

House Bill 920 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representative Holland of the 157th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To abolish the present mode of compensating the coroner of Turner County, known as the
2 fee system; to provide in lieu thereof an annual salary for the coroner; to provide for
3 cost-of-living increases; to provide that all fees, costs, or other emoluments of said officer
4 shall become the property of the county; to provide for the collection of all such fees, costs,
5 and emoluments; to provide for periodic statements; to provide for the payment of the
6 operating expenses of the coroner's office; to provide for the compensation of the deputy
7 coroner; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 The present mode of compensating the coroner of Turner County, known as the fee system,
11 is abolished, and in lieu thereof, an annual salary for such officer is prescribed as provided
12 in this Act.

13 **SECTION 2.**

14 (a) The coroner of Turner County shall receive an annual salary in the amount of not less
15 than \$8,500.00 and not more than \$12,000.00 as shall be established by the board of
16 commissioners of Turner County, payable in equal monthly installments from the funds of
17 Turner County; provided, however, that if the state should enact by general law a salary
18 schedule for coroners which would, but for this local Act, result in the coroner receiving a
19 higher salary under the state law, the salary under such general law for coroners shall be the
20 salary of the coroner of Turner County.

21 (b) On and after January 1, 2002, whenever the employees in the classified service of the
22 state merit system receive a cost-of-living increase or general performance based increase
23 of a certain percentage or a certain amount, the salary for the coroner as set pursuant to
24 subsection (a) of this section shall be increased by the same percentage or same amount
25 applicable to such state employees. If the cost-of-living increase or general performance

1 based increase received by state employees is in different percentages or different amounts
2 as to certain categories of employees, the salary of the coroner as set pursuant to subsection
3 (a) of this section shall be increased by a percentage or an amount equal to the average
4 percentage or average amount of the general increase in salary granted to the state
5 employees. The periodic changes in the salary of the coroner as set pursuant to subsection
6 (a) of this section, as authorized by this subsection, shall become effective on the first day
7 of January following the date that the cost-of-living increases or general performance based
8 increases received by state employees become effective; provided, however, that if such
9 increases received by state employees become effective on January 1, such periodic changes
10 in the salary of the coroner as set pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, as authorized by
11 this subsection, shall become effective on the same date that the cost-of-living increases or
12 general performance based increases received by state employees become effective. Such
13 cost-of-living increases shall be automatic and shall not require action or approval by the
14 board of commissioners of Turner County.

15 (c) The deputy coroner of Turner County shall continue to receive the fees authorized in
16 Chapter 16 of Title 45 of the O.C.G.A. for each case in which the deputy coroner performs
17 the duties of such office.

18 **SECTION 3.**

19 After the effective date of this Act, said coroner shall diligently and faithfully undertake to
20 collect all fees, fines, forfeitures, commissions, costs, allowances, penalties, funds, moneys,
21 and all other emoluments and perquisites formerly allowed the coroner as compensation for
22 his or her services as coroner; shall receive and hold the same in trust for said county as
23 public moneys; and shall pay the same into the county treasury on or before the fifteenth day
24 of each month next following the month in which they were collected or received. The
25 provisions of this section shall not apply to fees to which the deputy coroner is entitled
26 pursuant to this Act and general law.

27 **SECTION 4.**

28 The necessary operating expenses of the coroner's office shall be paid from any funds of the
29 county available for such purpose. All supplies, materials, furnishings, furniture, utilities,
30 and equipment, and the repair, replacement, and maintenance thereof, as may be reasonably
31 required in discharging the official duties of said office, shall be furnished by the county and
32 shall be paid from any funds of the county available for such purpose. The determination of
33 such requirements shall be at the sole discretion of the governing authority of Turner County.

SECTION 5.

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2 In addition to compensation provided for in Section 2 of this Act, the coroner shall be
3 reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses, including expenses for lodging and meals,
4 incurred by such officer in carrying out his or her official duties within and outside the
5 county, but within the state, including attendance at seminars or training required pursuant
6 to Code Section 45-16-66 of the O.C.G.A.; provided, however, that the coroner shall be
7 required to submit to the board of commissioners of Turner County an itemized, verified
8 account of any such expenses; provided, further, that the coroner shall not be reimbursed
9 more than \$1,800.00 per annum for actual and necessary expenses incurred in carrying out
10 his or her duties. When using his or her personal automobile in traveling on official business
11 outside the county, the coroner shall be reimbursed for travel expenses at the legal mileage
12 rate authorized under Code Section 50-19-7 of the O.C.G.A., as now or hereafter amended.
13 All expenses provided for in this section shall be paid from the funds of Turner County.
14 Expenses provided for in this section are in addition to any operating expenses provided for
15 in Section 4 of this Act.

SECTION 6.

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17 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
18 without such approval.

SECTION 7.

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20 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.