



March 20, 2017

Dear Colleague:

We are pleased to inform you that we have begun using the Social Security Administration's Online Verification of Social Security Number (OVS) as part of the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) in fifteen counties in Pennsylvania. Funeral homes in the remaining counties will soon have access to OVS.

Through the use of OVS, a decedent's social security number (SSN) is transmitted to the Social Security Administration to be electronically verified. OVS will ensure accuracy for families when applying for social security benefits and will allow for the immediate and automatic termination of benefits to deceased individuals, thus reducing erroneous payments.

Funeral homes using the OVS functionality in EDRS will no longer need to submit a separate Form SSA-721 Statement of Death by Funeral Director to report an individual's death to the Social Security Administration. Funeral homes using OVS will receive instant notification regarding the accuracy of the SSN as compared with the name, date of birth, and gender of the decedent.

The enclosed letter from Jessica MacBride of the Social Security Administration provides further details. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation as we implement EDRS. If you have any questions, please email us at [RA-DHDeathSupport@pa.gov](mailto:RA-DHDeathSupport@pa.gov) or call us at 1-800-323-9613.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Caniglia', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Frank Caniglia, RHIA  
Director, Division of Statistical Registries  
Bureau of Health Statistics and Registries

Enclosure