

**SENATE, No. 1472**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

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INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 19, 1996

**By Senator MARTIN**

1   **AN ACT** concerning police officers and supplementing P.L.1965, c.78.

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3   **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
4   of New Jersey:

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6       1. In the case of an apparent death which occurs outside of a health  
7   care facility as defined in section 2 of P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-2), if  
8   no attending physician is known or if an attending physician is known  
9   but is not available to make the actual determination and  
10   pronouncement of death, then a police officer may make the actual  
11   determination and pronouncement of death, after checking for vital  
12   signs and conducting an inquiry concerning the circumstances of the  
13   death. The police officer shall prepare a written description of the  
14   circumstances of the death, which shall be included in the police  
15   record and immediately communicated orally to the attending  
16   physician and as soon as practicable submitted in writing to the  
17   attending physician for preparation of the death certificate. If no  
18   attending physician is known, or if the attending physician is  
19   unavailable to sign the death certificate in a reasonable time, the police  
20   officer shall report the death immediately to the county medical  
21   examiner and as soon as practicable submit the written description to  
22   the county medical examiner.

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24       2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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**STATEMENT**

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29       This bill allows that in the case of an apparent death which occurs  
30   outside of a health care facility, if no attending physician is known or  
31   if an attending physician is known but is not available to make the  
32   actual determination and pronouncement of death, then a police  
33   officer may make the actual determination and pronouncement of  
34   death, after checking for vital signs and conducting an inquiry  
35   concerning the circumstances of the death. The bill requires the  
36   police officer to prepare a written description of the circumstances of  
37   the death, which shall be included in the police record and immediately

1   communicated orally to the attending physician and as soon as  
2   practicable submitted in writing to the attending physician for  
3   preparation of the death certificate. If no attending physician is  
4   known, or if the attending physician is unavailable to sign the death  
5   certificate in a reasonable time, the police officer shall report the death  
6   immediately to the county medical examiner and as soon as practicable  
7   submit the written description to the county medical examiner.

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12   Allows police officers to make death pronouncements.