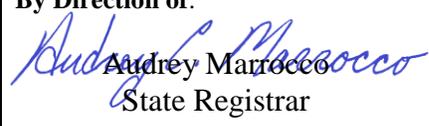


## STATE REGISTRAR NOTICE

<b>Subject:</b> Additional Death Certificate Design to be Released in 2020	<b>Type:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Transitory	<b>Number:</b> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>2019-15</b></p>
<b>Date Issued:</b> November 26, 2019  <b>Date Effective:</b> November 26, 2019	<b>Audience:</b> <p style="text-align: center;">All Death Stakeholders</p>	<b>By Direction of:</b>  Audrey Marrocco State Registrar

By spring 2020, the Bureau of Health Statistics and Registries (BHSR) will be 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 will offer 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:** Only available once the report of death has been entered in EDRS
- **Certificate Issuer:**
  - For EDRS reported deaths
    - Local and assistant registrars for the first 90 days
    - 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](http://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](http://www.doh.pa.gov/edrs).

If you would like to host a training event at an association meeting in your area or would prefer a hands-on training at your office location, please contact us to coordinate a date and time for the training event.

### **Additional Information Surrounding the New Standard Death Certificate**

A state registrar notice will be issued in early 2020 to local and assistant registrars on how to receive mandatory training on the new standard death certificate. In addition, state registrar notices will be issued periodically to update all death stakeholders on the status of this initiative.

#### **Contact Information:**

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