



Vital News



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STATEWIDE MEETING



The Statewide Vital Statistics Meeting is scheduled for September 18-20, 2002 in Orlando at the Rosen Plaza Hotel. It's been three years since our last meeting and over 1/3 of our Chief Deputy Registrars are new to their position.

The focus of this meeting will be somewhat different from those in the past. We will direct our attention to the implementation of the new Chief Deputy Registrar Operations Manual (COM) and how it will assist the CDRs and other vital statistics staff in office procedures and policies. Our office often hears that even though we have the same laws and rules statewide, policies often differ from county to county. With the implementation of the COM, we should see more uniformity throughout the state in the day to day operation of the vital statistics offices. There will always be differences due to county sizes, office hours and staffing, but the basics should not change. The COM should help everyone to have the same understanding of the rules and regulations.

Detailed information, reservation cards and registration information for the statewide meeting will be mailed out by the end of June. If you have any questions about the meeting, please contact your quality assurance field representative.

CREMATION APPROVAL FOR "SHIP OUTS"

When a person dies in Florida and the final disposition is cremation, anatomical donation or burial at sea, the district medical examiner must be contacted for approval, pursuant to s. 406.11(2), F.S.

When a funeral director ships a decedent's remains out of state and knows that final disposition will be cremation, anatomical donation or burial at sea, the funeral director should obtain authorization from the district medical examiner where the death occurred. Only the medical examiner where the death occurred has jurisdiction. Obtaining medical examiner approval helps to reduce the likelihood of delays for the family should there be a problem with the record.

This issue has been discussed at several Medical Examiner Commission meetings in the past and is the recommended procedure to be followed in all districts.

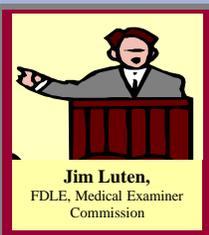
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Have a safe 4th!!



OUR "GUEST" TO YOU



The Medical Examiners Commission (MEC) was established in 1970 by the passage of The Florida Medical Examiners Act, Chapter 406 of the Florida Statutes. This legislation ended the old county coroner system and brought in the Medical Examiner System in Florida as we know it today. The Florida Medical Examiner System is comprised of 24 districts, a Medical Examiners Commission and staff to oversee certain aspects of the medical examiners' activities which are guided by Florida statute and administrative rule. The Florida Medical Examiner System has earned the reputation as the model for other states to follow throughout the country.

The Commission consists of nine members who, in general, represent the constituencies that deal with medical examiners and should have a say in how medical examiner offices function in Florida. Seven of these Commission members are appointed by the Governor and include representatives from: the State Attorney, the Public Defender, the Sheriff, the Funeral Home Industry, the County Commission, and two current District Medical Examiners. The Commission also has two appointed positions: a representative appointed by the Attorney General's Office and a representative appointed by the Department of Health. The Medical Examiners Commission holds its public meetings at least quarterly at different locations around the State. The Commission works closely with the Office of Vital Statistics. Vital Statistics

Medical Examiner Commission—(Continued on page 3)

CLERK'S CORNER

Just a friendly reminder that section 382.015, Florida Statutes requires, "The clerk of the court in which any proceeding for adoption, or annulment of an adoption, affirmation of parental status, or determination of paternity is to be registered, shall within 30 days after the final disposition, forward to the department a certified copy of the court order or a report of the proceedings upon a form to be furnished by the department..."



This is crucial for the removal of the original record from the file, to prevent accidental issuance of a document that should be sealed. It allows the new record to be prepared for the child so the parents can request certifications for school enrollment, passport, sports, social security, etc.

We have received reports, particularly those establishing paternity, months and in some cases, years after final disposition. Your cooperation in getting these reports to us in the time frame established by law would be appreciated.

STATE OFFICE EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Continuing our series, the following have been chosen as "Employee of the Month" at the state office:

March 2002 — **Sandy Lambert**, Birth Registration. "Sandy completes her work in a timely and proficient manner. She is willing to help others and approaches her job with a positive attitude."

April 2002 — **Dolores Jonjock**, Micrographics. "Dolores takes pride in her work and is always willing to help others and participate in office activities. She stands for 'the right thing.' Micrographics will not be the same when she retires."

May 2002 — **Barbara Robey**, Birth Registration. "Barbara has been a great help in keeping the office functioning with an employee on medical leave. She can be counted on to get the job done correctly and in a timely manner. She is always willing to assist others."

These individuals are recognized for specific achievements, a particular action that may have been helpful to another employee, or simply going "above and beyond" in their regular everyday work environment. They have been nominated by co-workers, supervisors, administrators or a client for exceptional service.

ADMINISTRATIVE FINE COLLECTED



An administrative complaint was filed against William B. Moncalieri, Jr. of Abbey Park-lawn Funeral Home, Dunedin, Florida for knowingly notarizing a signature he knew to be forged on an affidavit to amend a death record. An administrative fine of \$1000.00 was collected by the Department pursuant to section 382.026, Florida Statutes.



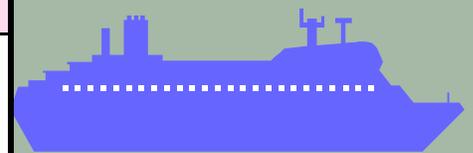
ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION UPDATE

In March, the National Association of Public Health Statistics and Health Information Systems (NAPHSIS) users group visited Jacksonville for a meeting on re-engineering of the nationwide death registration system. Attendees included representatives from NAPHSIS, Social Security Administration and Centers for Disease Control. Florida spoke on our recent experience in trying to implement a web based electronic registration system, the direction everyone seems to be headed. Discussion and a flurry of questions ensued. It was recommended that lines of communications between the states be kept open on any web based registration activities.

TOP 20 FIRST NAMES OF 2001

MALE		FEMALE	
1. Michael	11. Joseph	1. Emily	11. Alyssa
2. Jacob	12. Jonathan	2. Madison	12. Victoria
3. Christopher	13. Zachary	3. Ashley	13. Kayla
4. Joshua	14. Brandon	4. Hannah	14. Elizabeth
5. Matthew	15. Christian	5. Samantha	15. Lauren
6. Nicholas	16. Dylan	6. Alexis	16. Isabella
7. Anthony	17. John	7. Sarah	17. Nicole
8. Daniel	18. Alexander	8. Brianna	18. Jasmine
9. David	19. James	9. Jessica	19. Destiny
10. Tyler	20. Ryan	10. Taylor	20. Abigail

Welcome Aboard



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

Local Registrar

Kim Barnhill Jefferson & Madison Counties

Chief Deputy Registrar

Loretta D. Carr St. Lucie County

BROCHURES

The Commemorative Birth Brochure, DH 378, has just been revised and is now more colorful and eye-catching than ever before! The warehouse is stocked with the new version for CDR orders. This brochure will be of interest to your walk-in clients and should be part of the hospitals' pre-admit package for new parents, so be sure to get a good supply.

Another recently revised brochure is "What You Need to Know Before Signing Your Baby's Birth Certificate", DH 150-356, (7/2000). This brochure is full of valuable information for prospective new parents and answers some of their frequently asked questions. Hospitals have put this high on their list of requests in recent QA field visits, so be sure the CHD has plenty of them on hand.

The Commemorative Marriage brochure, DH 379 (1/2001), is another brochure of interest to CHD walk-in clients.

OPEN HOUSE



The State Office of Vital Statistics held an Open House in the newly renovated facility on Thursday, April 4, 2002 — smack dab in the middle of Public Health Week. As part of our celebration for the week, staff members provided guided tours of the three floors and the new records storage facility.

Guests included many retired employees, our laboratory "complex mates", and even some folks from neighboring county health departments. Comments from some of the retirees indicated they might entertain thoughts of returning to work if they could be promised such fine surroundings! They also noted they were glad to see the many security features that had been added during the renovation. Though retired, they still realized the importance of the material we are charged with protecting, as well as the importance of ensuring a safe working environment for employees.

When removing some of the furniture and doing clean-up in the old quarters, a treasure was unearthed. It seems that about 15 years ago, one of the now retired ladies had been a widow for several years, but still wore her wedding ring to work. Some of her co-workers teased her that it was time to take off the ring. The lady in question would humor them and oftentimes remove it. One such time, the ring disappeared, the lady soon retired, end of story, or so she thought. During the recent move, the wedding ring turned up when one of the old desks was removed for storage. There was a joyous reunion between ring and owner during the Open House!



CDRs — the Vital Records Registration Handbook can be downloaded from the department's Intranet site at: http://dohiws.doh.state.fl.us/Divisions/Planning_Evaluation/INDEX.html

Medical Examiner Commission—(Continued from page 1)

staff offers guidance and provides information to the Commission on matters dealing with the death certificate. While this form might seem simple and straightforward, it is a critical document as the summation of the identity of the deceased as well as the time, place, and circumstances of the death. This document can be used as evidence in criminal and civil courts, can be a determining factor for life insurance claims, and details the final disposition of the deceased. Approximately 12% of all deaths in Florida come under the jurisdiction of medical examiners because of the circumstances surrounding the death, which are mostly violent deaths. If cremation approvals are included, medical examiners review 55% of all of Florida's death certificates! This shows how essential the death certificate is to medical examiner activities and why the Medical Examiners Commission and their staff frequently call upon Vital Statistics for advice and guidance.

STATISTICAL TABLES HAVE MOVED

The *Vital News* will no longer publish statistical tables. The tables normally found on pages 4-11 can now 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

Those tables are:

Table 1—Resident Live Births

Table 2—Resident Deaths

Table 3—Resident Fetal Deaths,
Recorded Marriage &
Dissolution of Marriage

Table 4—Resident Births By Age of Mother

Table 5—Resident Births to Unwed Mothers

Table 6—Resident Births by Birth Weight

Table 7—Resident Deaths
Scoreboard

BITS 'N PIECES

- ◆ Funeral directors, when assisting the physician in **correcting/ changing the cause of death** on a death record, be sure to provide them with the correct amendment form, DH 434, 2/97, Affidavit of Amendment to Medical Certification of Death. Failure to use the proper form causes unnecessary delays for the family and the physician.
- ◆ **Permanent/Replacement death records** that have changes from the original pending record **must** have those changes authorized on the back of the permanent record. The item(s) corrected should be listed, followed by the funeral director's signature, pursuant to s. 382.008(5), F.S., e.g. "items 4, 7, 18 corrected; **John Q. Funeral**". If the change is not authorized, the record *will be returned*.
- ◆ The preferred method for entering dates on vital records is "2002". If the item permits, the abbreviated date of "02" can be used.