

Season's Greetings from the State Registrar

We close out 2015 with many satisfying accomplishments under our belt. We have piloted, and are preparing to launch EFDRS (Electronic Fetal Death Registration System) in early 2016. Once more we thank our partners in the field for having helped bring EFDRS into fruition. EDRS (Electronic Death Registration System) continues to be a shining star of accomplishment for vitals with an amazing 99.6% participation from the funeral homes in the state. We are continuing to automate with the help of our business partnership with the Clerks of Court Association and Florida Tax Collectors. Our roll-out of Electronic Divorce is nearly complete and looking toward the future we've

begun work on electronic marriage records.

We couldn't have done it without YOU! I want to recognize the dedicated work of our vital statistics staff in Tallahassee, county health departments and Jacksonville. Our county health departments continue to play a "vital" role as they serve our local communities, and as always we appreciate their work so much.

My wish is that each of you have a happy holiday season and a safe and prosperous New Year!

Thank you,
Ken Jones

State Office Recognizes Breast Cancer Awareness Month



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Spotlight on St. Johns County

St. Johns County was established in 1821. It was one of the two original counties that were established after Florida was ceded to the United States. St. Johns County is named for the St. Johns River which runs along its western border. St. Augustine is the county seat, and the largest incorporated city in the county.

Earlier this year the vital statistics office made a move to their current location at 200 San Sebastian View in St. Augustine.

The Vital Statistics team is lead by Local Registrar and County Health Officer, Dawn C. Allcock, M.D., along with the help of Chief Deputy Registrar (CDR) Stella Villanueva, and Deputy Registrars (DR) Jacob Quigley, Dany Davenport-Frigerio, and Laurie Boswell.



Pictured (L—R): Chief Deputy Registrar, Stella Villanueva, and Deputy Registrars Dany Davenport-Frigerio, and Jake Quigley Not pictured: Dawn C. Allcock, M.D. (Local Registrar), and Laurie Boswell, Deputy Registrar

Last year the vitals team handled over 5,600 requests, and had oversight at four tax collector locations. GO TEAM!

Welcome Aboard

The following appointments have been made to the position of registrar in the county health departments:

Local Registrar:

- Joy Jackson, M.D. Hardee
- Joseph D. Pepe Hendry/Glades
- Angela Swartzman Lee

Chief Deputy Registrar:

- Sandra Oglesby Union
- Christy Hendry Jefferson
- Melissa Schembri Okaloosa
- Tina Scott-Kidd Taylor



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

Electronic Fetal Death (EFDRS)

The Bureau of Vital Statistics launched the pilot for the Electronic Fetal Death Registration System (EFDRS) on August 31, 2015. Five funeral homes participated in the pilot, and with their feedback we will be able to make adjustments/enhancements in order to be more user friendly. Implementation of the program statewide is expected after the first of the year.

A BIG thank you to the participating funeral homes: Trahan Family Funeral Home (Escambia County), Wright and Young Funeral Home (Miami-Dade County), Newcomer Funeral Home—East Orlando Chapel (Orange County), Eternity Funeral Home, (Duval County) and Gentry-Morrison (Polk County).

CDR/DR Training

A regional CDR/DR training was conducted in Bay County on November 4th—6th, 2015 the last formal CDR/DR training for the year. We had representatives registered from five counties: Franklin, Liberty, Walton, Gadsden and of course, Bay. Thanks to all who participated and made the training a success.

The next CDR/DR training will be held in Jacksonville and is scheduled for February 10 -12, 2016. The February roster is full, but if you are interested in attending an upcoming CDR/DR training contact your Quality Assurance Field Representative for more information.

Southern Regional NAPHSIS Meeting

In late October, the Bureau of Vital Statistics sent Kenny Higginbotham, Gwen McNeil and Mary Boutte' from the Jacksonville Vital Statistics office to the National Association of Public Health Statistics Information Systems (NAPHSIS) Southern Regional Meeting in Atlanta. A total of 35 public health vital records professionals from the southern states attended the meeting sharing their innovations in vital records

registration and quality improvement initiatives.

The guest speakers covered such topics as vital record security, fraudulent and counterfeit document recognition and much more. Attending these meetings gives us all a chance to share our best practices and develop our relationships with our fellow vitals professionals.

Assistance for Veterans' Families

The Department of Health Bureau of Vital Statistics partnered with the U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs to develop an informational brochure to assist veteran's families when their loved one dies. The brochure provides information and direction on veterans' service-connected disabilities and helps to ensure that families provide the attending physicians and funeral director with the necessary information to properly certify the cause of death.

A lot of residents, especially those outside of the military, are unfamiliar with the term "service-connected conditions." What is even less known is that, when a veteran passes away from a service-connected condition, the surviving spouse and family members may be entitled to compensation. Mike Mason, Polk County Supervisor of Veteran Services and vice president of the County Veterans' Service Officer Association, brought to light some cases where the family members had to fight for a number of years to obtain this compensation. As a result, a workgroup was assembled with the goal of educating and raising awareness to the veterans, their families, funeral homes and the medical community.

Actions taken by the workgroup:

- Developed a brochure to educate the stakeholders
- Presented the brochure locally as well as in interviews on local TV
- Received the endorsement of the Florida Veterans Foundation and County Veterans' Service Office Association
- Ken Jones, State Registrar, Bureau of Vital Statistics (BVS), presented the initiative to:
 - Board of Funeral, Cemetery and Consumer Services
 - Medical Examiner's Commission
 - National Association of Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS) annual meeting in June

Positive feedback was received from all three groups.

BVS is currently working on a way to include service-connected conditions into the e-Vital system.

The Bureau extends our thanks to Ulyee Choe, DO, Director Pinellas County Health Department; Mike Mason, VA; Lisa Makal, Chief Deputy Registrar, Polk County Health Department; and the Polk Board of County Commissioners for all their work on this project. To obtain copies of the brochure email Mike Mason at: mikemason@polk-county.net or contact the state office for assistance at: ana.goold@flhealth.gov.

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Department of Health
Bureau of Vital Statistics
Quality Assurance Unit (HPVSRR)
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