

Connecticut Public Act No. 96-258

Substitute Senate Bill No. 30. AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO GENEALOGICAL RECORDS AND THE VALIDATION OF CERTAIN MARRIAGES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Section 7-41a of the general statutes, as amended by sections 12 and 21 of public act 95-257, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

All records of vital statistics including births, marriages and deaths in the custody of any registrar of vital statistics or of the Department of Public Health shall be open for research to any member of a [legally incorporated] genealogy society INCORPORATED OR AUTHORIZED TO DO BUSINESS OR CONDUCT AFFAIRS IN THIS STATE and such societies shall be permitted to incorporate statistics derived therefrom in their publications.

Sec. 2. Section 7-51 of the general statutes, as amended by sections 12 and 21 of public act 95-257, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

With the exception of the chief executive officer of the municipality or his authorized agent, the local director of health, attorneys at law, title examiners and members of [legally incorporated] genealogical societies INCORPORATED OR AUTHORIZED TO DO BUSINESS OR CONDUCT AFFAIRS IN THIS STATE, no person, except the person whose birth is recorded, if over eighteen years of age, HIS CHILDREN OR SPOUSE or his parent [or] guardian OR GRANDPARENT if a minor, shall have any access to or be permitted to examine the original or any copy of the birth certificate or birth record, of any person, nor shall he disclose any matters contained therein or any information concerning such birth, which original, copy or information is in the custody of any registrar of vital statistics or of the Department of Public Health, or shall he be entitled to any copy of any such certificate, record or information, except upon written order of a court of record or upon written request of a state department or the federal government when approved by the Department of Public Health.

Sec. 3. Section 7-51a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

[Notwithstanding the provisions of section 7-51, persons acting under the direction of a legally incorporated genealogical society shall be permitted to copy the vital records, including birth, death and marriage records and their indexes, of any municipality. The provisions of this section shall apply only to those vital records of a municipality which are not included in the Barbour Collection and which relate to events which occurred prior to the year 1900. All copies made under the provisions of this section shall be reduced to microfilm and shall be placed in the custody of the state's Public Records Administrator who shall make such microfilm copies available to the public for purposes of genealogical research at the State Library. If any vital records for the periods specified in this section have been microfilmed, the person having custody of the microfilm negatives shall permit their use for the purposes of this section. No expense arising from activities permitted under this section shall be paid by the state or any municipality. Nothing in this section shall be construed to be in derogation of any other right of public access to vital records conferred by any other provision of the general statutes.] ANY PERSON EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER MAY PURCHASE COPIES OF MARRIAGE AND DEATH RECORDS, AND COPIES OF RECORDS OF BIRTHS WHICH ARE AT LEAST ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD, IN THE CUSTODY OF ANY REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS. DURING ALL NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS, MEMBERS OF GENEALOGICAL SOCIETIES INCORPORATED OR AUTHORIZED TO DO BUSINESS OR CONDUCT AFFAIRS IN THIS STATE SHALL (1) HAVE FULL ACCESS TO ALL VITAL RECORDS IN THE CUSTODY OF ANY REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS, INCLUDING CERTIFICATES, LEDGERS, RECORD BOOKS, CARD FILES, INDEXES AND DATABASE PRINTOUTS, EXCEPT CONFIDENTIAL FILES ON ADOPTIONS, (2) BE PERMITTED TO MAKE NOTES FROM SUCH RECORDS AND (3) BE PERMITTED TO PURCHASE COPIES OF SUCH RECORDS.

Sec. 4. Section 46b-22a of the general statutes, as amended by section 1 of public act 95-6, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

All marriages, celebrated before [April 13, 1995] THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ACT, otherwise valid except that the justice of the peace joining such persons in marriage did not have a valid certificate of qualification, are validated.

Sec. 5. This act shall take effect from its passage, except that sections 1 to 3, inclusive, shall take effect October 1, 1996.

Approved June 10, 1996. Effective as provided in section 5.