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EDRS Unit Contact Information

The NYS Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Records (BVR) has enacted contingency protocols to continue supporting you during the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis, while keeping our staff healthy and mitigating the spread of the virus. In an effort to safeguard our team and still provide seamless support to our external stakeholders, many BVR staff will be working remotely.

Support Options

Please start by reviewing self-directed publications available to all external users.

⇒ Review documentation and reference materials
  - Under the EDRS Help menu

⇒ Email the EDRS Team at edrs@health.ny.gov - This Monitored by team and the most timely for responses.

⇒ Call the EDRS Call Center at 1-844-866-EDRS (3377) If your call cannot be resolved and is transferred to the EDRS Unit, LEAVE A MESSAGE, and an EDRS Team member will return your call as quickly as possible.

⇒ If you need assistance with your Health Commerce System (HCS) account, contact the Commerce Account Management Unit (CAMU) at 1-866-529-1890 option 1.

EDRS Team Support Hours

The EDRS mailbox and phone support hours, during this crisis are:

⇒ M-F: 7am-6pm
⇒ Sat-Sun: 7am-6pm (Email support only)

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Information, Training and Documentation at https://www.health.ny.gov/vital_records/
Amendments and Corrections

E-Filing expanded to all Medical Examiners/Coroners

With the current climate across New York State, the Bureau of Vital Records has decided to expedite rollout of electronic submission of death corrections/amendments through the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) for all *electronically filed cases* to all Medical Examiners and medically licensed Coroners. Electronic submissions will accelerate approval of corrections to *electronically filed* death records in support of timely and accurate data reporting to State and Federal agencies and provide closure to families with final issuance of the corrected death certificate. Originally, The electronic amendment process was piloted extensively in Monroe County, and more recently in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

Beginning Monday, April 20, 2020, any Medical Examiner or medically licensed Coroner in NYS can submit corrections for *electronically filed death records* via the EDRS. Personal (demographic) changes still require documentary evidence, which can be faxed to (518) 474-2785 after noted on the electronic submission. You will see an Amendment option other the Other Links menu after accessing an EDRS death record.

**NOTE:** Cases that have been “Dropped to Paper” (see EDRS case status bar) cannot be corrected electronically in EDRS. *Dropped to Paper records and records filed on paper will continue to be corrected on paper.*

- In lieu of guided training, refer to the Amendments Quick Reference Guide available on the EDRS public website and the EDRS Help menu within the application.
- If you need assistance contact AmendCorrect@health.ny.gov.
- If you would like to arrange an online training session for your office, please email Serean Smart at serean.smart@health.ny.gov.

Notice to All Local Registrars, statewide:

As part of the electronic amendment process, data providers *with electronic amendment permissions* will no longer submit correction forms or documentation to the Local Registrars unless otherwise directed.*

Local Registrars, through EDRS system-generated messaging, will see an increase in approved amendments that were submitted directly to the State from the data providers. The Amendment Approval notification will make you aware that a death certificate has been amended. **Your role is still important** in the process; Funeral Directors will continue to request certified copies from you. It is imperative that local file copies are up to date.

You are encouraged to

- Inspect the corrected vault copies compared to your filed copy.
- Report any discrepancies or concerns you may have to the State via edrs@health.ny.gov, include "Amendment" or "Correction" in the subject line.
- Make new copies for your files, as applicable, for both the Vault Copy and the new Registered Death Certificate Without Cause of Death forms.

*Local Registrars still submit amendments on behalf of Funeral Directors not based in Monroe, Nassau, or Suffolk counties and medical amendments for medical certifiers who are not ME/Coroners. You will be notified when permission has been granted in your county/statewide.*

Funeral Directors and Amendments

For the time being, only Monroe, Nassau, and Suffolk County based Funeral Directors and staff have been trained and granted permission for electronically filing amendments. Funeral Directors and firms in the remaining counties should anticipate electronic submission training and permissions in the summer of 2020.
Certifying and Registering COVID-19 Deaths

Current Public Health Law 4140 requires death registration (completed by Funeral Home, Medical Certifier, and Local Registrar) within 72-hours of the death event. In this unprecedented time, data integrity and timely reporting is of the essence, not to mention limiting the human and vehicle traffic within and around medical facilities and offices as much as possible. Unfortunately, many filing offices have been closed or have reduced hours due to the Governor's directive to reduce in-person staffing.

To minimize non-essential physical contact, reduce unnecessary foot traffic at medical facilities, and provide rapid transmission of data to the City, State and Federal agencies, the NYS Department of Health encourages all parties to electronically sign, certify, or affirm, as applicable to your role, New York State deaths in their respective electronic death registration system.

For Medical Providers

For EDRS, medical providers the National Center for Health Statistics released final guidance for certifying COVID-19 deaths on April 2, 2020. Please refer to the attached announcement and review the final guidance on the CDC website at https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/covid-19.htm.

Medical facilities are encouraged to consider:

1. Assigning medical facility support staff to start and data-enter EDRS case information up to the point of certification; and
2. Appointing one or a few NYS medically licensed professionals to certify on behalf of attending physicians. This can be another medical doctor, Physician’s Assistant, Nurse Practitioner, or Resident.

These options may assist with balancing your resources while under the strain of patient surge and utilize temporary medical staff moving around the state.

For Funeral Firms

The NYS Department of Health, Bureau of Funeral Directing redistributed, on March 18, 2020, guidance by the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic for funeral firms and families planning funerals. This guidance is available online at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#funerals.

Funeral Firms should remain vigilant, to adhere to the most current Executive Order executed by the Office of the Governor in regards to social distancing and limiting attendance at gatherings. Refer to Governor Cuomo’s Executive Orders web page for more information.

For Local Registrars

The EDRS is a web-based application accessible from computers, iPads, and smartphones (in limited functionality), with Internet access. Under the current executive order, essential government services are to continue to work, even if under remote or limited staffing. When all parties use EDRS for electronic death registration, we can maintain registrations in compliance with the 72-hour window defined by Public Health Law.

If you need assistance with EDRS, send inquiries to edrs@health.ny.gov. This Inbox is monitored by all team members and is the most timely for responses from our remote staff.