# NYS EDRS Newsletter

## Pilot Program Starting for Medical Examiner/Coroner Cases in EDRS

New York State's use of the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) has initially encompassed only natural deaths occurring in a health care facility. That covers about 80% of the deaths in New York State. We are planning to expand the case load to include unattended and unnatural cause deaths later this winter. Those cases typically require the involvement of a county medical examiner (ME) or coroner.

To prepare for expansion to cover ME/coroner cases, EDRS developers have incorporated an initial set of requirements gathered from EDRS user group ME/coroners. Through our outreach with ME/coroners we learned that the case work flow processes on unattended and unnatural death cases can vary depending on the circumstances of the case, the policies and practices at the specific health care facility that may be involved, the policies of the local registration district, the credentials of the ME/coroner, and the location and affiliation of any additional data providers who may need to be brought into the case such as a medical certifier serving as coroner's physician. It has been a challenge to turn all that process variation into system specifications and data work flows that work technically in the system, while also working functionally for MEs, coroners, health care providers and facilities, funeral firms, and local registrars. Because of the overarching need to manage and limit data access we have changed some of our initial approaches so that ME/coroners will have the control and case ownership they told us they need.

### NYSACCME Conference Presentation

The NYSDOH EDRS implementation team presented an information session for ME/coroners at the fall 2017 conference of the NYS Association of County Coroners and Medical Examiners (NYSACCME). The EDRS presentation was held Friday, September 15, in Syracuse. Coroners and medical examiners from across the state attended the program to learn more about how EDRS will impact the way death certificates are completed.

### Next Steps—Pilot Program

Two ME/coroner offices are now gearing up for a trial run using EDRS to process cases this fall. This pilot program will test the ME/coroner work flow built so far in EDRS, and provide first-hand feedback and input for additional features or processes that may be needed.

## Key Dates
### Completed

**June 2017**

- 6/5/2017 NYSDOH EDRS program coordinator Kira Cramer presented EDRS Overview webinar for health organizations HANYS, GNYHA, and Iroquois Healthcare

- 6/12/2017 Region 4 go-live in EDRS

- 8/1/2017 Social Security Number online verification began within EDRS

- 8/2/2017 Region 5 go-live in EDRS

- 8/21/2017 NYSDOH began configuration and testing the EDRS Spontaneous Fetal Death module

### Upcoming

- 9/2017 ME/coroner Pilot Program to begin in EDRS in select counties

- 10/2/2017 Region 6 will go-live in EDRS

- 10/17/2017 Fetal Death Module Demonstration for Fetal Death User Group and Fetal Death Pilot participants

- 11/29/2017 Region 7 will go-live in EDRS

## Fast Facts

**17,500+** *EDRS users*

**12,458** *Cases filed electronically using EDRS, as of September 20, 2017*

**43** *Counties in New York State are processing electronic death certificates in EDRS, as of September 20, 2017*

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## 43 Counties Are Using EDRS

| | |
|---|---|
| Albany | Otsego |
| Allegany | Putnam |
| Cattaraugus | Rensselaer |
| Cayuga | Rockland |
| Chautauqua | Saratoga |
| Chemung | Schenectady |
| Columbia | Schoharie |
| Delaware | Schuyler |
| Dutchess | Seneca |
| Erie | Steuben |
| Fulton | Suffolk |
| Genesee | Sullivan |
| Greene | Tioga |
| Livingston | Tompkins |
| Monroe | Ulster |
| Montgomery | Yates |
| Nassau | Warren |
| Niagara | Washington |
| Onondaga | Wayne |
| Ontario | Westchester |
| Orange | Wyoming |
| Orleans | |

# Testing is Underway on the New Fetal Death Module in EDRS

Initial software development has been completed on New York State's Fetal Death module in EDRS. The module is now being tested and configured to prepare for pilot implementation at select hospitals that have agreed to pilot the system. Pilot testing is currently planned to begin this winter. Full implementation roll-out to the rest of the state is expected to begin spring 2018.

The EDRS fetal death module will enable health care practitioners to report spontaneous fetal deaths electronically. Spontaneous fetal deaths include miscarriages, stillbirths, and other forms of non-induced fetal death in which there is no evidence of a heart beat or voluntary muscle movement upon delivery. NYS public health law and the Centers for Disease Control National Center for Health Statistics (CDC-NCHS) require that *all fetal deaths be reported.* NYS law does not have different reporting requirements for different gestational ages. The functional requirements of the fetal death system were based mainly on the reporting mandated by NYS and CDC-NCHS. NYS believes the reporting requirement has not been well-understood, and as a result some fetal deaths have not been reported in the past.

Like EDRS, the fetal death module will prepare the death certificate, as well as the report of fetal death that is submitted to the local registrar. The fetal death module guides the health care practitioner through completion of the form. Although the final printed certificate of fetal death contains less data than is requested by the fetal death module, the additional health and demographic data captured in the fetal death module are sent to CDC-NCHS for statistical tracking purposes. The health and demographic data are used to better understand causes and circumstances of fetal death and to improve relevant health care and health education. *The better the data that medical certifiers enter into a fetal death case, the more that data can be used to improve future maternal and fetal health programs.*

An electronic fetal death registration user group was formed earlier this year to begin outreach with future users of the system. Additional user group communications will be forthcoming as the fetal death module enters the pilot phase and we begin roll-out to the rest of the state. If you are interested in joining the fetal death user group to serve as a catalyst for communication to and from the NYSDOH and others at your health care facility, send an email to the electronic fetal death registration mailbox at efdr@health.ny.gov.

# EDRS Tech Talk

## Duplicate Case—"Abandon Case" and Review Overrides

If you get an error message in EDRS indicating a potential duplicate case exists, please phone the EDRS Call Center [1-844-866-EDRS (3377)] or send an email to the EDRS team (edrs@health.ny.gov) to request that one of the duplicate's be "abandoned". We cannot delete a case, even if is not being used, but when we can mark it as abandoned that removes the unused case from the work queue.

You will still get an error message about the duplicate case after it has been abandoned. Override the error message, save overrides, and then revalidate the page. In the Registration menu on the left, that page will still be marked with a yellow dot because of your override on the error message. That's ok. You can continue to certify/sign and register the case.

## Personalized Help At the EDRS Call Center

EDRS technical support is available weekdays 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. via the EDRS Call Center: 1-844-866-EDRS (3377). The Call Center may need to connect you directly with an EDRS team member or HCS account coordinator to troubleshoot a specific problem you are having.

If you do not reach a live person when you call, that would usually be because EDRS or CAMU team members are assisting other callers, or because it is outside of regular technical support hours.

If you don't reach us when you call, please leave us a message by voice message or by email to the EDRS team (edrs@health.ny.gov) so that we can follow up with you as soon as we are available. When leaving a message, it is helpful to provide the following information:

- Your name
- Your telephone number
- Name of your firm/organization
- The Case ID number
- The EDRS page on which you have a question or are experiencing an issue

**To protect the privacy of case data,** please do **not** provide in your message any case information other than the Case ID number.

## Tips for Searching for a Case in EDRS

- If you *do not yet own* the case, you need to search for it using **Start/Edit New Case**.

- If you or your organization already owns the case, then you can use **Locate Case** or **Start/Edit New Case** to search for it. Remember, if your organization does not

yet own the case, then you will never find the case using Locate Case.

- If you are a Funeral Firm you should *not* create a new case. The Medical professional creates the case in EDRS. You can search for a case using the Start/Edit New Case search screen, but funeral firms should **not** click the Start New Case button on the search results page.

- If you started or took ownership of the case while logged in under the wrong facility, you do **not** need to create a new case; instead, just move the existing case over the correct facility. How?

  ⇒ If you are medical facility, use **Transfer Case** option to transfer Medical ownership.

  ⇒ If you are a funeral firm, use **Relinquish Case** option to transfer Personal ownership.

- The **Start New Case** button on the Start/Edit New Case search results page means "create a brand new case from scratch." Don't click that button unless you are a medical facility and you know the case was not already created.

- If you are having trouble finding a case that you know was already created in EDRS, then try to find out exactly how the decedent's name was entered into EDRS when the case was created so you can be sure to enter the name the same way in your search criteria. If your organization has not yet taken ownership of the case, then you have to use Start/Edit New Case to find the case the first time.

- When you find the case in the search results list, **click the** hyperlinked **decedent's name** to open the case for editing. Don't click the Start New Case button, because that button will **not** open an existing case; it will create an entirely new case.

## HCS Coordinators—Removing an EDRS User from Your Organization

To HCS/HPN Coordinators: When a former EDRS user leaves your organization/office, removing their access to your organization's EDRS data is a two-step process.

1. The HCS Coordinator needs to remove the former employee's **Role** using the *Coordinator's Update Tool*.

2. The HCS Coordinator also needs to request that the EDRS Implementation Team remove the user's EDRS account mapping to the organization/office in EDRS. To request the change to the user account mapping in EDRS, the **HCS Coordinator should send an email** to the EDRS Implementation Team (edrs@health.ny.gov). In your email message please provide the user's name, their user ID, the name of your organization/office, and the effective date of removal from your roster.

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## Use % Wildcard Symbol in Look-up Tool

When looking up a person, facility/organization using the Look-up Tool magnifying glass or Places look-up tool house icon, you will find more possible matches if you use the **%** symbol wildcard in your search criteria.

It's not uncommon for the name/place you are looking up to be in the EDRS database a little differently than how you would spell it out ; a space , hyphen or word could be different. You will get better look-up results by entering just a small portion of the name followed and/or preceded by the **%** symbol, no spaces.

In the example below we have entered the first three letters of the person's last name, followed by the % symbol. This will find everyone who's last name starts with those letters.
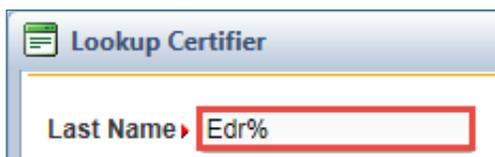


## Ongoing Training in EDRS

**Recurring "Webinar" Training Sessions –** Instructor-led training sessions are offered for any EDRS user each month as live, web-based sessions that use WebEx application for you to see and hear a live demo of the parts of the system that pertain to your role, ask questions and get immediate answers and discussion of the topic. Advanced registration is required to attend these sessions. Visit the EDRS website for more information and to register for a course: EDRS Website – https://www.health.ny.gov/vital_records/edrs/

**Live Regional Training –** As we approach a region's scheduled go-live date for EDRS, we offer region-specific, instructor-led web-based training. As part of the EDRS onboarding process we reach out to prospective EDRS users by email as your region's go-live date approaches to get users set up in the NYSDOH Health Commerce System, in EDRS, and registered for training. Watch for emails from NYSDOH, and be sure to respond promptly so you will be ready to go on your go-live date.

**Other Learning Resources –** On the EDRS website you will also find self-paced video tutorials, recorded Webinar training sessions, and written instructions, procedures, quick reference guides, and frequently asked questions (FAQs) that you can access online or print out to refer back to whenever you need help. CEU and CME credit is available for many of our courses/tutorials.

**LMS Courses Available –** Many of our EDRS tutorials/ courses are available for installation in your learning management system in SCORM 1.2 format. If your organization has a learning management system, your training administrator/coordinator can download the SCORM courses from the EDRS website.

## SSN Online Verification Is Working

The **Verify SSN** link on the Decedent page became active for funeral directors at the beginning of August. Clicking that link sends the decedent's key identity information to the Social Security Administration (SSA) for nearly instant verification.
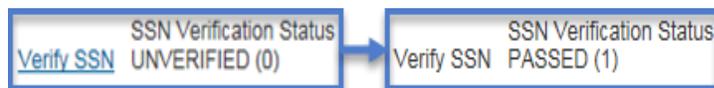


When it returns a status of PASSED, that saves the funeral director from having to file a separate form with the SSA, and families/beneficiaries no longer need to wait weeks or months for the verification before they can request insurance benefits they may be eligible to receive.

Many funeral directors we have spoken with are enthusiastically embracing this new EDRS feature.

## Update on EDRS/HCS Session Time-Out Feature

An updated security feature was previously announced for the Health Commerce System (HCS) and Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS). The new time-out feature is not yet in use; it has been deferred until later this year.

HCS currently times out when your keyboard and mouse have been idle in the HCS or EDRS window for an extended time, but the current feature runs in the background without communication with you.

The new time-out feature will be more informative. It will pop up a warning on your screen a few minutes before your session is timed out, giving you the option to extend/ continue your session. The warning message will look something like this:
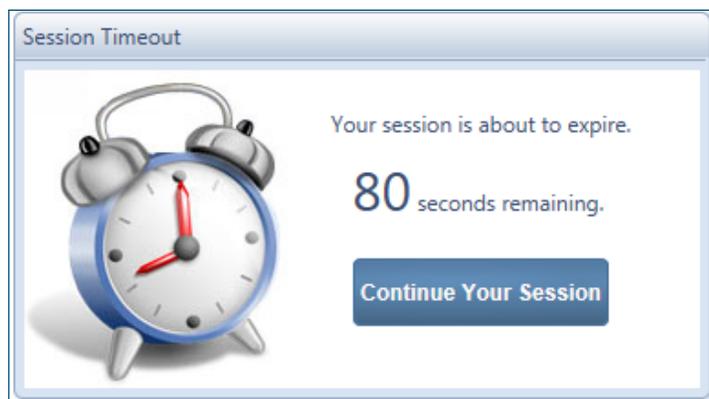


As long as you are actively working on your computer, your session will not time out, and you will be able to continue working in EDRS.

**Reminder:** For privacy and security, don't leave a case unattended. If you are going to be away from your computer or focus on other tasks, you should save your work and log out of EDRS.

# Upcoming Improvements to EDRS

You can expect to see the following improvements in EDRS this winter:

- On the **Select Your Office** page when you log into EDRS, your organization's registration/license number will display after the name of the office to help you differentiate them when you are affiliated with multiple offices/facilities that have the same or similar names. This should help you to select the intended office for your EDRS session.

- The **Start New Case** button on the search results screen will be changing its name. The text on the new button will be:

> **If case does not appear above, start new case**

That long button label might not seem entirely intuitive as a button, but some other states using the EDRS system have found this button label helpful for preventing accidental duplicate cases.
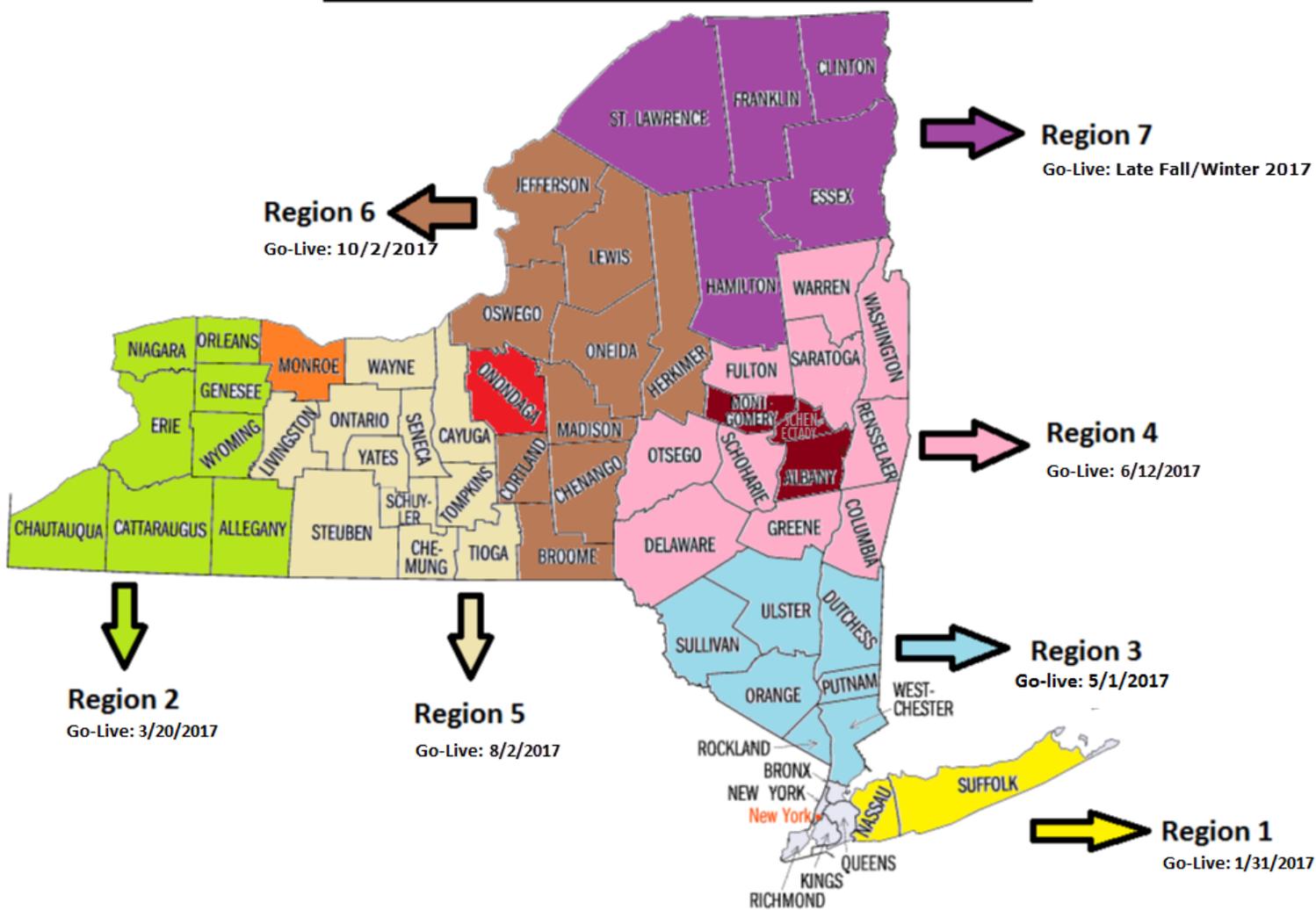
- A pop-up confirmation message will be added on the Start New Case button...soon to be renamed the "*If case does not appear above, start new case*" button. The pop-up message will remind you that you are creating a whole new case if you continue, and it will give you some hints on other things you should try first if you think the case might have already been created.

- **Transfer Case** option will be improved so that Funeral Firms can use it instead of using **Relinquish Case** to transfer a case to another firm. We think you will find Transfer Case to be more efficient.

- The medical owner of a case will have the ability to request medical certification from an external medical professional who is not affiliated with the same facility—**Request Non-Affiliated Certification**.

- A medical certifier will have the ability to certify an unnatural death case as long as the case "owner" is a medical examiner/coroner.

- On the Decedent page, a validation rule will be applied to the following fields to prompt medical facility users to enter the information: *"Was decedent transferred from another institution"*, and *"Medical Record Number"*. The question *"Was a decedent transferred from another institution"* pertains to the death event only. If the decedent was transferred previously for a reason not related to their death, then the appropriate answer may be "no".

- Private practice physicians will have the ability to self-enroll their office in EDRS for purposes of providing medical certification on cases in which their facility does not necessarily "own" the case. This will be most helpful when we begin processing unattended and unnatural deaths in which a coroner or hospital emergency department may want to refer the case to the decedent's physician to provide medical history and medical certification.

## EDRS IMPLEMENTATION ROLL-OUT MAP
Revised: 8/10/2017

**Region 7**
Go-Live: Late Fall/Winter 2017

**Region 6**
Go-Live: 10/2/2017

**Region 4**
Go-Live: 6/12/2017

**Region 2**
Go-Live: 3/20/2017

**Region 5**
Go-Live: 8/2/2017

**Region 3**
Go-live: 5/1/2017

**Region 1**
Go-Live: 1/31/2017

To prepare for go-live in EDRS, stakeholders need to get **HCS and EDRS user accounts and roles set up and attend training** before their go-live date.

To get started, visit the EDRS website: http://www.health.ny.gov/vital_records/edrs/

If you are not yet using EDRS, **please respond promptly to all emails** from NYS Department of Health to be sure you are ready to start using EDRS on your region's go-live date.