



SOCIAL SECURITY

August 2017

Dear Funeral Director:

We are writing to you to announce our new procedures regarding Social Security's "Statement of Death by the Funeral Director (SSA-721)" form. The state of New York now has access to the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) as of August 8, 2017.

Beginning August 8, 2017, if you use New York's EDRS to register deaths, you will no longer need to send a separate SSA-721 to SSA to report an individual's death. When EDR reports are received, they can be processed with no additional verification of the death information. This allows for the immediate and automatic termination of deceased individuals' benefits and suspension of benefits if the decedent served as a representative payee.

Although we do not expect issues, as with any automated process, there might be cases that do not process correctly through EDRS. If you receive a request to complete an SSA-721, we ask that you assist the SSA Field Offices with these requests so that we can all continue to deliver professional customer service to the families of the deceased.

We still need your help to share information with potential survivors, as they may be entitled to benefits. You can help us by distributing the last two pages of the SSA-721 to families as you register the decedent's information. These pages provide valuable information about potential benefits that may be payable and how survivors can apply for these benefits.

If you do *not* use New York's EDRS, or if you cannot verify the SSN through the EDRS system, we ask that you send us the SSA-721 as you have done in the past.

Thank you for your assistance in this process.

Sincerely,

Jessica MacBride

/s/ Jessica MacBride Director,
Earnings, Enumeration and Medicare Policy,
Office of Income and Security Programs