

STATE REGISTRAR NOTICE

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| Subject: <p style="text-align: center;">Additional Death Certificate Design Now Available</p> | Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Transitory | Number: <p style="text-align: center;">2019-15</p> |
| Date Issued: <p style="text-align: center;">November 26, 2019</p> Date Effective: <p style="text-align: center;">January 4, 2021</p> | Audience: <p style="text-align: center;">All Death Stakeholders</p> | By Direction of:  <p style="text-align: center;">Audrey Marrocco State Registrar</p> |

Text shown in a red font indicates substantial updates to information since the original date issued.

In December 2020, the Bureau of Health Statistics and Registries (BHSR) began offering a new death certificate in addition to the historical comprehensive death certificate issued since the Commonwealth's vital records program began in 1906. This additional offering is in response to feedback we have received from the general public and from our stakeholders.

The death certificate is used by various companies and organizations for reasons such as closing banking and financial accounts, claiming life insurance and pension beneficiary benefits, and cancelling accounts or re-establishing the account holder contact with utility companies.

While many of these organizations and companies need verification of an individual's death, they may not need to know the manner or cause of death. So that families have options in sharing details surrounding the death of their loved ones, BHSR has designed a death certificate that releases pertinent decedent details without disclosing manner and cause of death.

Two Types of Death Certificates

Once this new death certificate is released, BHSR is offering the following two types of death certificates:

Standard Death Certificate

- Data to be Listed: Summary of data on death record. Excludes medical information other than medical certifier's name and address
- Fee: \$20
- Possible Uses: Closure of bank and utility accounts, claiming pension benefits, and proof for spouse to remarry.
- Availability: **Currently only available to funeral homes that are ordering online through EDRS. BHSR anticipates offering standard death certificates to other eligible individuals during the first quarter of 2021.**
- Certificate Issuer:
 - For EDRS reported deaths
 - Local and assistant registrars for the first 90 days (**once trained**)

- BHSR’s Vital Record Offices
- For paper-reported deaths
 - BHSR’s Vital Record Offices only. The order will be processed once all data on the paper-reported death is data entered and verified by the PA Death Registry staff. Anticipate availability of this certificate approximately 3 months after the report of death is registered due to the workflow surrounding paper-reported deaths.

Comprehensive Death Certificate

- Data to be Listed: Full death record.
- Fee: \$20
- Possible Uses: Claiming life insurance benefits (if required by the insurance company), and family records for genealogy and medical history purposes
- Availability: Immediately available once the report of death has been filed with BHSR or a local or assistant registrar
- Certificate Issuer: For EDRS and paper reported deaths
 - Local and assistant registrars for the first 90 days
 - BHSR’s Vital Record Offices

Once both certificate types are available for purchase, family members can select the type of certificate based on the needs surrounding the use of the certificate.

What is EDRS

EDRS (Electronic Death Registration System) enables death reporting stakeholders (i.e., funeral homes, coroner and medical examiner offices, and physicians) to complete a Report of Death through a secured website instead of on paper. Electronic reporting of deaths is a nation-wide initiative to improve the timeliness and quality of data surrounding deaths in our nation.

Through the efforts of those stakeholders that have already adopted, Pennsylvania now registers close to 70% of all deaths through EDRS. EDRS provides the Department of Health with death data approximately three months sooner than deaths reported on paper. This rapid reporting of death data is crucial to the Commonwealth and our nation in notification of and responding to public health issues including epidemics and natural disasters.

Actions Stakeholders Can Take Now

Since the new standard death certificate is only available once the report of death has been entered into EDRS, stakeholders who have not yet adopted EDRS are encouraged to do so.

Training is currently provided through a one-hour webinar. Visit the “EDRS Training Opportunities” section of our EDRS website at www.doh.pa.gov/edrs for upcoming training dates. Prior to signing up for training, please register for an EDRS account. Details on “How to Register for an EDRS Account” are also located at www.doh.pa.gov/edrs.

Contact Information:

PA Death Registry @
Vital Events Stakeholder Hotline
Phone: 800-323-9613