

New Section 1. (a) The state fire marshal and investigators of the state fire marshal shall have the authority to make arrests and conduct searches and seizures while investigating violations of laws enforced or administered by the state fire marshal. Such investigators, who are certified law enforcement officers pursuant to K.S.A. 74-5601 et seq., and amendments thereto, shall be authorized to make arrests, conduct searches and seizures and generally to enforce all the criminal laws of the state as violations of those laws are encountered by such employees during the routine performance of their duties. ~~enforce all criminal laws of the state as such investigators encounter violations of those laws in the course of their employment.~~

(b) Whenever the death of a person occurs as a result of fire, or when the body of a deceased person is discovered at the scene of a fire, a joint investigation regarding the circumstances of the death shall be initiated by the chief of the organized fire department, ~~regular or volunteer, or the~~ and chief law enforcement officer, ~~if no local fire department exists. If there is no local fire department, the joint investigation shall be initiated by the~~ chief law enforcement officer and the state fire marshal. The state fire marshal shall assist such official who initiates any such investigation.