

DIVISION OF VITAL RECORDS

Terry W. Taylor, *Acting Chief, State Registrar of Vital Records*

201 W. Preston St.
Baltimore, MD 21201 225-5971
24-hour telephone: 225-5988
toll free: 1-800-832-3277

The Division of Vital Records serves the public by providing copies of certified birth, death, marriage, and annulment certificates. All births, deaths, marriages, and divorces that occur in the State are registered. Copies of birth, death, and marriage records are issued to authorized persons for a fee of \$3.00 per copy (checks to be made payable to the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene).

The Division has birth and death records for Baltimore City from January 1, 1875, and for the twenty-three counties of Maryland from August 1898. (Copies also are available at the State Archives.) State marriage registration began on June 1, 1951, and divorce registration began in June 1961. Copies of marriages records prior to June 1951 and of all divorce records may be obtained from the Circuit Court clerk in the county where the marriage or divorce occurred.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER

John E. Smialek, M.D., *Chief Medical Examiner*

111 Penn St.
Baltimore, MD 21201 333-3225

The Department of Postmortem Examiners was created in 1939 to replace a decentralized system of local coroners (Chapter 69, Acts of 1939). In 1982, the Department was subsumed into the State Postmortem Examiners Commission (Chapter 21, Acts of 1982; Code Health—General Article, secs. 5-101 through 5-507).

STATE POSTMORTEM EXAMINERS COMMISSION

Chairperson: Benjamin Trump, M.D., University of Maryland School of Medicine

Appointed by Secretary of Health & Mental Hygiene: one vacancy

Ex officio: John Yardley, M.D., Dept. of Pathology, The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine; Elias Dorsey, Acting Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City; Col. Elmer H. Tippet, Superintendent, Maryland State Police; vacancy, designee of Secretary of Health & Mental Hygiene.

333-3225

The State Postmortem Examiners Commission appoints physicians as deputy medical examiners in

each county. They investigate violent and suspicious deaths or deaths unattended by physicians. The deputy medical examiners file with the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner reports of all deaths investigated.

Commission records are open for inspection to the family of the deceased and are acceptable in court as evidence of the facts contained.

The State Postmortem Examiners Commission is composed of four ex officio members and a representative of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene selected by the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene. The Commission appoints all professional personnel (Code Health—General Article, secs. 5-302 through 5-312).

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF HEALTH EFFECTS OF FIRE

Director: John E. Smialek, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner

111 Penn St., 3rd floor
Baltimore, MD 21201 333-3250

The Center for the Study of the Health Effects of Fire was created in 1988 (Chapter 185, Acts of 1988). The Center studies the health effects of exposure to fire; gathers and analyzes data on morbidity and mortality of fire-related injury or death; and maintains a registry of persons who suffer fire-related injury or death, and a computerized data base concerning injuries and health effects of fire. The Center is a repository for information routinely collected about fires. Information collected by the Center and intended for use in research is confidential and not discoverable or admissible as evidence in a civil or criminal action to determine cause of death or liability for injury or death.

In accordance with the State budget, the Center provides funding for pilot studies on issues or factors affecting injuries or health effects of fire. The Center also applies for federal or private research grants to investigate such issues. In addition, the Center communicates with national data bases of scientific literature in toxicology, chemistry, epidemiology, and related scientific disciplines; collaborates with agencies, such as the National Bureau of Standards, that are involved in programs related to health effects of fire; and promotes interest in fire-related issues at educational institutions in Maryland (Code Health—General Article, secs. 18-701 through 18-711).

ADVISORY COUNCIL TO THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF HEALTH EFFECTS OF FIRE

Melvyn Tockman, M.D., Ph.D., *Chairperson*, 1992

Appointed by Secretary of Health & Mental Hygiene with Senate advice & consent: Walter G. Berl, Ph.D., 1992; Victor H. Esch, M.D., F.A.C.S., 1993; Peter Rasmussen, M.D., 1993; Andrew M. Munster,