



" Pumpkin patch, by Kam's world, Fotopedia gallery, <http://www.fotopedia.com/items/flickr-4047726158>".

News from the Center for Health Statistics Concerning the Oregon Birth Certificate

October 2012

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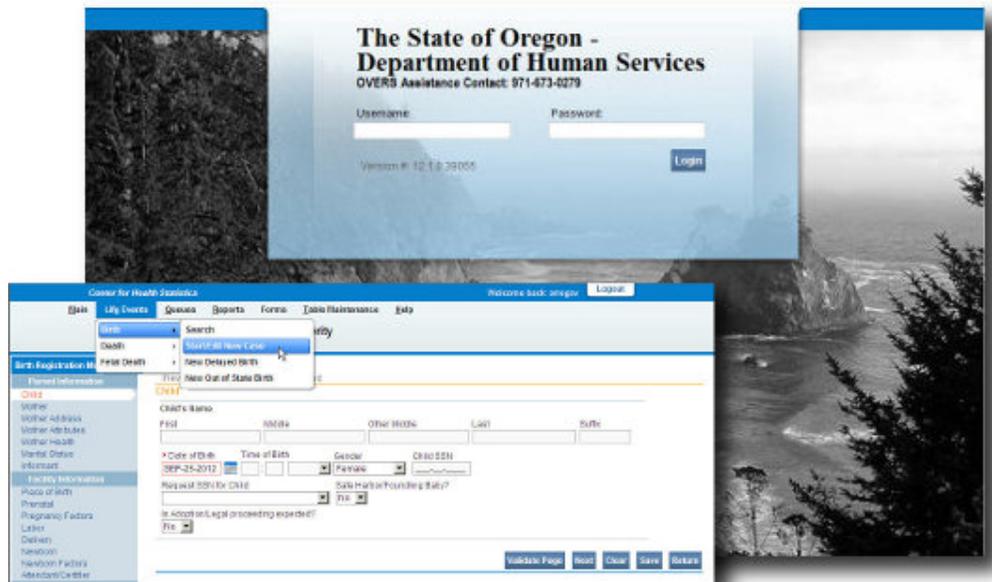
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OVERS new look & feel

In November, we are releasing a new look for the OVERS website. The new design is the first change to the look of OVERS since Oregon started using it in 2006 and is intended to make it more user-friendly.

While the website will look quite different, the navigation will remain mostly the same, and the functionality will remain exactly the same as it is now. This screen example demonstrates the new look.



Improved features will include:

- The main menu will now appear along the top of the page instead of down the left side. Secondary menus, such as the birth registration menu, will remain on the left side of the page. This allows both menus to be seen.

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OVERS new look and feel (Continued from page 1)

- Pages are designed to fit more content on your screen so you shouldn't have to scroll down as much as you do in the current version of OVERS.
- Error messages will no longer appear in a separate frame below the birth information. This should save you time

Common OVERS error messages

The OVERS system has been the primary method to register births since 2008. It is used by all birth hospitals, all but two freestanding birthing centers, and 41 of the 83 licensed attendants who certified out of facility births in 2012. OVERS is a complex system with a variety of potential system error messages. System errors appear as pop up boxes or white pages. This is different from the potential error messages that appear at the bottom of the pages after validating a record.

The OVERS system has been the primary method to register births since 2008.

Some system error messages are easy to resolve, and some require contacting the OVERS help desk. We are always willing to provide assistance, but sometimes the issue can be resolved without contacting us.

Most frequent error messages:

- *Invalid username or password* occurs at the point of logging in to the OVERS system. The system will not allow access after three attempts have been made even if the correct username and password are entered.

Technology may be fast, but keyboard reactions are not. Slow down, make sure

because it eliminates much of the scrolling you have to do to validate records when using the current version of OVERS.

- You will be able to customize your view by creating quick links to pages that you routinely access. (This functionality will be available in the Spring of 2013). ❖

the caps lock is off, and remember that all usernames in OVERS are lowercase (even the first letter). After three attempts, contact the OVERS help desk. If you know the problem is how you entered the password, we can reset the logon attempts, and you can keep your password. We can also reset to a new temporary password. We cannot confirm your password – it is not visible to us in the system.

- *Invalid user* may appear at the point the record is signed using the fingerprint reader. This error means that the username currently active in OVERS is not associated with the certifier's name. Most often, this occurs when the certifier's name is typed into the field instead of selected from the system list with the spyglass. This is a problem even if the name is typed exactly as it appears in OVERS. The system will not be able to link the expected fingerprint to the expected user unless the name is selected from the list. On the Attendant/Certifier page, click the spyglass, search for and select your name from the list, validate the page, and then return to the Certify page. If the error still appears, call the

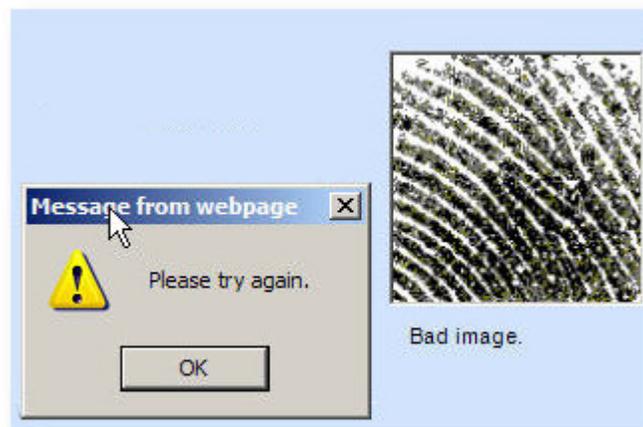
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Common OVERS error messages (Continued from page 2)

OVERS help desk.

- *Fingerprint verification failed* occurs when the system reads the fingerprint, but cannot match it to the current user. There is no resolution other than to continue clearing the message and placing your finger on the biometric reader to produce a clear image. Too much pressure will decrease the likelihood of success. If it routinely takes more than ten attempts to sign, please contact the OVERS help desk. We can re-enroll your fingerprints, and this usually makes certifying faster.
- *Bad image* occurs when the system cannot read the fingerprint on the device. If this occurs more than twice, consider cleaning the device with appropriate electronic equipment cleaner (such as you would use on a computer monitor) or washing your hands if they might have some residue blocking the fingerprints. If several different users experience the same problem, it may indicate that the biometric reader needs to be replaced.

Contact the OVERS help desk for replacements. Other than these suggestions, there is no resolution but to continue placing your finger on the biometric reader.



We hope this information provides some insight to OVERS system errors. Regardless of the error message received, the OVERS help desk is available to assist you Monday through Friday, 8 AM to noon and 1 PM to 5 PM by calling 971-673-0279. ❖

What makes a good comment?

Did you know that a comment in OVERS has power, yes, real power? It does. It has the power to confirm that the information you have entered into the birth record is actually correct. It also has the power to clarify the information you have entered. Confirming and/or clarifying information is important, especially when the information you have added is unique, minimal, or does not fit into an expected statistical range for the specific information.

For example, a comment would be needed if you have entered the mother's height as 6'1" and her pre-pregnancy weight is 260 lbs, but

her weight at delivery is 95 lbs. Such entered information does not appear to be logical and would require CHS staff to question the data and contact you. Another example is when little to no information has been entered in the record, such as no residence or mailing address for the mother. In each case, a comment should be added.

When you provide a comment for cases such as these, we do not need to get in touch with you to question your responses. CHS staff is able to save time, and you will too if you do not need to re-check the medical record and

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What makes a good comment? (Continued from page 3)

respond to us. So, yes, comments have power!

What should a comment contain? It should contain *what* item you are confirming or clarifying, and

verification that the information you provided is accurate. The comment can also explain *why* this is all the information you can provide.

When you provide a comment for cases such as these, we do not need to get in touch with you to question your responses.

Here are some example comments containing the elements we like to see:

- Mother left hospital without completing parent worksheet. No home or mailing

Reporting unknowns: fill the field with 9s

In our July 2011 Birth Newsletter, Center for Health Statistics provided incorrect information in an article entitled, “Completing Tobacco Fields in Birth & Fetal Death Records.” We correctly asked that you not leave the fields blank and to always respond to the tobacco questions. However, if the response was unknown, you were told to put in two 9s. That was incorrect. The field has three spaces and therefore, the correct response should have been to add three 9s.

When a response to a numeric question is unknown on a birth or fetal death report, you must fill the fields with 9s to signify unknown. Some questions on the record require two or three 9s because there are two or three spaces, and one question requires four 9s because there are four spaces. Either way, 9s must fill each space.

Both birth and fetal death reports ask about mother’s height in feet and inches. When

address was obtainable.

- Confirmed that mother lost weight between conception and birth.
- Mother’s height of 6’7” is correct.

Overall, if you believe the information you have entered could be questionable, and you want to clarify it, or you are in doubt as to whether the information you have provided is clear or verified, add a comment.

A comment is a good thing, and you should not worry that you have provided too many comments. We would rather have a comment in the record that verifies, confirms, or clarifies than no comment at all. Remember, comments are always welcome and may save you and CHS staff time in the long run. ❖

either height or inches is unknown, the field needs to have two 9s entered.

There are four questions on birth or fetal records where three 9s should be used if the answer is unknown. They are:

- Mother’s pre-pregnancy weight
- Mother’s delivery weight
- Mother’s tobacco use
- Mother’s average number of drinks per week

For the infant’s weight at delivery, four 9s should be entered if the response is unknown.

Thank you again for all that you do, and we apologize for our earlier incorrect answer in the July 2011 newsletter. If you have any questions, please contact Cynthia Roeser at 971-673-0478 or at

cynthia.roeser@state.or.us. ❖

Who has left, who has stayed, and is their contact information correct?

Are staff members leaving your team? If so, please notify the OVERS help desk in a timely fashion, at 971-673-0279. It is especially important to end OVERS accounts for former staff members. Unless we are notified, the past employee will still have access to your facilities' confidential birth records and could *potentially sign false records*. When an employee is leaving your facility, they or their supervisor can notify the OVERS team to close the employee's OVERS account. Just be sure first that the person is not simply employed elsewhere in your facility or designated as a backup

certifier.

In addition, the Center for Health Statistics (CHS) needs to verify the accuracy of emails for birth clerks and certifiers to implement a new process for sending out error reports. CHS sent out over 200 emails to explain the new error reporting process, but eighty individuals have not yet responded. We will be personally following up on these emails soon. We also need certifiers to provide us official email addresses from their facility sites, instead of Gmail, Hotmail, or Yahoo addresses. If you hear from us, please respond promptly. ❖

Error report consolidation update

Our July 2012 Birth newsletter had an article on the pilot of our new error reporting process. The pilot was a success. You and your hospital's Information Technology staff will receive a letter about the new error reports along with the roll-out plan. All information is being sent via email, so make

sure we have a good email address for you (see above article for more information). New reports will start coming in October to selected hospitals. Check the roll-out plan to see when your hospital will be getting the new reports.

caseid	Date of Birth	Child First Name	Child Last Name	Error Text	Item Value
123459	1/1/2012			Mother tobacco use indicates more than 80 cigarettes per day for some period. Please correct or confirm high use of tobacco.	80
123459	1/1/2012			Is Infant Living at Time of Report? vs Apgar Score at 5 Minutes vs Birthweight is unlikely	
326144	4/2/2012	Daniel	Gregson	Mother Married?—Acknowledgement of Paternity Signed vs At Conception, at Birth or any Time in Between	
326144	4/2/2012	Daniel	Gregson	Mother Married?—Acknowledgement of Paternity Signed	X
326144	4/2/2012	Daniel	Gregson	Mother Married?—At Conception, at Birth or any Time in Between	U

What is new about the reports? First, they will be emailed to you rather than faxed. Second, we have consolidated the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and our Center for Health Statistics (CHS) requests for correction into one document. We expect

the process will decrease or eliminate the number of phone calls to you from CHS requesting corrections or verification of information on birth certificates. If you have any questions, please contact Cynthia Roeser at 971-673-0478 or JoAnn Jackson at 971-673-1160. ❖

Common errors on marital status

Along with our new consolidated error reports, we will continue to alert you regarding errors that commonly appear so that we may prevent them in the future. Two such common errors occur in the Marital Status section.

The question “Was Mother Married at Conception, at Birth or Within 300 Days of Birth?” has four possible answers: *Yes*, *No*, *Oregon Registered Domestic Partnership*, or *Unknown*. One of these options **must** be selected as an answer for this question. If you receive an error on this question on your report, it is most likely because the answer was left blank or answered as *Unknown*. While *Unknown* is an acceptable response, if it is reported in error, it may create a lot of problems for the family with regards to establishing custody or child support.

Therefore, it’s extremely important to answer this question *Yes* or *No* if at all possible. In the rare instance

While *Unknown* is an acceptable response, if it is reported in error, it may create a lot of problems for the family.

New business reply envelopes

New postage-paid business reply envelopes are now available for sending in Voluntary Acknowledgment of Paternity forms to our office. If you currently have envelopes in stock, continue to use them until you need more. After your stock is gone, you will receive business reply envelopes with “Paternity” in the address line the next time you place an order. The new envelopes will be white so that sorting and routing will be easy. This should help us get birth records

where the mother’s marital status is *Unknown*, please add a clarifying comment to the record explaining why you were not able to determine the mother’s marital status.

The accompanying paternity question, “Has Acknowledgment of Paternity Been Signed in the Hospital?” has three possible answers: *Yes*, *No*, or *Not Applicable*. *Not Applicable* is the default answer since most Oregon mothers are married at the time of the child’s birth, and no paternity acknowledgment is required. *Not Applicable* is an appropriate answer only if the answer to “Was Mother Married...” is either *Yes* or *Oregon Registered Domestic Partnership*. If the answer to “Mother Married ...” is *Unknown*, then the “Paternity” question will be disabled and you will not be able to select an answer. If the answer is *No*, then the “Paternity” question **must** be answered either *Yes* or *No*. When the response to the “Paternity” question does not match the marital status of the mother, error messages will be included in your error report.

If you have any questions, please contact Cynthia Roeser at 971-673-0478 or JoAnn Jackson at 971-673-1160. ❖

registered more quickly.

If you do not have a stock of business reply envelopes, please fax in an order using the form on our web page, at <http://public.health.oregon.gov/BirthDeathCertificates/RegisterVitalRecords/Documents/45-43.pdf>. You can write “Paternity” on the line where you mark the order for business reply envelopes to ensure you receive the new ones. ❖

Improving data quality series: mother's worksheet

This article is the third in a series focused on improving the quality of our data. The first and second in the series appeared in our [April](#) and [July](#) 2012 newsletters.

The focus of this article is the Mother's Worksheet, which contains information used to complete the legal portion of the birth certificate as well as data used in public health research. It is important that you provide complete and accurate information. The birth certificate establishes identity and is used by researchers to study and improve the health of mothers and newborns.

The mother should be asked questions about her race, ethnicity, and education before leaving the hospital or birth center. To do so, it is common practice to provide a worksheet to the mother to obtain general information about the parent(s) of the child. Some facilities use "pre-admission" forms that are completed by the mother prior to delivery, while others use worksheets provided by CHS to gather the information needed to complete the birth certificate. This is called the Mother's Worksheet.

The Mother's Worksheet is a tool to help gather data from the mother, but it is not legally binding. If the information provided by the mother on the worksheet differs from the medical record, use the medical record. We know that sometimes items from the mother's worksheet are truly unknown. For example, people will refuse to provide information about their education, race, or ethnicity. However, this should happen infrequently, and our office may still follow up with your facility to try to find the information. In addition, if the number of unknowns reported by your facility is higher than acceptable, follow-up will occur.

Worksheet FAQs

The parents refuse to fill out any of the information. What else can I do?

It is the responsibility of the facility, delegated to the person completing the birth record, to obtain this information, and fill out the birth record accurately and completely (refer to Birth Certificate rules ORS



432.206, ORS 432.075). Please make every attempt to gather this information from other sources if necessary, including re-contacting the parent, finding the information on the hospital admittance form, or checking other medical records.

The mother wrote down that she smoked 400 cigarettes per day. I just write down what I see, so why are you contacting me?

The Mother's Worksheet is a tool to help you collect birth certificate information. If the mother misread the questions, or if the information she provides differs from the medical record, use the medical record. If something clearly does not make sense, such as smoking 400 cigarettes a day, we will contact you. Please review the information provided on the worksheet for consistency and follow up if necessary.

In addition to the basic duty to submit a complete birth record, the law also requires that birth, death, or fetal death information be provided to the State Registrar when requested (ORS 432.075). Every employee of the State Vital Records office acts as an agent of the State Registrar when they call a

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Mother's worksheet (Continued from page 7)

facility. Please provide information to our office when requested.

The mother left before she filled out all the information on the mother's worksheet. Should I just enter Unknown?

There are a few items that can be "refused" or "unknown," but in general the birth certificate must be complete. Please make every effort to re-contact mothers who

submit partially finished worksheets.

Can I have the mother fill out the facility worksheet as well?

No. The Facility Worksheet is to be filled out by facility staff using the medical record. The mother or other relative should not be asked to complete any detailed medical information (for example, baby's birth weight, complications, procedures, or congenital anomalies). ❖

Birth certificates are controlled forms

While out of facility birth attendants are able to use the OVERS system to submit birth records, many choose to use paper forms to submit the birth certificate. The Center for Health Statistics has adopted several practices in the past two years to improve the security of these forms. Please remember that birth certificates are an important legal document and are the primary document to establish identity. It is essential that measures be taken to prevent the blank birth certificates from being used fraudulently. Some of these measures are listed below:

- **Birth certificate forms are numbered on the back for tracking.** We log who receives the birth certificates, so if any problem arises, we know who originally received the form. Please do not provide forms you receive to another birth attendant. These are controlled legal forms provided to you for your use in submitting legal records. Each birth attendant must request forms for their individual use.
- **Do not use blank birth certificates as worksheets.** The birth certificate should only be used to report a live birth to CHS. CHS has provided worksheets online that can be printed and used by any facility or birth attendant. These are available at <http://public.health.oregon.gov/BirthDeathCertificates/RegisterVitalRecords/Pages/InstructionsBirth.aspx> in both Word and

PDF format.

- **Return any unusable forms.** Please return any damaged forms, including forms with incorrect information that cannot be used, to CHS. The damaged forms can be enclosed with the birth certificate being submitted or sent separately to:
Attn: Carolyn Hogg
Center for Health Statistics
PO Box 14050
Portland OR 97293-0050
- **We limit the number of birth certificate forms sent.** CHS is sending ten or fewer birth certificate forms for each request received. Only four birth attendants using paper forms certified more than 20 births so far this year. Of the remaining 95 birth attendants using paper forms, 59 have certified one or two births this year. The limit on the number of certificates sent will require a faxed request for forms no more often than every two months and for the majority of out of facility birth attendants, once or twice a year.

Interested in using OVERS? OVERS is a web-based system for a Microsoft PC and Internet Explorer. A biometric device, or fingerprint reader, is required and provided without charge by CHS. If you are interested in using OVERS and would like more information, please contact our OVERS help desk at 971-673-0279. ❖

What address is used on birth certificates?

The address of the birth certifier, who is the birth attendant for out of facility births, is required for all birth certificates. For consistency of information between the

licensing board and CHS, we use the address submitted to the licensing board as the address for licensed providers. Since

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What address is used on birth certificates (Continued from page 9)

licensing boards differ in what they collect, there is variation among different types of certifiers.

- LDM – The Oregon Health Licensing Agency collects the home address of the midwife. This is the address to list on birth certificates, even if the birth occurred at a licensed facility.
- NP or RN – The Oregon Board of Nursing also collects home address so the home address should be reported for the birth certifier.
- MD, DO, ND, and Chiropractors – The

Name and address changes

As mentioned above, correct and consistent addresses on birth records are very important. Please report a change of address to CHS within seven days. This will allow us to share information effectively.

If you are a licensed birth attendant, we will verify the address change with the appropriate Board, so it is important that

Oregon Medical Board, Oregon Board of Naturopathic Medicine, and Oregon Board of Chiropractic Examiners all collect the practice address as the preferred point of contact. Birth certifiers should list their practice address on out of facility births.

- CHS registered midwives – Midwives not otherwise licensed who are registered with the Center for Health Statistics should list their home address.

The address you list on birth certificates must be consistently reported. CHS will use that address to contact you with any questions about records and to communicate any changes in policies and procedures. ❖

they also receive notice of the change of address as soon as possible.

Send notice of your change of address in writing by postal mail, email to Lynda.L.Jackson@state.or.us, or by fax to 971-673-1201. ❖

Wanted—Newsletter topics

Have a question or idea for a future newsletter article? Contact JoAnn Jackson at 971-673-1160 or JoAnn.Jackson@state.or.us. JoAnn collects ideas for articles and then shares them with the writing team.

Thank you to the contributors of this newsletter:

James Burke, Karen Cooper, Joyce Grant-Worley, Karen Hampton, Sarah Hargand, Carolyn Hogg, JoAnn Jackson, Kerry Lionadh, Linda Reynolds, Lynda Jackson, Cynthia Roeser, Carol Sanders, Mike Vernon, and Jennifer Woodward.

Have a question? Try asking one of the helpful CHS staff listed below.

Frequent Contacts

Paternities Debbie Gott 971-673-1155	Filiations Tony Bojanowski 971-673-1143
Birth Corrections <1 year, Amanda Vega 971-673-1169 1+year, Johanna Collins 971-673-1137	Adoptions Debbie Draghia 971-673-1152 Delayed Filings Becki Buskirk 971-673-1147
Death Corrections Patty Thompson 971-673-1163	OVERS Helpdesk 971-673-0279

CHS Managers

State Registrar Jennifer Woodward 971-673-1185	OVERS Manager Karen Hampton 971-673-1191
Amendments/Certification Manager Carol Sanders 971-673-1178	Data Processing Supervisor Cynthia Roeser 971-673-0478
Statistics Manager Joyce Grant-Worley 971-673-1156	Certification Supervisor Karen Rangan 971-673-1182
Registration Manager JoAnn Jackson 971-673-1160	

The Center for Health Statistics' office is located at:

800 N.E. Oregon St.,
Suite 225
Portland, OR 97232-2162

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14050
Portland, OR 97293-0050

General info: 971-673-1180
Order vital records: 971-673-1190

Website: <http://public.health.oregon.gov/BirthDeathCertificates>

OVERS website: <http://healthoregon.org/overs>

