



New York State
Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS)

What's New in EDRS

EDRS Death Module, Version 17.3.1

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Introduction

The New York State Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) currently in use is version 17.3.1 of the EDRS application. Version 17.3.1 was released to users in early January 2018. This document describes system improvements and new features that were added to the application in this version, as well as known issues in system functionality and acceptable work-arounds for those issues.

Product Description

EDRS is a secure, web-based application used to electronically register death certificates across New York State (excluding the 5 boroughs of New York City). Access to EDRS is granted through the New York State Health Commerce System (HCS) with accounts for HCS maintained through the Commerce Account Management Unit (CAMU). The database vendor is VitalChek.

The primary purpose of EDRS is to enable death registration users – physicians, hospitals, nursing homes, hospice facilities, funeral firms, and medical examiners and coroners – to file death records electronically with local registration districts and New York State, within the required 72 hours after a death occurs. All parties involved require access to EDRS with profile configurations carried over from HCS accounts.

EDRS provides on-line access for all parties involved to work on the same case to complete decedent fact-of-death and cause-of-death information without the need for a physical paper certificate.

Implementation of EDRS is using a two-phased approach:

1. Phase 1 – electronic processing of natural-cause deaths occurring in medical facilities
2. Phase 2 – electronic processing of deaths occurring at home, unattended, and from unnatural causes

Phase 1 began with a Pilot Program in select counties, November 2015 through November 2016. The Pilot was followed by statewide roll-out by region. Statewide roll-out was completed November 2017. During Phase 1 any case involving a Medical Examiner (ME) or Coroner continued to be processed outside of EDRS using the triplicate paper certificate.

Phase 2 also began with a Pilot Program in select counties while some new functionality was still being developed to support fully electronic processing of home, unattended, and unnatural cause deaths. Phase 2 Pilot Program began fall 2017 and will run through spring 2018. Activities related to onboarding and training of ME/Coroners, Coroner's certifying physicians, and remaining local registration offices is being conducted January 2018 through summer 2019.

For More Information

For questions regarding implementation status, up-to-date self-paced training, or a schedule of upcoming webinar trainings, click [here](#) to go to the EDRS public webpage, or contact the EDRS Implementation Team via email edrs@health.ny.gov or by telephone at the EDRS Call Center at 1-844-866-3377 (EDRS).

System Requirements

The following are the minimum requirements for accessing EDRS through the New York State Department of Health's Health Commerce System (HCS) and processing electronic death certificates in the EDRS. Work with your technical support team to ensure at least the minimum requirements are met at your facility.

Recommended software is in bold text below. Full detail of HCS technical requirements are posted on the [HCS Browser Requirements](#) web page.

- **4 GB** memory
- **Windows** Vista, Windows 7, Windows 8, or Windows **10** Operating System
- Internet Browsers
 - **Microsoft Internet Explorer (version 11.0 or newer)**
 - Google Chrome (current stable release; Windows platform)
 - Firefox (current stable release, but limited HCS support)
 - Safari 9 (Mac Operating System)
- Browser settings
 - Java enabled, most current version
 - Cookies accepted
- **High-speed internet connection**
- **Adobe Acrobat Reader** (9.0 or higher - to view/print forms and reports)
 - A browser should *not* be used as the default viewer for printing burial permits or death certificates.
- **Printer**
 - When printing forms from EDRS, set printer to *Shrink to Fit* or *Shrink to Page* so that the entire form will print. Verify format in Print Preview before printing.

Note: HCS/EDRS compatibility with mobile devices is not guaranteed.

What's New in EDRS Version 17.3.1

The following table describes new features, enhancements and bug fixes that were added in the current version of EDRS.

User Role	Page	New, or Fixed?	Description of New or Corrected Feature
All Users	EDRS Sign-in > Select your Office page	New	Facility ID number now displays in parentheses after the name of the office/facility. The Facility ID number was added to help users affiliated with more than one office of similar names to differentiate the offices when they select their office associated with the case(s) they will work on in this session.
All Users	EDRS Sign-in > Select your Office page	Fixed	The link to “Click here if profession or office not found” has been improved. It is now more effective at pulling into EDRS a user’s updated office and role assignments from the Health Commerce System (HCS). Office and role assignments still need to be set up by each facility’s HCS Coordinator using the Coordinator’s Update Tool.
All Users	Start/Edit New Case > Search Results page	New	Start New Case button now has a more descriptive button name: “If case does not appear above, start new case” . The button was renamed to make it clearer that the button should NOT be clicked if the desired case is listed in the search results. Many EDRS users were confused about what to click to access an existing case that is listed in search results, resulting in many duplicate cases.
All Users	EDRS Home Page pop-up notifications	Fixed	<p>The checkbox “Do not show this message again” has been fixed to now function correctly. Pop-up notifications are system-wide messages to EDRS users that New York State occasionally posts to notify users an EDRS event, system outage, or change.</p> <p>After reading the message, you may select the checkbox “Do not show this message again,” and then click OK. The message will not display again within your current working session. The message will reappear after you have returned to the Select Your Office page by changing office or by logging out of EDRS and then signing back in to start a new session.</p>

User Role	Page	New, or Fixed?	Description of New or Corrected Feature
Affects Medical Users and Funeral Firms, but is only available to NYS EDRS Team	Print Forms > Drop to Paper	New	<p>NYS EDRS Team now have the ability to reverse/Cancel Drop to Paper status on a case if requested to do so by the medical facility or the funeral firm. Drop to Paper is a Print Forms function that ends all future electronic processing of a case, switching to a paper certificate using the original Drop to Paper print-out. Drop to Paper should only be used if the next organization that needs to work on the case is not yet using EDRS.</p> <p>If an EDRS case has been Dropped to Paper, but now needs to resume electronic processing and registration, contact the EDRS Call Center to request that Drop to Paper status be cancelled. EDRS Call Center: 1-844-866-EDRS (3377).</p>
Medical Certifiers or Medical Facility Staff	Certifier page	Fixed	<p>Certifier and Attending Physician's address(es) which was/were manually entered on the Certifier page now print out on lines 25A and 25C as they appear on the Certifier page in EDRS. Previously a manually entered/edited Certifier or Attending Physician address was not correctly handling Country field portion of the address.</p>
Medical Certifiers or Medical Facility Staff	Place of Death	Fixed	<p>When the Type of Place of Death selected is Hospital Hospice, the Facility Name may now be entered/edited. Previously the Facility Name was not manually editable for Hospital Hospice facilities.</p>
Funeral Directors and Funeral Firm Staff	Disposition	New	<p>The Funeral Director's name and registration number now automatically fill in when the Funeral Director first accesses the case. When the first person to work on the case at the funeral firm is a Funeral Firm Staff user, then the Funeral Director fields are left blank until the Funeral Director later views the case. The Funeral Director information may still be searched and selected in the look-up tool, or you may enter the Funeral Director's registration number and click the autofill button (curved arrow icon) to manually enter the information, but that step is no longer necessary unless the name entered needs to be changed.</p>

User Role	Page	New, or Fixed?	Description of New or Corrected Feature
Funeral Directors and Funeral Firm Staff	Trade Calls	Fixed	<p>The Trade Calls function is now fully functioning, and it allows you to pre-filter Funeral Directors by their affiliated firm.</p> <p>How to Use: The funeral firm hired by the family takes ownership of the case. To allow an external funeral director to access the case, click Trade Calls. Use the Look-up Tool (magnifying glass) to search and select the external funeral firm, and then search and select that firm's Funeral Director who will be assisting you with the case. Only Funeral Directors affiliated with the selected funeral firm will be available to select. Use the wildcard % character in the Last Name field to list all Funeral Directors affiliated with the specified firm. Click Save, and then click Return. The trade call funeral director may now access and edit the case, but may not Sign the case.</p> <p>Note: The Funeral Director handling final disposition must be named on the Disposition page and must also be directly affiliated with the funeral firm named on the Disposition page. If an external Funeral Director will be handling final disposition for your firm and therefore must be the Signer on the death certificate, then instead of using the Trade Call feature, the HCS Coordinator at the funeral firm should assign that external Funeral Director an EDRS role at the funeral firm so that he/she may access the case directly.</p>
Funeral Directors and Funeral Firm Staff	Transfer Case	Fixed	<p>Funeral firms may now use Transfer Case to assign ownership of a case to another funeral firm. All funeral firms that have active EDRS users assigned to the firm may be accessed in the Transfer Case feature. Previously Transfer Case did not list all firms. After transferring a case, the Funeral Director or Funeral Firm Staff at the designated firm still needs to accept ownership of the case before they can work on it, but they can search for it using either Locate Case or Start/Edit New Case.</p> <p>Note: Funeral firms may also continue to use the Relinquish Case feature instead of Transfer Case. If a case has been Relinquished, it is not owned by any funeral firm and therefore the new firm must use Start/Edit New Case to search and take ownership of the case.</p>
Funeral Directors and Funeral Firm Staff	Disposition	New	<p>The Filing Registrar field is now disabled for Funeral Firms. The Filing Registrar's name will automatically fill in when an authorized user in the Local Registration Office views the case. This allows all authorized users in the Local Registration Office to review and register the case. Previously the field was editable by the Funeral Director/Funeral Firm Staff, but then the case was only accessible to the one Registrar/Sub-registrar specified.</p>

User Role	Page	New, or Fixed?	Description of New or Corrected Feature
Funeral Directors and Funeral Firm Staff	Informant page and Disposition page	Fixed	<p>The Places look-up tool (house icon) for looking up and selecting the City (or town, village, hamlet) now includes the County name after the name of the city/town/village/hamlet. The County name does not get carried over to the associated City/Town field on Informant page or Disposition page.</p> <p>The County name was added to the Places look-up tool on these pages to show the difference between municipalities of the same name in different parts of New York State. Those municipalities of the same name previously appeared to be duplicate entries on the list.</p>
Funeral Directors and Funeral Firm Staff	Resident Address page	Fixed	<p>When entering the City and County of residence, after you enter the City, Township or Borough, then in the County field, only those Counties applicable to the specified City will be listed for you to select when you start typing in the name of the County. Additionally, if the County has been entered first, then only valid Cities/Towns/Villages/Hamlets/Boroughs located in the specified County will be listed when you start typing in the name of the municipality.</p>
Funeral Directors and Funeral Firm Staff	Informant page and Disposition page	Fixed	<p>The Places look-up tool (house icon) for looking up and selecting the City (or town, village, hamlet) now includes the County name after the name of the city/town/village/hamlet. The County name does not get carried over to the associated City/Town field on Informant page or Disposition page.</p> <p>The County name was added to the Places look-up tool on these pages to show the difference between municipalities of the same name in different parts of New York State. Those municipalities of the same name previously appeared to be duplicate entries on the list.</p>
Registrar, Deputy Registrar, and Sub-registrars	Disposition	New	<p>Filing Registrar field is editable by the Local Registrar and their staff after the Funeral Director has electronically Signed the case. The Filing Registrar information will automatically fill in the first time an authorized user in the Local Registration Office views and validates the Disposition page in the case. If the case is not registered during that first session and the name later needs to change to a different person, the fields will remain editable by all authorized registration office users.</p>
Registrar, Deputy Registrar, and Sub-registrars	Identifiers	Fixed	<p>Entering a Local File Date before Affirming the case no longer automatically registers the case. However, this functionality is still not perfect (see Known Issues section below). Therefore, it is still recommended that the Local Registrar/Sub-Registrar leave the Local File Date blank and let the system automatically enter the date when the Registrar/Sub-registrar Affirms the case, then if you need to you can edit the Local File Date after the case has been Affirmed/Registered.</p>

Known Issues/Bugs and Work-Arounds

The table below identifies known system bugs and acceptable procedures to work around each of these known issues.

User Role	Page	Known Issue/Bug	Work-Around	Anticipated Resolution
Medical Users and Funeral Firms	Decedent	<p>Apostrophe (') in the Decedent's Name - Last name or First name - is not currently searchable.</p> <p>This bug affects Start/Edit New Case searches, as well as searching by Decedent Name in Locate Case. Once a facility 'owns' a case, they can search for the case on other criteria on the Locate Case page.</p> <p>An apostrophe in a name is common throughout the world in both first and last names. Examples: O'Connor, D'Amato, L'Hereux, Ze'ev, Mo'nique, Ja'amal.</p>	<p>1. Medical facility should omit the apostrophe (') from the decedent's name when creating the case. Inform the funeral firm on how the decedent's name was spelled in EDRS.</p> <p>If the case was already created with an apostrophe in the Decedent's Legal Name, and the funeral firm has not yet taken ownership of the case in EDRS, then the medical facility should delete the apostrophe and click Validate Page. Be sure to inform the funeral director on how the decedent's name is spelled in EDRS so they can find the case, take ownership, and then correct the spelling of the name.</p> <p>2. Funeral firm searches and takes ownership of the case in EDRS using Start/Edit New Case. Then the funeral firm edits the decedent's name to add the apostrophe where needed.</p> <p>To resume work on the case, both the medical facility and the funeral firm should now use Locate Case to search for the case on other criteria, not using the part of the name that now includes an apostrophe.</p>	<p>All search functions will be fixed in a future release to accommodate apostrophe in the search criteria.</p>

User Role	Page	Known Issue/Bug	Work-Around	Anticipated Resolution
Medical Users	<p>Multiple:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place of Death: <i>Date Admitted</i> Other Factors: <i>Date of Delivery</i> when specified that decedent was pregnant in last year Certifier: <i>Deceased last seen alive by attending physician</i> <p>Certifier: <i>Attending physician attended deceased, Start Date and End Date</i></p>	Fields accept future dates that are beyond Date of Death.	Users should be diligent not to enter future dates for past events.	If this becomes an issue, then NYS might consider adding a validation rule on these date fields.
Funeral Firms and Registrars	Decedent and Burial Permit	For infant deaths where the decedent is less than 1 year old, the Burial Transit Permit currently prints the decedent's age as <i>Unknown</i> if the Years field on the Decedent page was left blank. This occurs even if the age was entered correctly in months, weeks, days, or hours. The Working Copy and Vault Copy/Certified Copy print the age correctly, so the issue will not be visible until after the case has been registered.	<p>When the decedent's age is less than 1 year old, enter 0 (zero) in the Years field, and enter the accurate age in hours, days, weeks, months, as applicable. You may leave months and weeks fields blank, as applicable. The age will now print correctly on the Burial Transit Permit as long as a value was entered into the Years field.</p> <p>To help you remember this, instructions have been added to the Tooltip hint that pops up when you mouse-over the age fields. To view Tooltip hints in EDRS you must have View Tooltips turned on from the EDRS Help menu.</p>	Will be fixed in future release to accept blank in the Years field when decedent's age is as less than 1 year.

User Role	Page	Known Issue/Bug	Work-Around	Anticipated Resolution
Funeral Firms and Registrars	Disposition	Date of Disposition must not occur before the case is registered. Validation rule that verifies the date is not in the past is currently only applied once. If registration is then delayed after Funeral Director Signs the case, it is possible for the specified Date of Disposition to be in the past but is not flagged as an error by EDRS.	<p>Funeral Directors: Do not sign the case until after the case has been Medically Certified. Check the Status Line at the top of any page in the case to see if it is UNCERTIFIED or CERTIFIED. Then just before signing, verify the Date of Disposition.</p> <p>Registrars/Sub-registrars: Be sure to verify that the specified Date of Disposition is not in the past before you Affirm the case. If necessary have the Funeral Director correct the Date of Disposition and then re-Sign before Affirming/registering the case.</p>	Date of Disposition will have an additional validation check-point created for a future release of EDRS.
Funeral Firms and Registrars	Disposition and Burial Permit	No notation in EDRS to enter transportation information if the body is being shipped.	Print burial permit and hand-write the transportation information on the burial permit after conferring with the local registrar.	EDRS Team will research for system change in future release
Funeral Firms and Registrars	Disposition and Burial Permit	No notation on the Burial Permit if the disposition is a Donation/Anatomical Gift.	<p>Write in the donation information on the printed burial permit in the <i>Disposition: Removal or Hold</i> section, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the <i>Date</i> field write Donation along with the date that the institution receives the remains. In the fields for <i>Place Removed and/or Held</i> and <i>Address</i>, enter the name and address of the institution where the remains are being donated. 	A future release of EDRS will add a checkbox for <i>Donation/Anatomical Gift</i> to the EDRS burial permit. Donation information will automatically be filled in from case data on the EDRS Disposition page, as applicable.



User Role	Page	Known Issue/Bug	Work-Around	Anticipated Resolution
Registrar, Deputy Registrar, and Sub-registrars	Identifiers	<p>Local File Date is intended to be system-filled in automatically when you Affirm the case.</p> <p>However, if you manually type in the Local File Date before Affirming the case, Save or Validate the page, and then exit the case without Affirming, then when you return to the case and Validate the page, the case will automatically register and the Local Registrar Affirm page becomes disabled.</p>	<p>Affirm case first. Local File Date will fill in automatically when the case is Affirmed. If the Local File Date needs to be adjusted, such as to accurately reflect an offline registration that occurred outside of normal business hours, then you may edit the Local File Date after the case is Affirmed/Registered. After editing the Local File Date, be sure to Save or Validate the page.</p>	<p>In a future version of EDRS, the Local File Date field will not be able to be edited until after the case is Affirmed by the local registration office.</p>

Troubleshooting and Getting Help

For help with learning how to use EDRS and with troubleshooting problems, you will find wealth of documentation and training on the EDRS website. The website contains documented procedures, a troubleshooting guide in the form of Frequently Asked Questions, role-based quick reference guides, reference materials, video tutorials, recorded training sessions, and the training schedule for upcoming live web-based training. The EDRS website is located at http://health.ny.gov/vital_records/edrs/.

For specific questions or issues, refer to the contact information in the following table.

For Help With	Contact	At
Getting an HCS Account	DOH HCS website	https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/public/hcs_login.html (Use the sign up for an account links at the bottom of the HCS Login window.)
Your HCS User ID	DOH HCS website	https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/public/hcs_login.html (Use the Forgot your user ID link at the bottom of the HCS Login window.)
Your HCS Password	DOH HCS website	https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/public/hcs_login.html (Use the Forgot your password link at the bottom of the HCS Login window.)
An Inactive HCS Account	Commerce Account Management Unit	1-866-529-1890
Assigning you and your staff's EDRS roles with a facility or office	Your facility's HCS Coordinator	If you do not know who your HCS Coordinator is, contact the Commerce Accounts Management Unit at 1-866-529-1890 for assistance.
Adding EDRS to your list of applications in HCS	You can do this yourself	First try clicking the Refresh My Applications List at the bottom of the list. Next, try the steps below <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Select My Content > All Applications from the menu bar. 2. In the <i>Browse by</i> section, click on the letter 'E.' 3. Locate <i>Electronic Death Registration System</i> in the list and click on the '+' symbol in the last column for that row. A confirmation message will display. 4. Select Home > Home from the menu bar.



For Help With	Contact	At
Getting access to EDRS	Your facility's HCS Coordinator or The NYS Department of Health EDRS team	edrs@health.ny.gov EDRS Call Center: 1-844-866-EDRS (3377)
A question on a specific electronic death certificate	The NYS Department of Health EDRS team	edrs@health.ny.gov EDRS Call Center: 1-844-866-EDRS (3377)
EDRS and HCS availability during system outages	HCS Home Page	Broadcast system message about the EDRS and HCS outages/maintenance downtime will be posted on the <i>HCS Home Page</i> when applicable. HCS Home Page: https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/hcs/index.html