



Timberline, Mount Hood, Oregon by Carol Munro, <https://flic.kr/p/eVwayQ>

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

Issue: September 2015

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Vital records fees to increase

The Vital Records fee increase has been approved by the Oregon Legislature as part of the Oregon Health Authority’s budget. Since the new fees are established in rule, we will be completing the rule-making process in time for the fees to be effective on January 1, 2016. Please note that the amounts of the fees will not be finalized until rule-making is complete. We plan to have the administrative rules finalized on November 1, 2015. The proposed fee schedule is on page 2. This fee schedule was supported by the rules advisory committee in August. We anticipate the attached fee schedule to be accepted with only minor changes.

Please stay tuned as more information on the new fees is forthcoming in the next couple of months. If you have any questions, Jennifer Woodward is the preferred contact at (971)-673-1185 or Jennifer.A.Woodward@state.or.us. ❖



Salem, Oregon by JaspSalem, Oregon by Jasperdo, <https://flic.kr/p/qZVWnK>

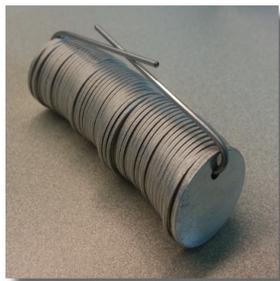
[Archived articles online](#)



Proposed Vital Records Fee Schedule (proposed effective date: January 1, 2016) Not all services shown. See rules for complete information.			
Services	Current Fee	New fee Jan. 1, 2016	New fee Jan. 1, 2018
Birth Certificates - First Copy	\$20.00	\$25.00	\$25.00
- Each Additional Copy	\$15.00	\$20.00	\$25.00
Death, Fetal Death, Marriage, or Divorce Certificates - First Copy	\$20.00	\$25.00	\$25.00
- Each Additional Copy	\$15.00	\$20.00	\$25.00
Expedite (Handling Charges)	\$5.50	\$7.00	\$7.00
Amendments	\$30.00	\$35.00	\$35.00
Certificate Replacement Fee	\$20/flat fee for 4 or more	\$5.00/ per replacement	\$5.00/ per re- placement
Verification Fee	\$8.00/first 10 for free	\$10.00/first 5 for free	\$10.00/first 5 for free
New fees			
Certified copy of birth record <i>requested as image</i>		\$30.00	\$30.00
Pre-adoption birth record (<i>not previously separate service</i>)		\$30.00	\$30.00
Contact Preference form		\$25.00	\$25.00
Amendment expedite fee		\$30.00	\$30.00

Fee discontinued for burial and cremation metal discs

Effective October 1, 2015, the Center for Health Statistics will **no longer charge** \$.09 per disc (or \$4.50/roll) for metal discs, also known as ID tags. Orders for metal discs received on or after October 1, 2015 will be **free of charge**. Please



make sure to notify your business offices. We are only able to process refunds for overpayments in excess of \$6.00. Metal discs can be requested from our *Request for Vital Records Forms and Tags* (Form 45-43) at <https://public.health.oregon.gov/BirthDeathCertificates/RegisterVitalRecords/Documents/45-43.pdf>.



Social Security Administration's online verification service available within limited hours

The Center for Health Statistics recently learned that the Social Security Administration (SSA) does not schedule the online verification service (OVS) to be available 24/7 as OVERS is. If you are attempting to confirm a social security number outside of the hours shown below, you will likely receive a 'SYSERR' message. SSA's OVS is a national system, so

available times are set by Washington D.C. See table below for SSA OVS availability, converted to Pacific Time.

We have also received Frequently Asked Questions from SSA and have added that information to our website at 1.usa.gov/1E8miHi. If you have any questions about OVS, please contact the OVERS help desk at 971-673-0279. ❖

Monday-Friday	2:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Saturday	2:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Sunday	5:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Federal Holidays	Same availability based on day of week noted above

Funeral home monthly reports

Currently, monthly funeral home reports are mailed to each funeral home. However, we would like to begin sending you these reports via email by October or November 2015. In order to receive them, we need to ensure that we have your correct and current email address.

By **September 25, 2015**, please provide the email address of the funeral home manager or director at your funeral home. Include the

full name of the manager or director associated with the email address and include the current telephone number for the funeral home. This information will ensure that we have updated information for each funeral home.

Send the email address, name of manager or director and telephone number to Lynda Jackson at lynda.l.jackson@state.or.us. Her telephone number is 971-673-1164. Thank you. ❖

What keeps a report of death from being legally sufficient?

A death record must have specific items completed for it to be legally sufficient. The county is responsible for reviewing the death report to make sure it is legally sufficient to be registered. Only then may the family or funeral director purchase certified copies.

Below is a list of the information that, if **missing** from the death report, would keep the record from being legally sufficient.

If any of the information below is missing, then a record is not considered legally sufficient and cannot be registered. The

record will be returned to the funeral director to supply the missing information prior to registration. If a funeral director or medical certifier changes any information a correction affidavit should accompany the record to the county. The changes to the record may be completed by county staff if they receive an affidavit before the original report of death is sent to the state office. Otherwise, it will be forwarded to the Center for Health Statistics for processing.

If you have any questions, please call Cynthia Roeser at 971-673-0478 or email her at cynthia.r.roeser@state.or.us. ❖

OVERS Screen	Item needed for legal sufficiency
Decedent	Decedents legal name
	Sex
	Date of birth
Disposition	ID tag number
Pronouncement	Date of death
	Time of death
Place of death	Type of place of death and /or facility name
	Address location of place of death
Cause of death	Cause of death
Other factors	Autopsy
	Tobacco
	Manner of death
	Case referred to Medical Examiner
Certifier – Medical	Name and address of medical certifier
	Title of certifier
	Oregon license number of certifier
Signatures and dates signed	On drop to paper copies for both funeral director and medical certifier.

Report card on timeliness and quality

Funeral directors are essential partners in obtaining complete, accurate and timely information on death records. In the past, the Center for Health Statistics has only addressed issues at a record-specific level. Now, we have a new report providing information to each funeral home on several important measures including timeliness and frequency of unknown items.

The first section of the report shows the total registered and unregistered deaths from your funeral home for the reported month. Unregistered deaths are included in the report because they may indicate problems with record information that delay registration. Remember that death records should be available within 5 days of the event.

The second section shows the method used to submit the record

Funeral directors should submit death reports within 5 days of the death event.

(electronic, hybrid and paper). The goal is to have all death records filed electronically. For the month of July 2015, the average time between date of death and registration for an electronic record is 7.2 days. By comparison, paper and hybrid records can take from 17 to 26 days longer to be registered at the state. Decedents' families and government organizations that work with vital record statistical data both benefit from timelier registration of death records.

The third section of the report gives information about how well your funeral

home is meeting Oregon law for timeliness of death records. Please see the example of the section report on page six. The first column contains a description of the timeliness measure. The second is the number of records that met the timeliness measure. The third column shows the percentage of this funeral home's records that met the goal. The requirements are included in our instructions for reading the Funeral Home Report located at <http://1.usa.gov/1NJva9a>.

Another important measure in the report is how often "unknown" is used for answering certain questions on the death record. The lower the percentage of unknowns, the better quality of data we receive. For example, "Birthplace of decedent – state" when answered with "unknown" can prevent or delay the death record from being matched with a birth record from that state. Identifying that a person is deceased on their birth record is one way of preventing fraud. Valuable statistical information may also be lost if questions such as "US veteran served in combat" are answered with "unknown".

The lower the percentage of unknowns, the better quality of data we receive.

(Continued on page 6)

Funeral Home X

Funeral Home Report for Deaths Occurring 01/01/2015 to 01/31/2015

Total deaths filed	21
Death reports registered	21
Not yet registered	0

Record type:

Electronic	8	38.1 %
Hybrid	13	61.9 %
Paper	0	0.0 %

Timeliness of records:

Registered or filed at county within five days of death	8	38.1 %
Electronic/hybrid signed within three days of death	16	76.2 %
Electronic - medical certification requested within three days of death (non-Medical Examiner)	1	12.5 %
Medical certifier signed within five days of death	10	47.6 %

Unknowns - National questions:

			National Standard
Birthplace of decedent - state	3	14.29 %	1.15%
Place of residence	0	0.00 %	1.13%
Inside city limits	1	4.76 %	1.00%
Marital status	0	0.00 %	1.00%
Education of decedent	0	0.00 %	2.06%

Unknowns - State questions:

			State Standard
U.S. veteran	0	0.00 %	10.00%
If U.S. veteran, served in combat	0	0.00 %	10.00%

The questions are followed by the number of records that had an answer of “unknown”. The second column is the percentage of registered records for the month that answered that question with “unknown”. The third column shows the national average for answering “unknown” on that question. As you can see from the example, the funeral home is doing better than the national standard for three of the five questions and worse than the national standard for two questions.

We hope this report will be a valuable tool for your funeral home. The report can give you an accurate account of how you are doing with four important performance measures. We sent out the first Funeral Home Report in March 2015. Your funeral home should receive the report monthly. Please contact JoAnn Jackson, State Registration Manager at 971-673-1160 if you believe you have not received this report or if you have any questions about the law and your facility’s performance. ❖

How are you doing on veterans' combat status data collection?

In March 2015, staff at the Center for Health Statistics (CHS) published a newsletter article titled, "Veterans' Combat Status Reporting". Since this article's publication, reporting of veteran status has improved in death certificates. The percentage of unknown or missing responses on the veteran combat status question in 2015 has decreased to 23% statewide as of July 20, 2015. Please check out our website at <http://1.usa.gov/1X7NSun> to see how your funeral home is doing. We still need your help to meet the statewide goal of **10% or lower** "unknown" responses for the combat status question.

Nineteen funeral homes requiring improvement received letters, dated January 12, 2015. A majority of these funeral homes improved their reporting on the combat status and combat zones questions, but some did not improve or worsened. Telephone contact was made directly to those funeral homes.



Proper reporting of veteran-related questions can save you time from revisiting the death reports, and provides accurate data for public health uses. You can help improve responses to the combat status question by taking the following actions:

- Review the [death certificate worksheet](#) you use to gather information from an informant to make sure the two new questions on veterans' combat status and combat zones are in place;
- [Train](#) and remind funeral home staff to ask the veterans' combat status and combat zone questions for all veteran decedents;
- Communicate with funeral home facilities with good reporting percentages to get tips to improve reporting.

Good reporting with a low percentage of veterans with unknown or missing combat status is possible. Kudos to the funeral homes listed in the following table, who have done an outstanding job collecting the veteran-related information. They all achieved a 10% or lower unknown/missing rate to the combat status question. Keep up the great work! (See table on following page)❖

Announcing new counter service hours

Starting September 14th, the new in person counter hours will be 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. ❖

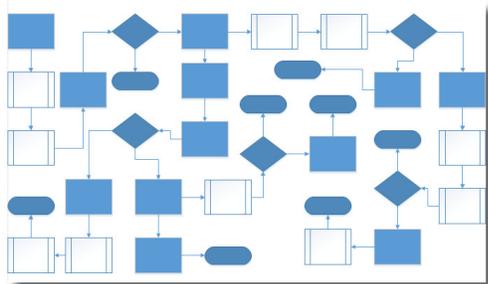


Kudos to funeral homes meeting the goal

Funeral homes with less than 10% unknown/ missing responses to the veteran combat status question, 2015 (Jan- July 20th YTD)	
Aasum-Dufour Funeral Home	Lane Memorial Funeral Home
Affordable Funeral Alternatives	Macy & Son Funeral Directors
Amling/Schroeder Funeral Service - Bandon Chapel	McHenry Funeral Home, Inc.
Amling/Schroeder Funeral Service - Myrtle Point Chapel	Mt. Scott Funeral Home
Aurora Cremation & Burial Services	Murphy-Musgrove Funeral Home
Autumn Funerals, Redmond	Myrtle Grove Funeral Service
Barrick Funeral Home Inc	Myrtle Grove Funeral Service - Bay Area
Burns Mortuary Of Hermiston	Nelson's Bay Area Mortuary
Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary Inc.	Niswonger - Reynolds Funeral Home
Canby Funeral Chapel	Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service
Cascade Decedent Care	Ocean View Memory Gardens Cremation and Burial Service
Conger-Morris Funeral Directors	Pacific View Memorial Chapel
Crown Memorial Center, Cremation & Burial - Salem	Peake Funeral Chapel & Cremation Services
Dakan Funeral Chapel	Poole-Larsen Funeral Home Inc.
Deschutes Memorial Chapel	Redmond Memorial Chapel
Desert Rose Funeral Chapel	River View Cemetery Funeral Home
Donelson Funeral Chapel & Cremation Services	Roseburg Funeral Alternatives
Emily's Cremation And Burial Service	Simon-Cornwell Colonial Chapel
Farnstrom Mortuary	Smith-Lund-Mills Funeral Chapel
Fisher Funeral Home, Inc.	Southern Oregon Cremation Services
Grants Pass Funeral Alternatives	Sunset Hills Funeral Home
Gresham Memorial Chapel	Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home and Cremation Services
Hillside Chapel	Taylor's Family Mortuary
Holman-Hankins-Bowker & Waud Funeral Service	Umpqua Valley Funeral Directors
Hubbard Chapel Inc	Unger Funeral Chapel
Hughes-Ransom Mortuary - Astoria	Unger Funeral Chapel - Mt. Angel
Hull & Hull Funeral Directors	West Lawn Memorial Funeral Home
Illinois Valley Funeral Directors	Westside Cremation and Burial
Keizer Funeral Chapel & Cremation	Whispering Pines Funeral Home
LaFollette's Chapel	Zeller Chapel Of The Roses

RPI – Records now registered more quickly

In March of this year, our Center for Health Statistics (CHS) Registration unit began a Rapid Process Improvement (RPI) plan to improve the workflow of registering death



records at the state vital records office.

Oregon’s process meetings were facilitated by a member of the state’s Performance Management Team, trained in leading RPI processes. CHS Registration staff completed six four-hour meetings over a four-week period. The results to date have eliminated unnecessary or duplicative steps to improve workflow. Two staff have improved their processing lag times from 5-7 days to the same day or next day. Additionally, OVERS queues have made it possible for staff to more quickly find records in various stages of processing as the records are being completed. We should also be able to complete any amendments and corrections a

little faster.

At this time, the RPI design stage is complete. Our new process supports immediate registration of most death records if they are “legally sufficient”.

“Legally sufficient” means certain line items on the death record must be completed in accordance with law in order for the record to be registered. Funeral directors can help this process by ensuring line items are completed, allowing the death record to be considered “legally sufficient” to be registered. See our companion article on page 4 of this newsletter for the specifics of legal sufficiency.

We continue to evaluate and establish a smooth workflow to put the process into daily practice. We are hopeful that an improved and leaner workflow will better support the state registration team even when staffing levels fluctuate. Also, the improvements should result in better customer service for state partners and customers.

If you have questions, feel free to contact JoAnn Jackson at 971-673-1160, or by email at joann.jackson@state.or.us. ❖

Oregon awarded funds to help improve ease of use by doctors

The Oregon Center for Health Statistics recently learned that we have been awarded a second contract related to increasing use of OVERS. This contract will focus on OVERS functionality:

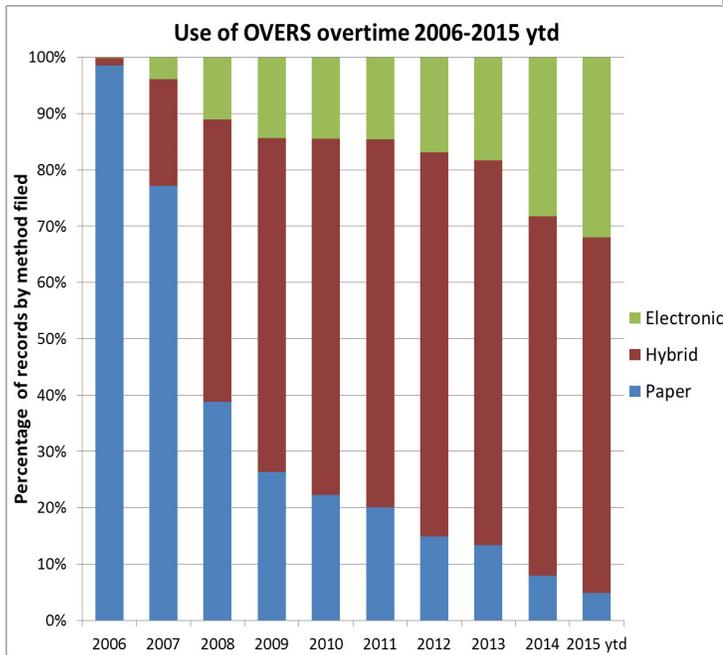
1. The ability to use signing pens as an alternative to biometrics; and
2. The ability for the funeral director to

enter time of death and change the date of death *when there is no medical owner*.

CHS will be working with the vendor to schedule these important upgrades to OVERS. Our goal is to improve ease of use for both medical certifiers and funeral directors while maintaining data integrity. We will share more information as it becomes available. ❖

OVERS use by medical certifiers: what you can do to help ?

The Center for Health Statistics continues to recruit funeral directors and medical certifiers to use OVERS. In the past 18 months we have almost doubled the proportion of fully electronic records, from 18% in 2013 to 33% in May 2015.



Currently less than 5% of records are traditional paper records. Of the 14 funeral homes that have filed only paper records in 2015, thirteen are located in Washington or Idaho. There is only one Oregon funeral home not yet using OVERS. The benefits of using OVERS include quick online confirmation of a decedent's social security number, flagging of blank fields that could cause the record to be rejected as incomplete, and prompt electronic amendments once the record is registered (same day approval in most cases).

The use of OVERS by a funeral director makes it possible for the medical certifier to complete a record electronically as well and, for deaths that occur in hospitals, comply with law. Funeral directors promoting the

use of OVERS to medical certifiers is important for our success, which in turn is important for the families. In the two Oregon counties that are fully electronic (Harney) or almost fully electronic (Lake, at 97% electronic), records are registered much faster than the average in Oregon. In fact, Lake is the only county in Oregon to meet vital records law with an average of less than five days between date of death and date registered.

Lake County is meeting five day registration requirement.

Moving towards fully electronic

Our goal currently is for 80% of Oregon deaths to be fully electronic. Use by funeral directors exceeds that goal at 95%, so our efforts during the past 18 months have primarily focused on hospitals. This is because of Oregon's new law requiring use of OVERS for deaths at hospitals with more than ten deaths the previous year. Recent additions among hospitals include Kaiser Sunnyside (71% electronic usage in May), Kaiser Westside (85%), Salem (55%) and Sky Lakes (43%). However, through your actions and those of medical certifiers, we also have been contacted by several individual doctors and clinics about using OVERS. We are happy to have any medical certifier (or funeral director) implement OVERS for our mutual benefit.

Resources available

We have several resources available for promoting OVERS to medical certifiers.

- We recently updated the *Electronic Registration of Death Records brochure*. Funeral homes were sent a small supply

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to give to medical certifiers and additional copies are available on request.

- *General information*, including user enrollment forms, is available online.
- *Specific information for clinics and hospitals on implementing OVERS* is available online. This includes the decisions that need to be made to successfully implement OVERS at a facility with many users. It also includes the resources available (onsite or distance) to help with installing biometrics, creating users and enrolling fingerprints.
- *Self-paced online training*. We know how difficult it is to get doctors together at a set time to receive training on the death record and on OVERS. We have self-paced training available on the *content* of the death record (relevant whether electronic or paper) that is used nationally, and Oregon-specific training on the use of OVERS.

- *Live trainings* (primarily distance webinars). These trainings are generally aimed at staff that will support medical certifiers in facility administrator or medical records staff roles. While our help desk is available to all users, we know doctors generally prefer to keep questions in-house.
- *Spot training by OVERS staff*. We will gladly walk through entering a record or creating amendment with medical certifiers (or funeral directors) as part of the training process. This can be as limited as how to resolve an edit on one field to entering all medical information and certifying.

Information online is located at www.healthoregon.org/overs. Our help desk is staffed 8 AM – 5 PM Monday through Friday. Call us with any questions or if copies of the brochure are needed. Please continue to help us promote OVERS to medical certifiers. ❖

Wanted—Newsletter topics

Have a question or idea for a future newsletter article? Contact Judy Shioishi, at 971-673-1166 or judy.shioishi@state.or.us. Judy collects ideas for articles and then shares them with the writing team.

Thank you to the contributors of this newsletter:

Carolyn Hogg, Joyce Grant-Worley, Karen Hampton, Carlos Herrera, Patty Thompson, Carol Sanders, Melissa Alarcon Evans, Vivian Siu, James Burke, Lynda Jackson, Steven Baird, Karen Rangan, JoAnn Jackson, Melissa Franklin, Megan Welter, Cynthia Roeser, Karen Cooper and Jennifer Woodward.

We're just a phone call away

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Portland, OR 97293-0050

General Information: 971-673-1190
Order Vital Records: 1-888-896-4988

Website: [http://public.health.oregon.gov/
BirthDeathCertificates](http://public.health.oregon.gov/BirthDeathCertificates)

OVERS website: [http://
public.health.oregon.gov/
BirthDeathCertificates/
RegisterVitalRecords/overs/Pages/
index.aspx](http://public.health.oregon.gov/BirthDeathCertificates/RegisterVitalRecords/overs/Pages/index.aspx)

