

1978 WL 35143 (S.C.A.G.)

Office of the Attorney General

State of South Carolina

October 2, 1978

*1 Mr. W. McKewn Williams
Coroner
222 James Street
Georgetown, South Carolina 29440

Dear Mr. Williams:

You have inquired whether it is necessary for a coroner's jury to view the body in all death cases in Georgetown County. It is the opinion of this Office that a coroner's jury must be impanelled to view the body in such death cases.

[Section 17-7-240 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina \(1976\)](#) provides that a coroner's jury shall render a verdict only after 'having viewed the body.' I have previously expressed concern over the practice of keeping the jury impanelled after viewing the body until an interest, which may occur some weeks after the death. However, [Section 17-7-200 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina \(1976\)](#) expressly provides that the coroner has the power to adjourn the jury and bind them over.

Reference is made to Section 17-5-300(c) which states that 'no coroner's jury shall be impanelled until the investigation is completed' and that 'the jury is not required to view the body.' However, Section 17-5-220 clearly indicates that the above provision shall only apply to counties in the State having an established medical examiner commission and a population of 240,000 or more.

Therefore, it is the opinion of this Office that Georgetown County and all other counties with a population of less than 240,000 are still governed by [Section 17-7-10 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina](#), which includes a requirement that the coroner's jury view the body and remain impanelled if the coroner so orders.

Yours very truly,

Victor S. Evans
Deputy Attorney General

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