



Vital News



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REVISED DEATH CERTIFICATE

January 3, 2005 came and we hit the ground running with the revised Florida Death Certificate. The first few weeks were filled with a flurry of calls about the revised record. Questions on new or revised items were anticipated and answered. Questions on items that did not change were also plentiful. The revised record gave everyone the opportunity to think about routine items to which they had become accustomed, and now, they had the chance to see the record in a new light and wanted to know "why?". We have all had to put on our thinking caps to provide answers to these many interesting and provocative inquiries. A series of emails with frequently asked questions helped to get answers not only to the county vital statistics offices, but also to medical examiners, funeral directors, and two of the professional associations, Independent Funeral Directors of Florida (IFDF) and Florida Funeral Directors Association (FFDA). These questions are posted to our website at: http://www.doh.state.fl.us/planning_eval/vital_statistics/index.html The cooperative effort of all of these parties has resulted in a successful launch of the new record.



CDRAC UPDATE

The Chief Deputy Registrar Advisory Committee (CDRAC) said goodbye to one of its original members. Maurice Darden, CDR, Miami-Dade County Health Department, retired in January 2005. Ms. Darden's dedication and experience will be missed.

As Ms. Darden has walked off the CDRAC stage, MaryAnn Burrin CDR, Monroe County Health Department has walked on. Ms. Burrin tells us she eagerly awaits the opportunity to work with the rest of the group and assist the state office and other CDRs in any way she can. Welcome aboard, MaryAnn!

The vital statistics mail out of 37,000 informational brochures to Florida physicians generated calls from physicians and hospices throughout the state. This was the first effort of its kind and has been well received. It has also led to the development of an additional informational brochure for physicians (see article, page 3 of this issue) that we feel will be helpful to those involved in the death registration process. Articles have appeared in the Florida Medical Association publications and email newsletters regarding the revised record. Several local medical societies have asked for information, which we have been more than happy to provide. Any opportunity to reach physicians is appreciated. Quality Assurance has offered to provide training at medical society meetings. Should the CDR receive such a request, just let us know and we will make the arrangements with the appropriate people.

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E-VITALS TRAIN

The e-Vitals training train is rounding the final bend! As of the press date for this issue, 58 of Florida's 67 counties have been trained. This equates to 155 registrars completing the two day training course. Each week, more and more counties are going live on e-Vitals. We expect all counties to be on the system by May 2005.



In addition to these registrars learning e-Vitals, the state office has also been learning a lot from them. All of the input that the counties have provided about their individual operations has really helped us to sculpt our training and look at additions or enhancements to the system. That input has provided insight as to how to better use the resources of the system to all our advantage. The use of the e-Vitals Help Desk has helped these registrars make a success of their move from the mainframe to e-Vitals.

Almost \$4 million in revenue has now been transacted through e-Vitals across the state. What a success! We very much look forward to training the remaining 9 counties and bringing the entire state up on e-Vitals. In the meantime, trained counties, remember to call the Help Desk at (904) 359-6900, ext. 14357 with all of your e-Vitals questions. System Administrator Ray Herz is waiting for your call.

CHANGE IN LATITUDE



Milt Sumrell, Program Administrator for Administrative Services, retired January 31, 2005. He leaves us with a total of 33 years in state government; he had been active in the department both in Jacksonville and in Tallahassee. Milt's Seminole spirit, as well as his expertise in getting a job done, will be missed by all of us. Our loss will be Live Oak's gain!

IN-HOSPITAL PATERNITY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

As reported in similar articles in the last two issues of the *Vital News*, hospitals, county vital statistics staff, state office staff, CSE staff, and parents are working with the new provision in statute (Senate Bill 160) that now allows for either a notary or two witnesses for in-hospital paternity acknowledgement. Revised birth certificate forms have been distributed, both the pre-printed as well as the software generated updates. Facilities were given until March 2005 to implement the revised form.

CSE, along with the Office of Vital Statistics, has developed a resource guide to assist those involved in the birth registration process with the new options. To obtain a copy of the In-Hospital Paternity Establishment Resource Guide, contact Lynn Pesic, 850-921-8413 or SunCom 291-8413.

CHANGE

We are all, by nature, resistant to change. Just when we start to feel like we are getting a handle on a certain procedure, it changes. More often than not, things change so frequently that we never even have a chance to become proficient at one task before it changes to something else. This can be frustrating. Along with learning almost any new task, comes an inherent period of discomfort, which lasts to some degree, until we become comfortable in our knowledge of performing the task. What happens, however, when seemingly everything we do on a daily basis changes all at the same time? It can make us want to just throw up our hands.

As difficult as it may be to accept, we must always be mindful that life is full of change. Nothing stays the same...for very long. So then, what is the answer? How do we handle it? Nothing effects our day to day activities more than one simple thing, over which we do have control -- our attitude. Does this mean we pretend that nothing is wrong? Of course not. It does mean, however, that we make a decision. Are we going to be left behind, grumbling, while others move forward? Or will we believe in our abilities and face change head on, willing to change perhaps not only what we do, but the way we do it? We must be like the little mouse in Who Stole My Cheese?, who accepted the frightening fact that the cheese was no longer left where it usually was, and ventured out to find the new location of the cheese. It also may help to remember that we are not alone. Our co-workers, friends, and family all face the same challenges. We can support each other through times of frequent change and look forward to the opportunities change might present.

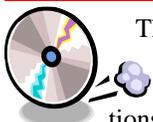
MEDICAL AFFIDAVIT, FORM DH 434A

The Affidavit of Amendment to Medical Certification of Death (2005 version), DH 434A is available for chief deputy registrars to order from the warehouse. The stock number for the form is 5744-00A-0434-1.

Physicians and funeral directors should contact the local vital statistics office for a supply of the form. Remember, original forms must be used, copies are not acceptable. All users of the affidavit should remember to use the form that corresponds with the death certificate. DH 434 (old form) must be used for 2004 deaths and older; DH 434A (new form) must be used with 2005 deaths forward.

Funeral directors who want to be *emailed* the quarterly updates to the County Health Department phone list can provide their email addresses, and the listing will be sent automatically. To have your name put on the list, send an email to: sharon_dover@doh.state.fl.us

TRAINING TOOL FOR CDRS



The state office has developed a training tool for the CDR to use when training new deputy registrars. Computer disks with the training material were mailed to all county health departments in February. Questions regarding training of deputy registrars and use of the CD should be directed to your Quality Assurance Field Representative.

Welcome Aboard



The following appointments have been made to the position of Registrar:

Local Registrar

Mary Kay Burns DeSoto County

Chief Deputy Registrar

Sandra Prescott-Factor DeSoto County

MD BROCHURE

An informational brochure for physicians has been developed by the State Office of Vital Statistics. The brochure addresses such issues as who should sign the certificate, how long does the physician have to complete cause of death, what must be reported to the medical examiner, what if a patient dies at home, what items does the physician complete, and more.

This brochure should be a useful tool for funeral directors to provide certifying physicians when taking death records to be signed. CDRs can use the brochure as part of a training packet for area physicians. QA plans to distribute the brochure at any training opportunity that includes physicians, such as at local medical association meetings.

Funeral directors should contact their local CDR for a supply of the brochure. CDRs should order from the warehouse as they would any standard form. It is suggested the CDR keep an ample supply on hand for distribution to area funeral directors. The form and stock numbers are:

DH 150-849
Stock Number 5730-849-0150-9

ON THE ROAD WITH QA



In between e-Vitals trainings, Mike Grant, Quality Assurance Field Representative, has made a couple of road trips, spreading the vital statistics news! His most recent venture was to the Statewide Administration Meeting in Orlando, where he made a presentation to the group regarding Vital Statistics and the e-Vitals system. Mike's focus was on the role of the business manager in vital statistics and how the new e-Vitals system would streamline several heretofore manual tasks within the VS office. His presentation generated much thoughtful discussion.

REVISED COM & VRRH ON WEB

The Chief Deputy Registrar Operations Manual (COM) has been updated to coincide with the revised birth and death certificates. This manual is intended for department use only and is available for downloading at the Department of Health Intranet site. CDRs should be sure all staff have a copy for reference.

The Vital Records Registration Handbook (VRRH) has also been updated to include detailed information related to the revised birth and death certificates. The handbook is for use by the preparers of Florida vital records: hospital and birthing center staff, funeral home staff, and medical examiner and physicians' staff. It is available at the web address:

http://www.doh.state.fl.us/planning_eval/vital_statistics/index.html

A copy of the handbook should be downloaded for reference by all those involved in the preparation and filing of vital records.

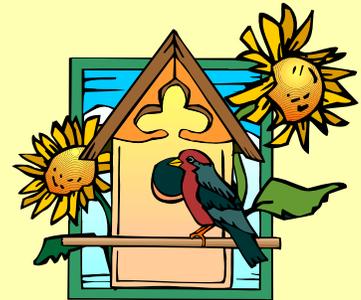
USE OF THE 24-HOUR CLOCK

Time of birth and time of death, as recorded on vital records, can be very important to the family. It can make the difference in insurance coverage, tax benefits, inheritance rights, and more, especially if the date of event is impacted.

With the revision of the birth and death certificate forms came the change of format in the time of the event. Traditionally, vital records were filed using Standard Time to record the time of birth and time of death. Nationally, for vital records, the move is to the Universal Time Clock, or **24-hour Clock**, to be in sync with what is used in most medical facilities. Many refer to this time format as "military time", but military time may have slight variations from the 24-hour clock, and we are using the 24-hour clock.

With the 24-hour clock, the format is four numbers, e.g. 0535, (leading zeros when applicable) or 1705, **no** colons, no am/pm. Midnight is the *beginning* of the day and should be entered as 0000, not 2400 or 12 mid.

In reviewing records filed with the new time format, we have seen quite a few variations and are working with these folks individually. It is important that there be no question as to what time is being recorded. For the time being, as long as the time can be determined, we are not rejecting records for failure to use the correct format, but we encourage everyone to get on board with the new way. If you need a copy of the conversion chart, contact your chief deputy registrar.



BITS 'N PIECES

- CDRs: there are several vital statistics **forms available in Spanish and Haitian/Creole**. Check the warehouse forms catalog for availability and offer this added service to your clients.
- The informational flyer for physicians, the "**yellow card**", has been revised to correspond to the revised DC. Packages of 100 can be ordered from the warehouse with the following information:

Form # DH 1976

Stock # 5744-000-1976-0

The statistical tables, along with past issues of the *Vital News*, can be found on the department's website at the following address:

http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Planning_eval/Vital_Statistics/VitalNews/vn-index.htm