

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 4, 2016

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 12, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2427

Introduced by Assembly Member Chau

February 19, 2016

An act to amend Section 129 of, and to add Section 2034.415 to, the Code of Civil Procedure, relating to civil procedure.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2427, as amended, Chau. Civil Procedure: discovery.

Existing law generally prohibits a copy, reproduction, or facsimile of any kind of a photograph, negative, or print, including instant photographs and video recordings, of the body, or any portion of the body, of a deceased person, taken by or for the coroner at the scene of death or in the course of a ~~postmortem~~ *post mortem* examination or autopsy, from being made or disseminated. This prohibition does not apply for use in a criminal action or proceeding in this state that relates to the death of that person, ~~or~~ or, as a court permits, by order after good cause has been shown and after written notification of the request for the court order has been served, at least 5 days before the order is made, upon the district attorney of the county in which the ~~postmortem~~ *post mortem* examination or autopsy has been made or caused to be made.

This bill would additionally authorize the making or dissemination of a copy, reproduction, or facsimile described above for use or potential use in a civil action or proceeding that relates to the death of the deceased person (1) if the coroner receives written authorization from a legal heir or representative of the deceased person before the action

is filed or while the action is pending, or pending and the legal heir or representative provides to the coroner either a declaration under penalty of perjury and a valid form of identification, or a certified death certificate, or (2) if a subpoena is issued by a party who is a legal heir or representative of the deceased person in a pending civil action. By expanding the scope of the crime of perjury, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

Existing law authorizes any party, after the setting of the initial trial date for an action, to demand the simultaneous exchange by all parties of lists containing the names and addresses of any persons expected to provide expert opinion testimony at the trial. Existing law also provides that a demand for an exchange of expert witness lists may include a demand for the production of discoverable reports and writings made by the listed expert witnesses. Existing law authorizes a party, to depose any expert disclosed in an expert witness list.

This bill would require that any materials or category of materials, including any electronically stored information, and any discoverable reports and writings of an expert trial witness, demanded to be produced in the deposition notice be produced no later than 3 business days before the deposition.

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 no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no-yes.
State-mandated local program: no-yes.

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

1 SECTION 1. Section 129 of the Code of Civil Procedure is
2 amended to read:
3 129. (a) Notwithstanding any other law, a copy, reproduction,
4 or facsimile of any kind of a photograph, negative, or print,
5 including instant photographs and video recordings, of the body,
6 or any portion of the body, of a deceased person, taken by or for
7 the coroner at the scene of death or in the course of a post mortem
8 examination or autopsy, shall not be made or disseminated except
9 as follows:

1 (1) For use in a criminal action or proceeding in this state that
2 relates to the death of that person.

3 (2) As a court of this state permits, by order after good cause
4 has been shown and after written notification of the request for
5 the court order has been served, at least five days before the order
6 is made, upon the district attorney of the county in which the post
7 mortem examination or autopsy has been made or caused to be
8 made.

9 (3) For use or potential use in a civil action or proceeding in
10 this state that relates to the death of that person, if either of the
11 following applies:

12 (A) The coroner receives written authorization from a legal heir
13 or representative of that person before the action is filed or while
14 the action is pending. *To verify the identity of the legal heir or
15 representative, either of the following shall be provided to the
16 coroner:*

17 (i) *A declaration under penalty of perjury that the individual is
18 a legal heir or representative of the deceased person and a valid
19 form of identification.*

20 (ii) *A certified death certificate.*

21 (B) A subpoena is issued *by a party who is a legal heir or
22 representative of the deceased person* in a pending civil action.

23 (b) This section shall not apply to the making or dissemination
24 of a copy, reproduction, or facsimile for use in the field of forensic
25 pathology, in medical or scientific education or research, or by a
26 coroner or any law enforcement agency in the United States for
27 investigative purposes, including identification and identification
28 confirmation.

29 (c) This section shall apply to a copy, reproduction, or facsimile,
30 and to a photograph, negative, or print, regardless of when it was
31 made.

32 (d) A coroner is not personally liable for monetary damages in
33 a civil action for any act or omission in compliance with this
34 section.

35 SEC. 2. Section 2034.415 is added to the Code of Civil
36 Procedure, to read:

37 2034.415. Any materials or category of materials, including
38 any electronically stored information, and any discoverable reports
39 and writings of an expert trial witness, demanded to be produced

1 in the deposition notice shall be produced no later than three
2 business days before the deposition of the expert trial witness.

3 *SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to*
4 *Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because*
5 *the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school*
6 *district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or*
7 *infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty*
8 *for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of*
9 *the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within*
10 *the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California*
11 *Constitution.*

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