

Special Characters for Child's Name

When completing any name field on the Florida birth record, but especially the child's name, birth registrar instructions have always been not to enter any diacritical or extraneous marks attached to the letter in the name. For example: ç ä ñ š. A hyphen (-) or apostrophe (') is a separate character and acceptable when used as instructed.

There are strong reasons why the use of these special characters is prohibited. One of the most important is that the Social Security Administration (SSA) will not issue a Social Security Number (SSN) for that child through the enumeration at birth process at the time the birth record is prepared. This means that parents must apply for the number in person. This can be a difficult process for the family and could take quite a bit of time to resolve in the security climate under which government agencies must operate. Another reason the practice is prohibited is that the e-Vitals system, due to these same SSA rules, will not allow for a birth certification to print with these markings, which causes additional delay for the family.

This can be a customer service issue for the hospital as well as the Bureau. We do not want the family going back to the hospital asking what happened, why didn't their child get their SSN through the birth record, and why are they having to go to so much trouble for what should be a simple process?

If your facility has somehow enabled any special programming, using "hot keys" on the keyboard or any other method that allows these special characters to print, that programming must be removed immediately. If the character does not appear on the standard keyboard, it cannot be used. If parents request that these characters be used on their child's name, you should explain to them why it cannot be done, and then enter the information accordingly.

For questions on the naming convention, contact the Helpdesk Registration Support Team at 1-866-295-5902. We appreciate your cooperation as we work together to best serve the needs of the families.

Florida's Adoption Reunion Registry

In Florida, upon the finalization of an adoption, the adoption record, along with the original birth certificate is sealed. A new birth certificate is issued in the adoptee's new name listing the adoptive parent(s) as the parent(s).

Florida's Adoption Reunion Registry (FARR) was established in 1982 for birthparents, their families, Florida adoptees and adoptive parents, to give their consent to the disclosure of their contact information.

How does it work? FARR is a mutual consent registry. Upon registering, contact information is stored and not disclosed until a match is made with another registered person who has a connection to the adoptee. FARR then contacts each person to disclose the information in its registry.

For more information please visit the web: www.adoptfl.org.

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Spotlight on Okaloosa County

Okaloosa County was created by an act passed on June 3rd, 1915. The name Okaloosa comes from the Choctaw language and means "black water".

Okaloosa County is home to 3 US Air Force bases, and covers an area that reaches from the Gulf of Mexico to the Alabama state line. Crestview is the County Seat; however, the Okaloosa County Health Department that houses the vitals office is located in Fort Walton Beach.

Okaloosa's Vital Statistics team consists of Karen A. Chapman, M.D., M.P.H., Director, Okaloosa County Dept. of Health/Local Registrar, the Chief Deputy Registrar (CDR) Rebecca Daily, and Deputy Registrars (DRs) Melissa Schembri and Cheryl Miller.

With Okaloosa County having a population estimated at over 196,000 in 2014, the Vital Statistics office has a steady stream of customers to serve. Alleviating some of the heavy traffic for vitals, there are six tax collector offices open in the area that also issue birth certifications. Making a difference in their community: Go Team Okaloosa!



Pictured (L—R): Karen A. Chapman, M.D., M.P.H., Director, Okaloosa County Dept. of Health/Local Registrar, Rebecca Daily (CDR), Cheryl Miller (DR), and Melissa Schembri (DR).

Safe Haven/Surrendered Newborn Babies

Surrendered babies come in two forms – the most common being the newborn who is left at a fire station or hospital; the other is when the mother delivers in a facility, but leaves the child, in effect surrendering the child to the facility. The identity of a parent who leaves a newborn infant, 7 days old or less, at a fire station or hospital in accordance with Section 383.50 and 383.51 Florida Statutes, is confidential and exempt from s. 119.07(1), Florida Statutes. In either of these instances, no parent information can be entered on the birth record.

If a hospital or birthing center has what they think might be a Safe Haven baby, they should contact the state office Helpdesk immediately at 1-866-295-5902 for assistance in completing the birth record.



The County Health Department phone list (with fees) is posted to the Internet at: www.floridahealth.gov/certificates/certificates/publications-page.html The list is updated quarterly & can be downloaded at any time. Be sure to verify with the county should there be additional fees.

"Each time someone stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope."
—Robert F. Kennedy

The following appointment has been made to the position of registrar in the county health department:

Local Registrar:
Kerry Waldron..... Suwannee & Lafayette

Chief Deputy Registrar: **ABOARD**
Lynda Malloy Dixie
LeJoyce McCalister Jackson



Home Births

CDRs: Home Births, one of those events that tend to make us sweat, our hearts beat a little faster and you are so hoping it is in another county and not yours. Sound familiar?

Our job here at the state office is to make the home birth registration process as painless as we can. We understand home births are not common and for some of the smaller counties don't occur at all, but when that one does show up, we want you to be confident and ready for the challenge.

Some points to remember when preparing to complete the home birth paper birth record:

- Make an appointment with the parent(s) of the baby and have them bring the baby with them. Meet with the parents in a quiet room. Use a private office or exam room as many of the questions are personal and confidential.
- Use the birth worksheet to interview the parent(s) just in case you have to make corrections prior to typing the final record; take notes during the interview.
- Be respectful of this family's personal beliefs and practices.
- The CDR Operations Manual and Section 64V-1.006, Florida Administration Code outline the documentation required for filing a home birth.

- When completing the worksheet, if the parent(s) do not want to answer a specific question, unknown is acceptable. Some parents are reluctant when it comes to divulging information. If the parents do not want to give personal information explain to them why we are collecting the information and how the information is used for statistical purposes only.

- Once you have gathered all of the information, use the enterable PDF version of the birth record, complete all the blanks, and print an 8 1/2 x 14 size (legal) double sided copy for the parents to review.

- For home births the Certifier will be the mother or the father, or in the absence of the father and the inability of the mother, the person in charge of the premises where the birth occurred.

- Have the parents review the completed record to ensure everything is correct and have them sign the record to attest to the information. Remember your job is to register the birth to the best of your ability based on the information that is provided. When the parent(s) sign the birth registration they are affirming that the information provided is true and correct.

NOTE: If the home birth was attended by a midwife it is the midwife's responsibility to file the record. If the parent(s) take the baby to the hospital within 3 days of birth the hospital should prepare the birth record.

CDR/DR Training

The State Office held the quarterly CDR/DR Training in Jacksonville on April 22—24, 2015.

Once again we had attendees with less than 6 months experience working with e-Vitals come in for some extended training for 1/2 a day before the regular sessions started. There were 4 in attendance at the extended training, and a total of 8 that attended the regular sessions. Counties attending the CDR/DR training were: Highlands, Collier, Gadsden, Monroe, Okaloosa, Broward, Escambia, and Manatee.

The next CDR/DR Training is slated to be held on August 18—20, and will be a regional training hosted by the Palm Beach County Health Department. If interested in attending this event, please contact (CDR) Lily Salazar at the Palm Beach CHD for area information, and to reserve your spot.

Amarlis.salazar@flhealth.gov

Bits N' Pieces

CDRS:

- Remember to reconcile safety paper usage reports (SPUR) daily
- CDR's with tax collector offices should also reconcile SPUR daily on those offices
- Discrepancies regarding safety paper must be handled immediately
- Money discrepancies must always be handled the same day



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Bureau of Vital Statistics
Quality Assurance Unit (HPVSRR)
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