory infrastructure, and to establish~~  
35 ~~Department of Justice protocols and personnel.~~

36 ~~(2)~~

37 ~~(d) (1) The Department of Justice shall begin case analysis in~~  
38 ~~2002. The Department of Justice shall retain the authority to~~  
39 ~~prioritize case analysis, giving priority to those cases involving~~  
40 ~~children and those involving homicide victims.~~

1     ~~(3)~~

2     (2) If federal funding is made available, it shall be used to assist  
3 in the identification of the backlog of high-risk missing person  
4 cases and long-term unidentified remains.

5     SEC. 3. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that  
6 this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to  
7 local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made  
8 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division  
9 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

10    SEC. 4. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the  
11 immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within  
12 the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go into  
13 immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

14    In order to track down persons who threaten the public peace  
15 and the safety of our citizens, it is necessary for this act to take  
16 effect immediately.