

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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December 18, 1956

no.

To Peter W. Bowman, M. D., Superintendent, Pownal State School
Re: Autopsies

You inquire whether or not it is permissible to perform an autopsy on an elderly individual whose death occurred at your institution, when his only living parent is senile, 84 years of age, and a patient at the Augusta State Hospital, and where consent to the autopsy was given by a competent brother and sister.

It is our opinion that it would be permissible under such circumstances to perform an autopsy.

Generally speaking, the closest next of kin should give the consent to such autopsy, or consent should be given by that party who is entitled to the body.

James Glynn Frost
Deputy Attorney General

jgf/c