Vital Records Image Redaction and Statewide Access

VRIRSA User Manual

January 8, 2013

Revision History

Version	Date	Description	Name
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1.4	02/25/2009	Corrected URL for VRIRSA system	VRIRSA Support Team: E. Pannell, M, Shahzad, V. Wong
1.5	09/08/2009	Added CR/LR documentation added to Sections 2.2 & 2.6	V. Wong
1.6	05/05/2010	Blurred content sensitive text for confidentiality purposes	E. Pannell
1.7	06/03/2010	Removed Certificate of No Public Record reference	E. Pannell
1.8	01/03/2012	Added Enhancements: Local Office Copy, Name Search grouping, CA Code Conversion, and Requesting of Old County Codes	E. Pannell
1.9	12/07/2012	Added Marriage Section 2.6 and Marriage references	E. Pannell & B. Almanza

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- **Search Vital Records – The VRIRSA system enables you to search and retrieve only the available digital images of birth and death records for redaction and distribution as Informational Copies. Many older certificates may not be available now, although they will be added in the future. This manual contains instructions on how to search for vital records by entering search criteria and selecting from results of your search. For further information on searching see Section 2.2 Search for a Birth Certificate document, Section 2.3 Search Screen Fields, Section 2.4 Understanding Partial Name Searches, Section 2.5 Search for a Death Certificate, and 2.6 Search for a Marriage Certificate.** 39

1. Introduction

The purpose of the VRIRSA System is to allow CRs, LRDs, and Center staff access to a single State database, via a secure web-based application, for requesting automatically redacted and non-redacted informational-only copies of birth and death records. As of January 1, 2013, only County Clerks, CRs and Center staff will have the ability to search and request redacted and non-redacted informational-only copies of marriage records. The system can be obtained over the Internet using the following URL:

https://www.vrirsa.cdph.ca.gov/vrirsa

1.1 Redaction

Currently the system is configured to provide only Informational Copies of birth, death and marriage certificates. Any signatures, social security numbers, or sensitive health information visible on the original certificate is redacted, i.e., hidden from view by solid rectangular boxes of either black or white. The VRIRSA system accepts requests from users for specific certificates, retrieves the images of those certificates from a central digital repository at CDPH offices in Sacramento, and then automatically applies redaction boxes to cover the sensitive information found on those images before sending the redacted image back to the users.

1.2 Non-Redaction

Non-redacted documents are considered Local Office Copies (LOC). LOC requests allow counties to obtain a copy of a birth, death or marriage certificate for their files. Birth LOCs will have the social security numbers and confidential information redacted. Death and Marriage LOCs will not have information redacted.

1.3 Support

The VRIRSA system is supported by a team within the California Department of Public Health's Center for Health Statistics. The help desk for support of the VRIRSA system is available during state working hours – from 8:00am to 5:00pm, excluding weekends and state holidays.

1.4 Security

Whether within CDPH or part of a County Recorder or Local Registrar's Office, each user of the VRIRSA system will receive a user ID and password from the VRIRSA Team. Each user ID will be associated with a particular County or State office. For County staff, only certificates belonging to their County will be provided by the system. State VRIRSA support team members working with the VRIRSA system have access to certificates from all counties.

When registering staff in the system, the support team will setup accounts with each user's email address and optional fax number, since the system provides email notifications and can also fax redacted document images to the requester.

Each user will be provided with a password, which may be changed later. All passwords must adhere to security standards – minimum 9 characters, including at least one uppercase letter and 1 number. Passwords must be changed at least every 60 days. As the expiration time for a password nears, the system will automatically send an email notification to the user requesting them to change the password. As with any state information system, users are prohibited from sharing their user IDs and passwords with anyone. The following link goes to the password change function: **https://www.ext.dhs.ca.gov/webadmin**

1.5 Accessing Online User Guide and Help Screen

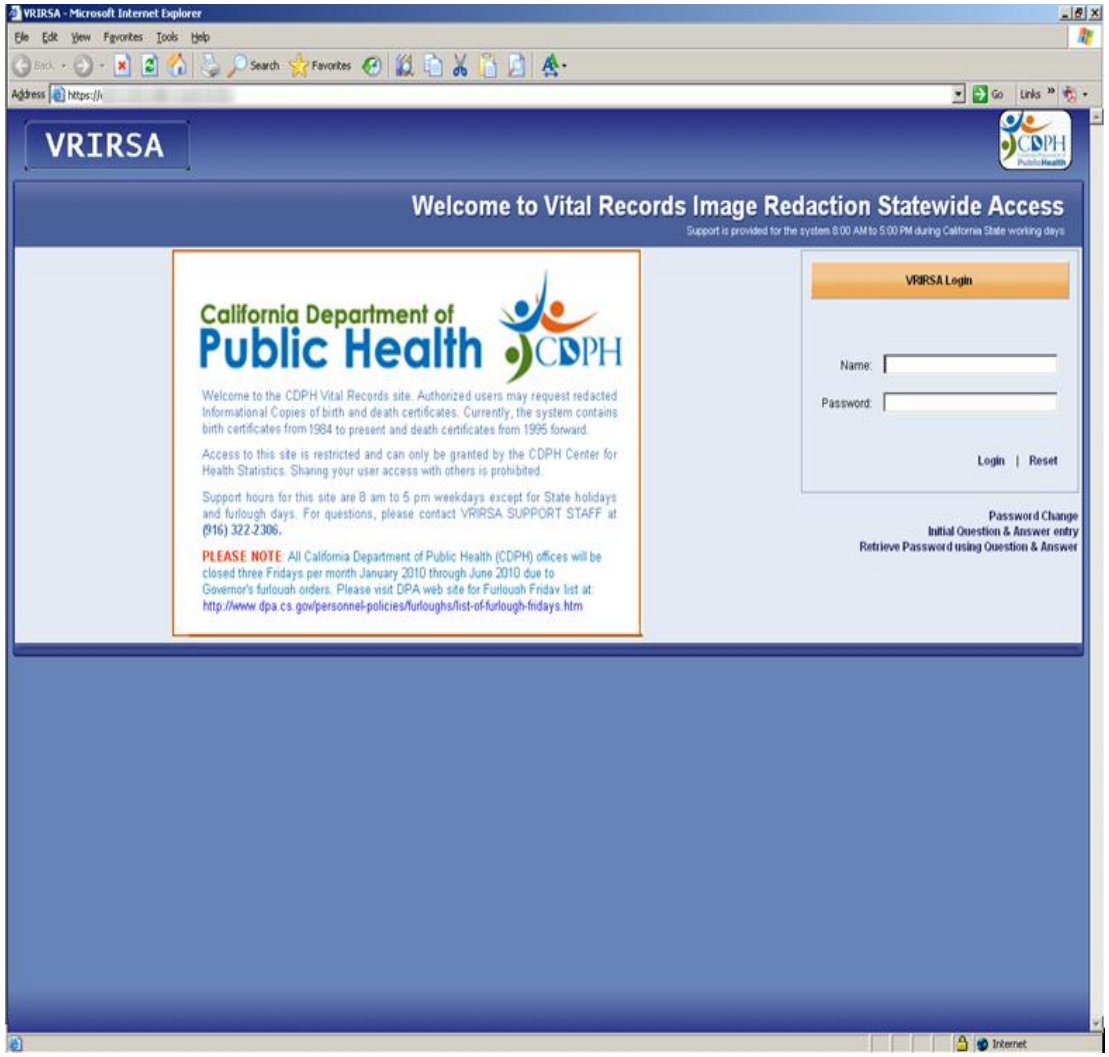
Online help is accessible by selecting the user guide link at the top right corner of the screen. In order to access the help screen, the user must click on the help tab which describes the last section the user was working on.

2. Interacting with the VRIRSA System

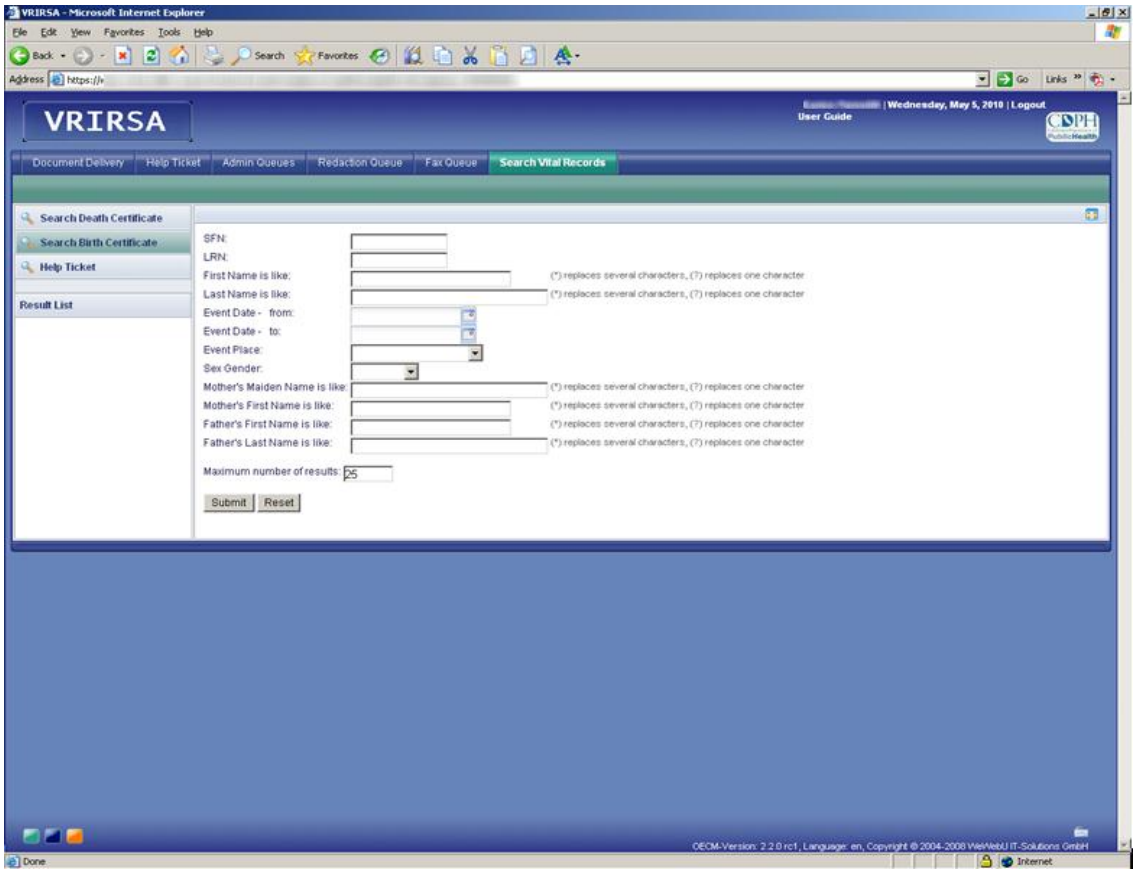
2.1 Logging into VRIRSA

Point your web browser to the VRIRSA URL: **https://www.vrirsa.cdph.ca.gov/vrirsa**

- You will be provided a login name and password by the VRIRSA Team.
- You can change your password through the 'Password Change' link at the bottom right of the screen.
- Important messages may appear in the center-left area of the screen, known as the "Landing Page".
- Support hours for the VRIRSA system are listed in the Landing Page as well as the upper right area of the Welcome screen.



2.2 Search for a Birth Certificate document



1. Use the search criteria fields to define the certificate you are looking for. See **Section 2.3** below for a complete explanation of the available search fields.
2. Enter search criteria using one or more fields to obtain a list of results. We recommend entering at least 3 pieces of search information to execute your search appropriately. When you conduct your search using very broad information, it takes the system longer to respond which may result in a timeout error.
3. If using the SFN for searching with the older '104' number on the certificate, VRIRSA will automatically convert these numbers to '105' before it does the search for birth certificates. When searching by Name, VRIRSA will find all related records based on an index and group them together. For example, if the person has changed their last name for any reason, the result list will display all name variations for this person. No need to know the LRN or SFN as in the past.
4. Date fields are entered in the format 'mm/dd/yyyy', including slashes, or use the calendar icon to the right of the field to select a date.
5. You may view up to 200 entries in the result list.
6. After entering the search criteria, press the 'Submit' button.
7. Pressing 'Reset' will clear your entries in the search fields.

2.3 Search Screen Fields

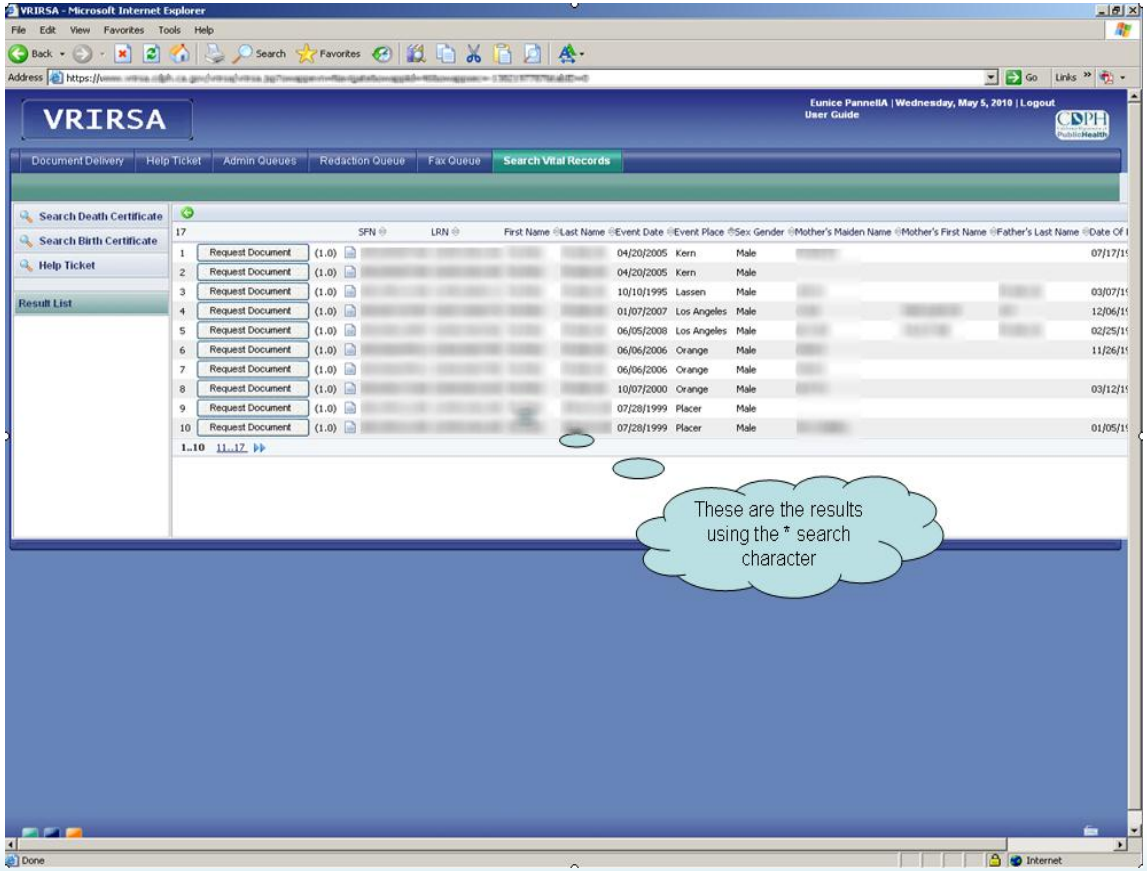
SFN	State File Number (13 digits, no dashes or other special characters)
LRN	Local Registration Number (13 digits, no dashes or other special characters). If searching for records that belong to Local Registrar, the local registration district is the sixth and seventh characters of the LRN. **Note: Added enhancement January 2012 the ability to use old county codes; i.e., 60 – Alameda, 70 – Los Angeles, 80 – San Diego, and 90 – San Francisco.**
SSN	Social Security Number (9 digits, no dashes or other special characters) ***Note: only available for searches of Death Certificates***
First Name	Enter a search string for first name – see 'Understanding Partial Name Searches' below
Last Name	Enter a search string for last name – see 'Understanding Partial Name Searches' below
1st Person's FirstName	Enter a search string for first name – see 'Understanding Partial Name Searches' below
1st Person's Last Name	Enter a search string for last name – see 'Understanding Partial Name Searches' below
2nd Person's FirstName	Enter a search string for first name – see 'Understanding Partial Name Searches' below
2nd Person's LastName	Enter a search string for last name – see 'Understanding Partial Name Searches' below
Event Date – from:	Enter the lower end of the range of dates for the date of birth shown in the certificate you're looking for, using format mm/dd/yyyy or using the calendar selection icon.
Event Date – to:	Enter the upper end of the range of dates for the date of birth shown in the certificate you're looking for, using format mm/dd/yyyy or using the calendar selection icon.
Event Place:	Select from the list the County within which the birth took place, using dropdown list of counties
Sex Gender:	Select the gender of the person for whom you are searching (dropdown for Male or Female)
Mother's Maiden Name	Enter a search string for last name – see 'Understanding Partial Name Searches' below
Mother's First Name	Enter a search string for first name – see 'Understanding Partial Name Searches' below
Father's First Name	Enter a search string for first name – see 'Understanding Partial Name Searches' below
Father's Last Name	Enter a search string for last name – see 'Understanding Partial Name Searches' below
Maximum number of	Up to 200 records may be found and displayed for any search. Use this field to lower the maximum results.

results	Default is set to 200.
Date of Birth – from:	Enter the lower end range of the date of birth for the individual's death certificate you are looking for using format mm/dd/yyyy or using the calendar selection icon. ***Note: only available for searches of Death Certificates***
Date of Birth – to:	Enter the upper end range of the date of birth for the individual's death certificate you are looking for using format mm/dd/yyyy or using the calendar selection icon. ***Note: only available for searches of Death Certificates***

2.4 Understanding Partial Name Searches

The VRIRSA System's search capabilities include searching on partially entered first and last names.

- If you enter any number of letters of the first name, followed by an asterisk, the system will find all names beginning with those letters. For example, **'jo*'** will find **Jo**hn, **Jo**se, **Jo**seph, **Jo**celyn, etc.
- If you don't enter the trailing asterisk, any set of letters you enter in the name field will return a set of result records with that string of letters anywhere in the name. For example, **'ja'** will find **Ja**son, **Ja**net, and

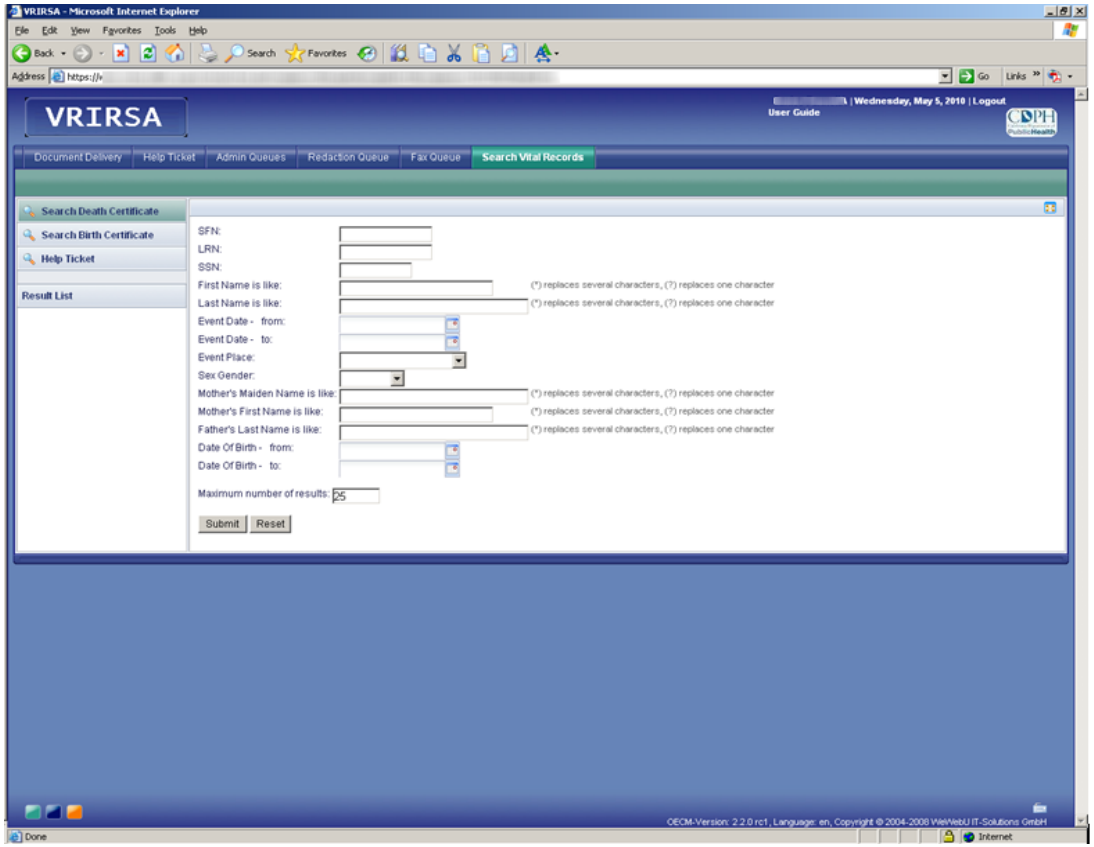


James, but will also find Ben**ja**min, Ale**ja**ndra, etc.

- You may also use the question mark character as a placeholder for any single letter. For example, **'a?a'** would yield results such as A**n**a, A**v**a, and A**d**a.

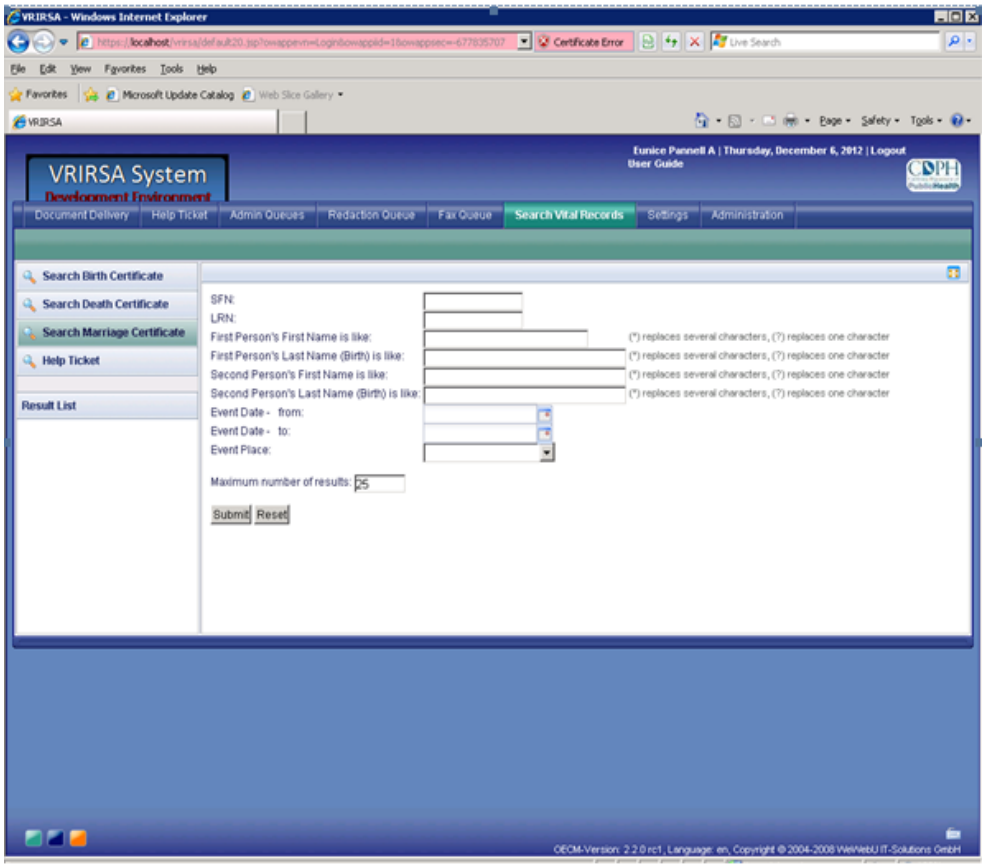
2.5 Search for a Death Certificate

1. Enter the criteria for the death certificate search.
2. For death certificate searches, you can also search by social security number.
3. If using the SFN for searching older '304' certificates, VRIRSA will automatically convert these numbers to '305' before it search death certificates.
4. When search by Name, VRIRSA will find all related death records based on an index and group them together.
5. After entering search criteria, press 'Submit' to review the results.
6. Pressing 'Reset' will clear the search fields.



2.6 Search for a Marriage Certificate

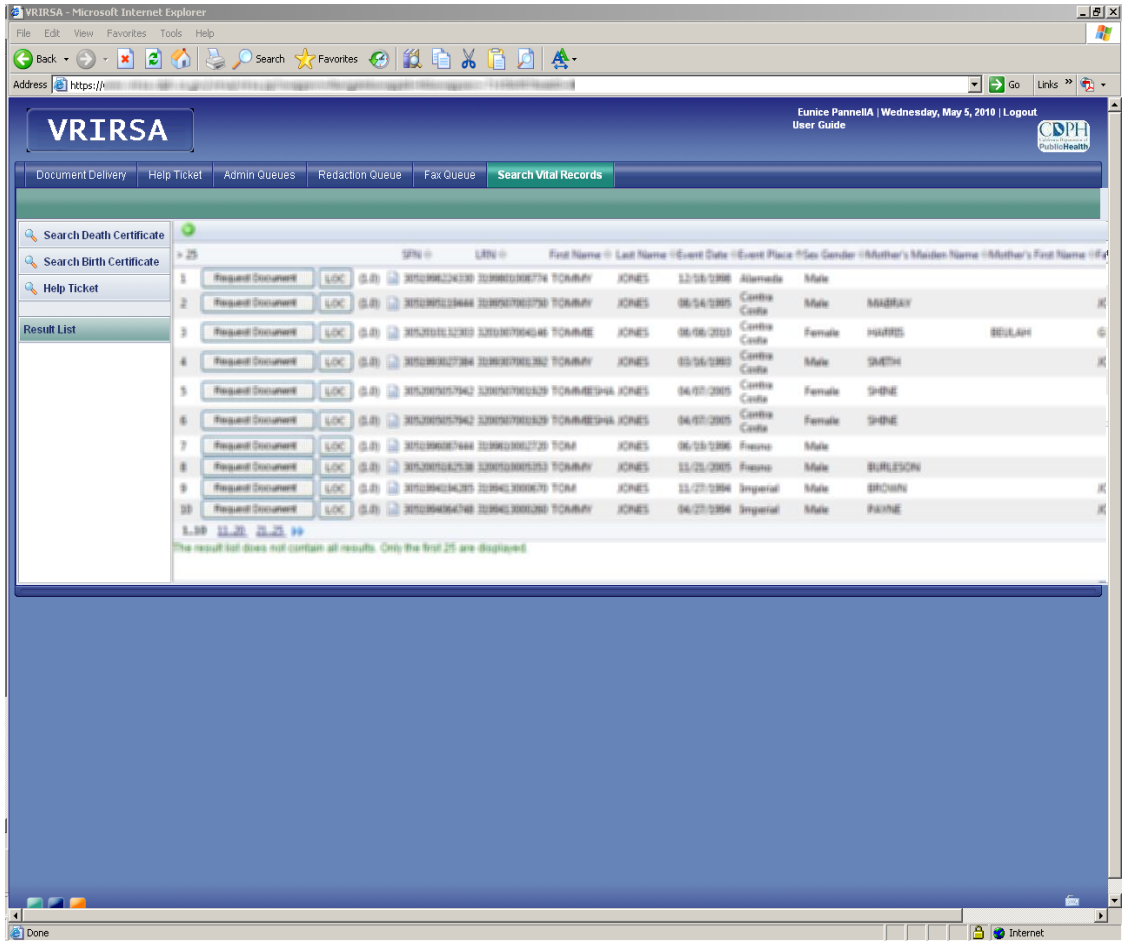
1. Enter the criteria for the marriage certificate search.
2. County Clerks and Recorders and Center staff have the ability to search and request redacted Informational or local office copies. Local Registration Districts will not have the capability to search and request marriage certificates.
3. When searching by Name, VRIRSA will find all related marriage records based on an index and group them together. After entering search criteria, press 'Submit' to review the results.
4. Cross Search – when searching by name and staff are uncertain how the order of the name is entered in the system, VRIRSA will automatically search and return the results of First Person and Second Person as well as Second Person and First Person.
5. Pressing 'Reset' clears the search fields.



2.7 Requesting a Redacted Document

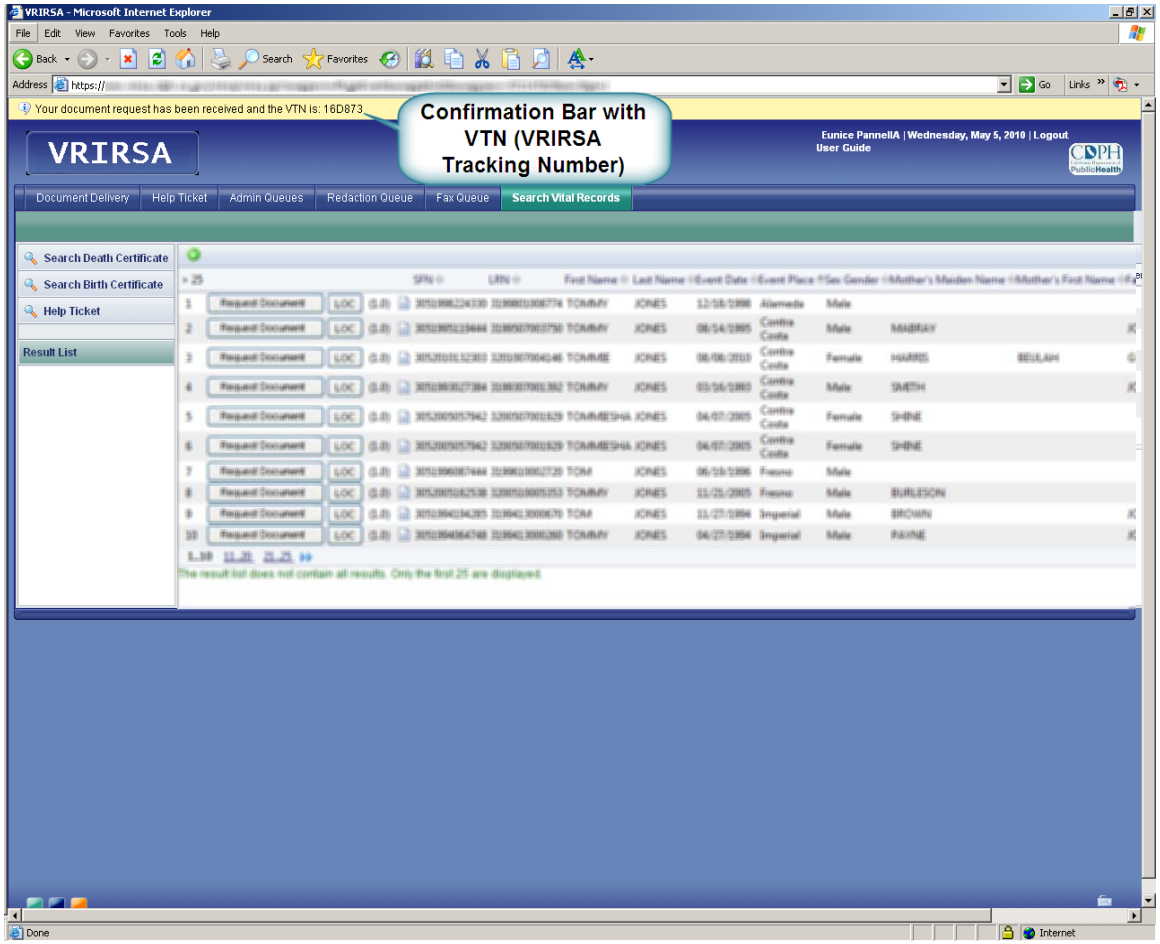
Search Results

1. After entering search criteria and hitting the 'Submit' button, the screen will shift to the 'Results List' tab, and the search results list is displayed, similar to the screen shown at right.
2. The result list will display all document records matching the search criteria, up to the maximum number specified by the user (but no more than 200).
3. When you find the record you were searching for, hit the 'Request Document' button or the 'LOC' button to the left. This will start the system process of retrieving and redacting the certificate image and returning it to you.
4. No need to contact the State for Local Office Copies. You have the ability to request these copies by pressing the LOC button. The main difference between LOCs and informational copies is that the only area that is redacted on a birth LOC is the SSN field, if one exists, and the confidential section at the bottom of the certificate. Death and Marriage LOCs require no redaction at all.



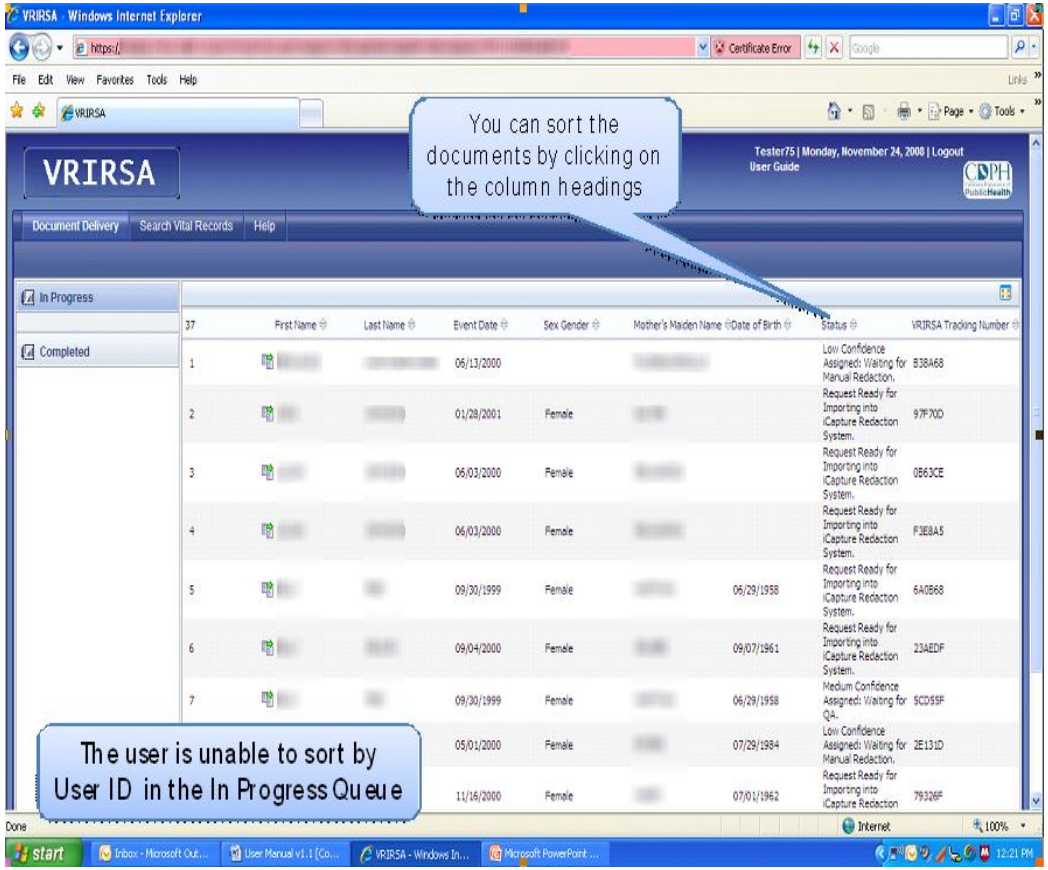
2.8 VRIRSA Tracking Number (VTN)

- The system provides an identification number to track the document through the system. The VTN is internal tracking number used by the VRIRSA system. The VTN number can be retained by the user for reference when writing a help ticket or when contacting the VRIRSA support team for further assistance.
- The display of the VTN signals that the system is now retrieving the requested document from the central image repository and will put it through an automatic redaction process. If successful, the redacted image will be returned to the Document Delivery/ Completed queue within minutes.
- In a very small percentage of cases, the image will have to be handled by either the VRIRSA support staff or by CHS-OVR staff in order to properly apply redaction. Once the document has been completed, it will move to your Completed Queue.

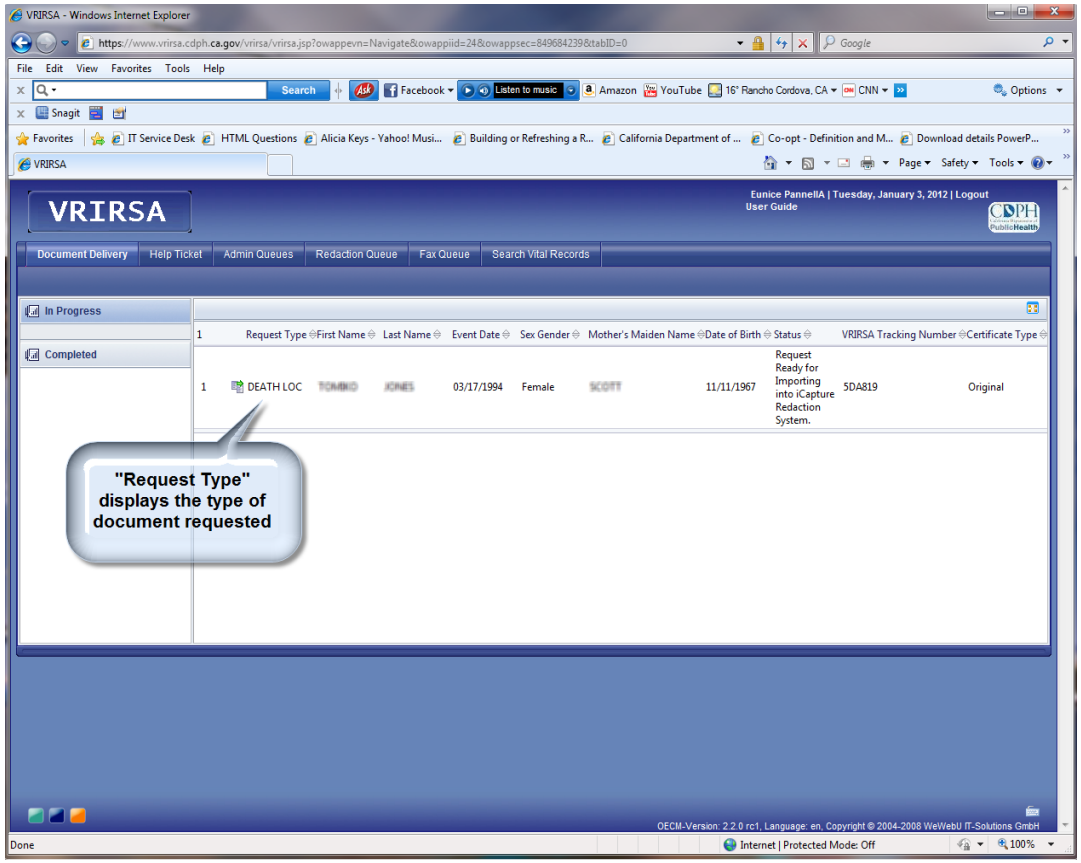


2.9 Document Delivery; In Progress Queue

- To see the redacted document that you requested, select the 'Document Delivery' tab.
- There are two sub-tabs under Document Delivery tab; 'In Progress' and 'Completed'.
- While automatic redaction is occurring (usually for just a few seconds), the requested document will be listed in the 'In Progress' queue with a status of Image Ready for Importing into Redaction.
- The 'Status' column in both 'In Progress' and 'Completed' queues indicates the current state of your requested document in the redaction process.
- You can sort the In Progress Queue by clicking on the column headers to re-arrange your view of the page(s). The Document Delivery Queues are shared within your office, so you may see documents requested by others as well as your own.
- The document icon (to left of first name column) is inactive at this point. If you click on the icon it will give you an error that indicates the work item is being used by another user.

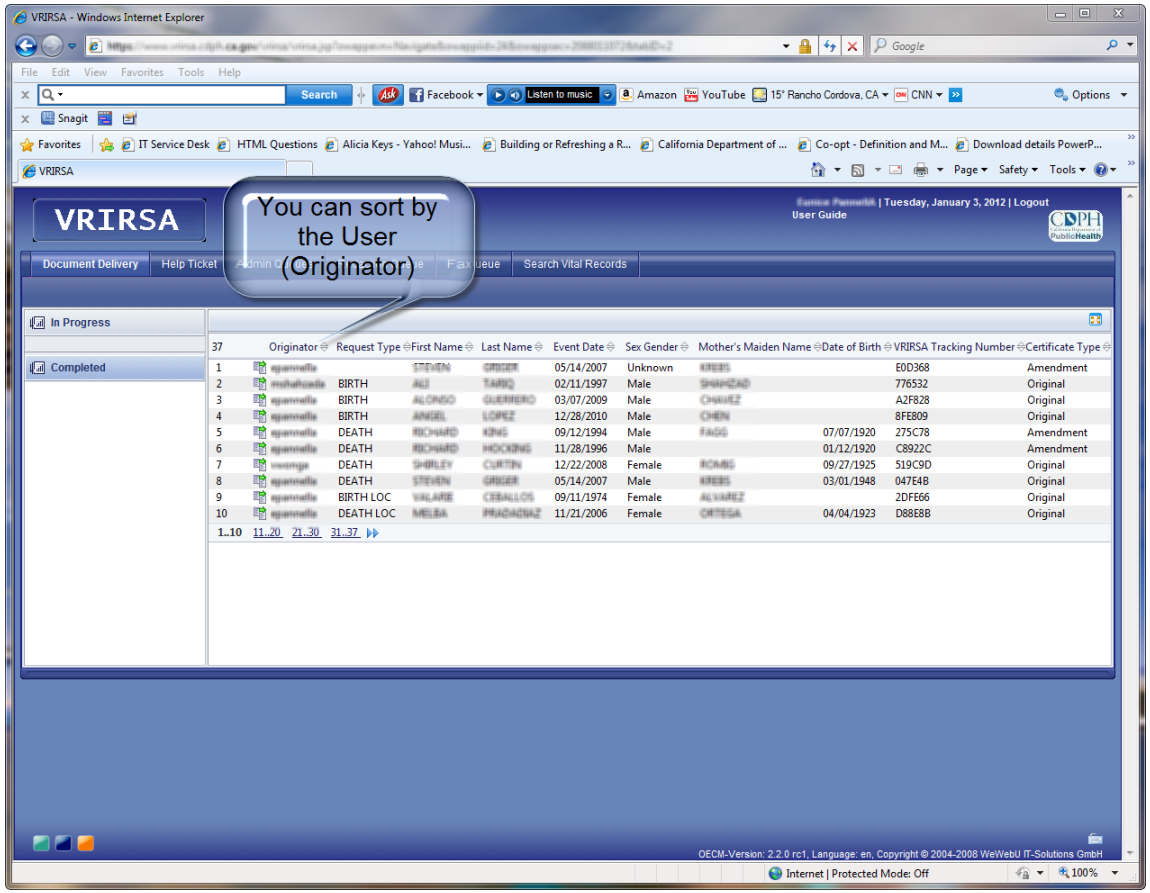


- Depending on which button was pressed on the search result list, determines which request type will display in the Document Delivery -- In Progress and Completed queues; i.e., Death, Death LOC, Birth, Birth LOC, Marriage, Marriage LOC..
- When the redacted document is ready for viewing, it will automatically move to the 'Completed' queue. Since the VRIRSA system is delivered via a web browser, you may need to refresh (hit F5 key or the Refresh button on your toolbar)
- In a very small percentage of cases, the image will have to be handled by the VRIRSA support staff in order to properly apply redaction. In this case, the requested document will stay in the "In Progress" queue until the manual intervention or QA check has occurred. This process is covered in more detail in the section 3.1 **Manual Intervention**.



2.10 Document Delivery; Completed Queue

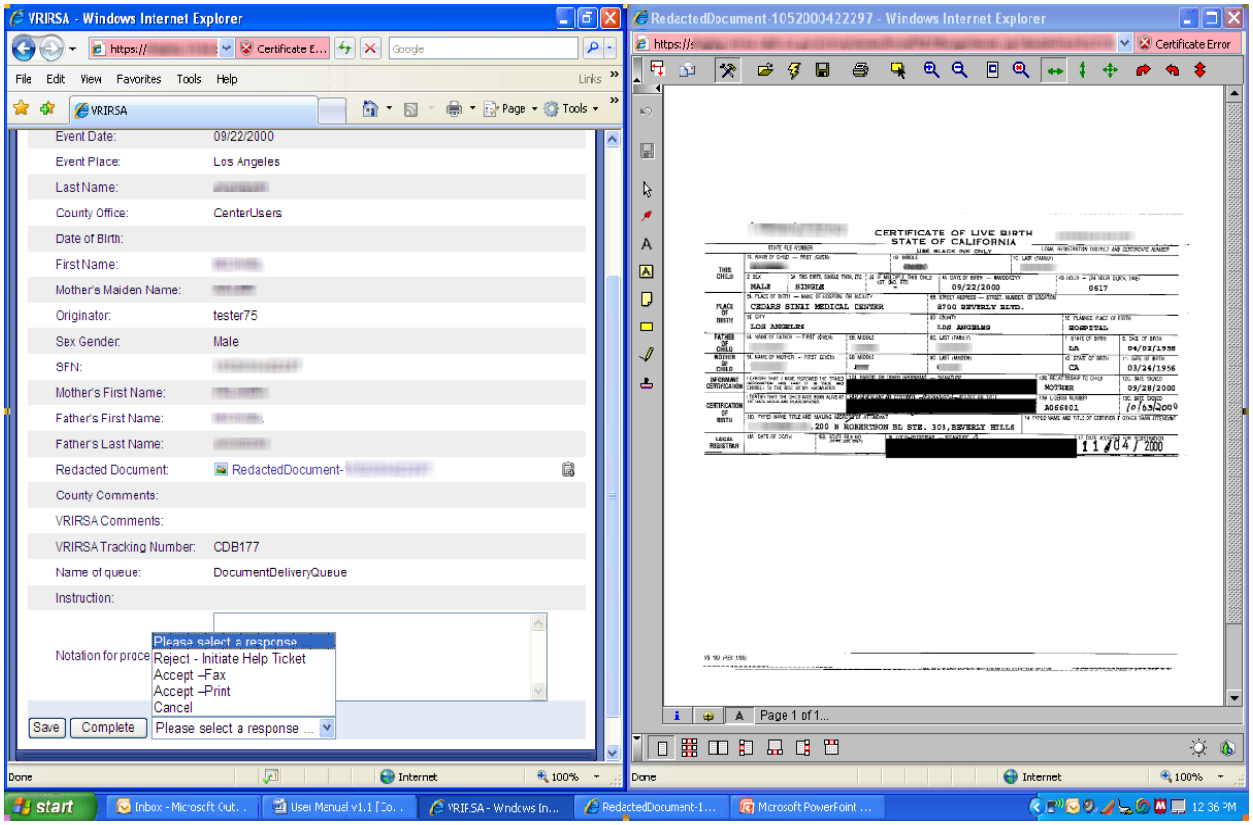
- When your document is ready for viewing, it appears in the 'Completed' queue. You may now open it and confirm that you received the correct certificate
- To view your redacted document, click on the icon to the left of the First Name column.
- The lock icon to the left of the item number indicates that the document is not available to view because another person in your office is viewing it.
- You can sort the columns in the Completed Queue by the Originator (your user ID). This is helpful if there are several VRIRSA users in your office.



2.11 Viewing the Redacted Document

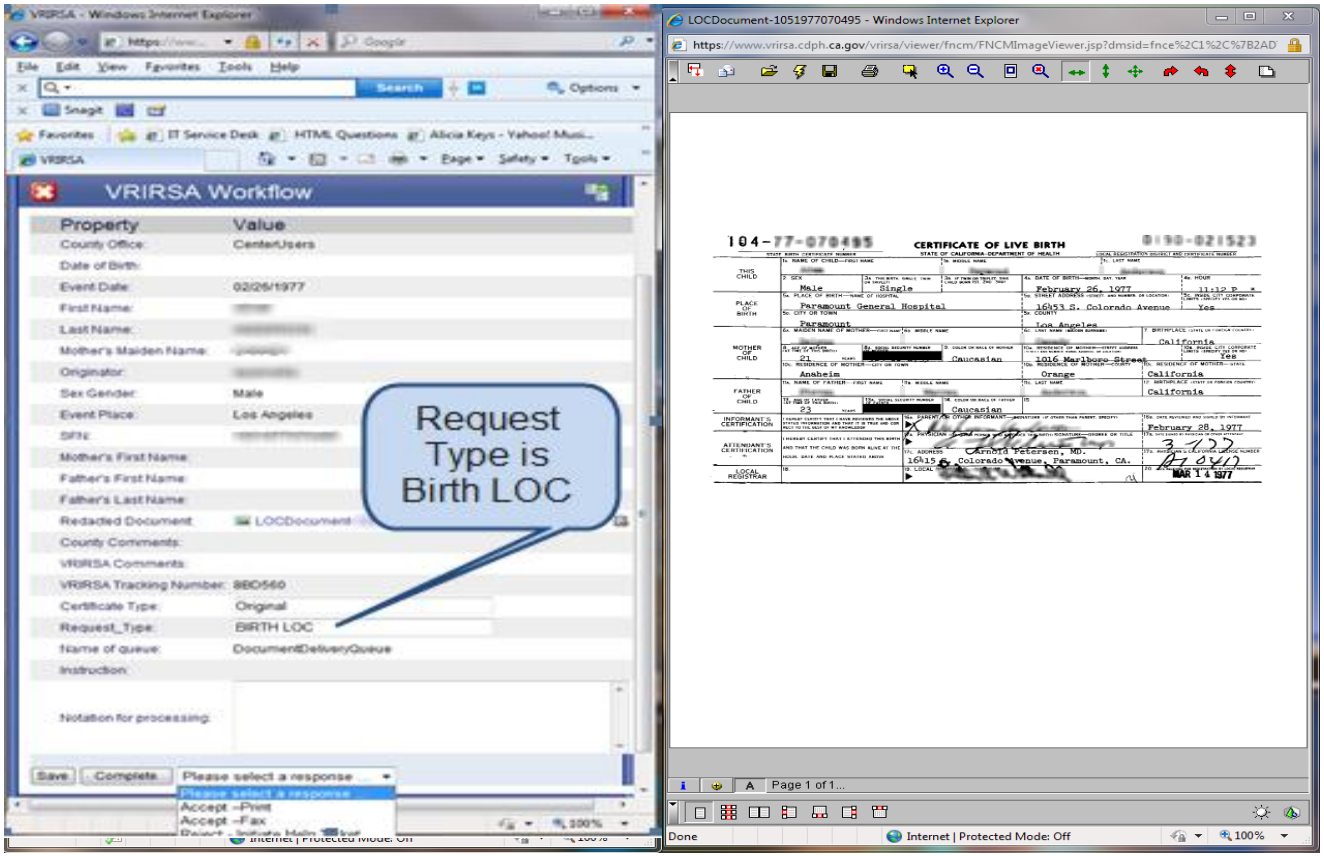
BIRTH REDACTED DOCUMENT

1. After selecting your redacted document for viewing, a new document viewing window will display and show you a split-screen view. On the left side is the search criteria you used to request the document, as well as other information associated with this certificate. On the right is a viewer that displays the image of the redacted certificate.
2. Examine the redacted document to ensure it matches the request you received from the customer, and inspect it to ensure the system has properly redacted it.
3. Signatures and SSN are redacted on a Birth document and only SSN is redacted on a Birth LOC document. The confidential health information on the bottom portion of the certificate is redacted on both documents.



BIRTH LOC REDACTED DOCUMENT

4. On the left side of the screen, indicate your acceptance of the certificate, by making a choice from the list of available actions.
   a. 'Accept – Fax' sends the requested document to the fax machine for delivery, using the fax number you provided when you setup your UserID with the VRIRSA support team.
   b. 'Accept – Print' sends the requested document to your default printer. Be sure to have your banknote paper properly loaded in the printer.
   c. 'Cancel' will remove the document from the completed queue with no further action taken.



   d. 'Reject – Initiate Help Ticket' gives you a screen to add comments to a help ticket, which will then be submitted to the VRIRSA help desk along with information about this document request.

5. If you don't want to print or fax this document, click the 'Save' button to return this document to the 'Completed' queue without further action.
6. Click the 'Complete' button after making your choice.

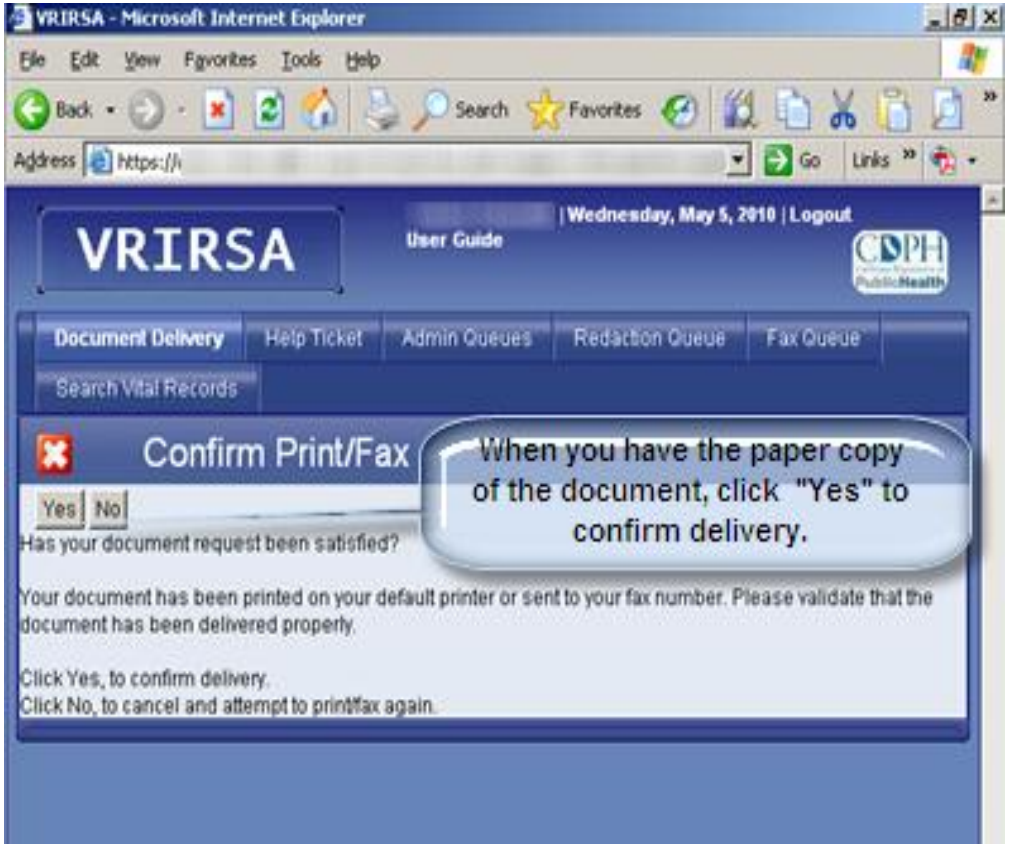
NOTE: DEATH AND MARRIAGE LOCS ARE NOT REDACTED.

2.12 Document Confirmation

When you have successfully received the document after printing or faxing, a confirmation screen similar to the one at right will appear. You must click 'Yes' to confirm that you have received your document and are satisfied and finished with the transaction.

If your printing process failed or had problems, or the fax machine did not receive and print the document, select 'No'. This sends you back to the previous split-screen view of the certificate, where you can correct the problem, then try again to print or fax. You may also file a help ticket on this request.

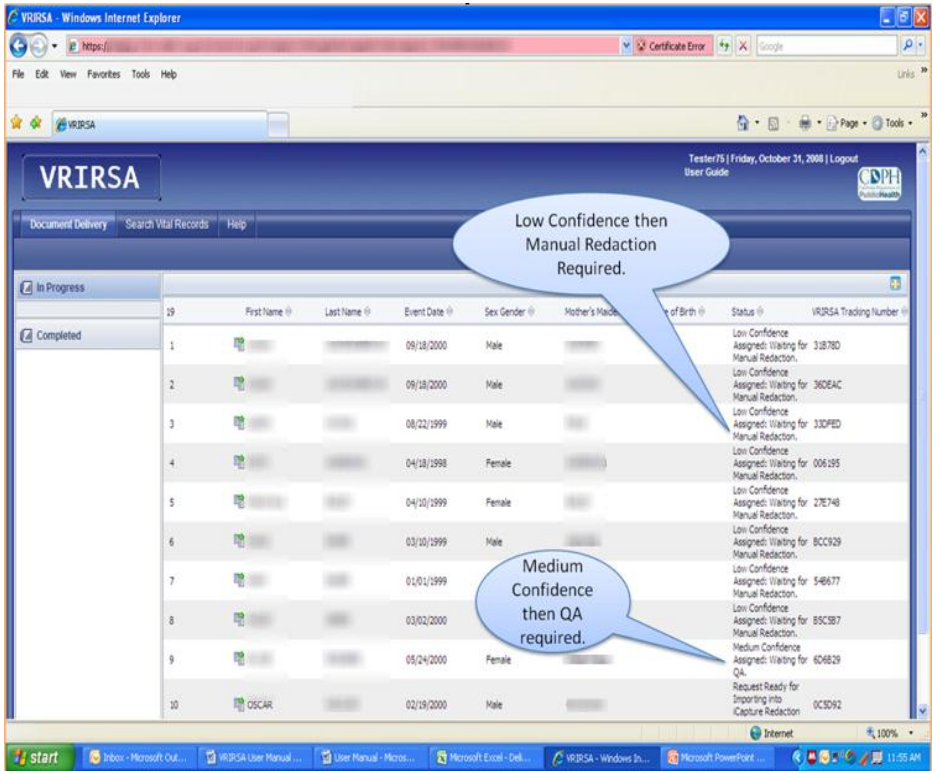
- Once receipt is confirmed, this document will be taken out of your Completed queue. It is important to confirm receipt of your document here; otherwise the document will stay in your Completed queue unnecessarily.
- If you do not receive a document you sent to your fax machine, please verify that you have a current, correct fax number on file with the VRIRSA support team.



3. VRIRSA Exceptions

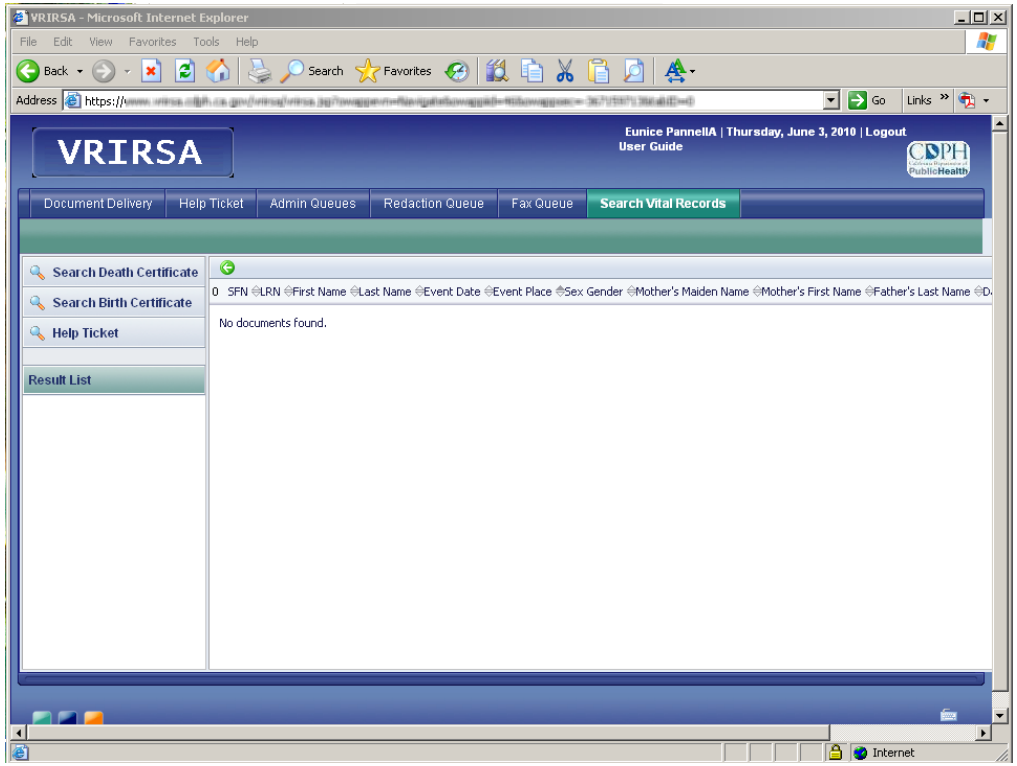
3.1 Manual Intervention

- Occasionally, the system may not be able to complete redaction of the requested certificate with sufficient accuracy. If this occurs, you will find the requested document and its status listed in your “In Progress” queue.
- The reason for requests staying in the “In Progress” queue is that, on attempting to automatically redact the certificate image, the system scored the redacted document with a lower than acceptable confidence rating. This sends the document to the VRIRSA support team to inspect it before releasing it back to you.
- If the VRIRSA system scores the redacted document with a low enough rating, the staff may need to manually redact the document before sending it back to you.
- In either of these cases where manual intervention is required, the VRIRSA support team responsible for this task will make every effort to send you your requested document as soon as possible.



3.2 No Record Found

If your initial search based on information from the customer requesting the certificate does not locate a birth, death or marriage certificate, a “No Document Found” message appears. When this happens, contact your State’s Policy Analyst or VRIRSA Support Team to attempt to locate the ceritifcate for you and have it available to the VRIRSA system. Once the certificate is moved to the ‘Completed’ queue it can be printed and given to the person who requested the document.



3.3 Certificate found for a Different County

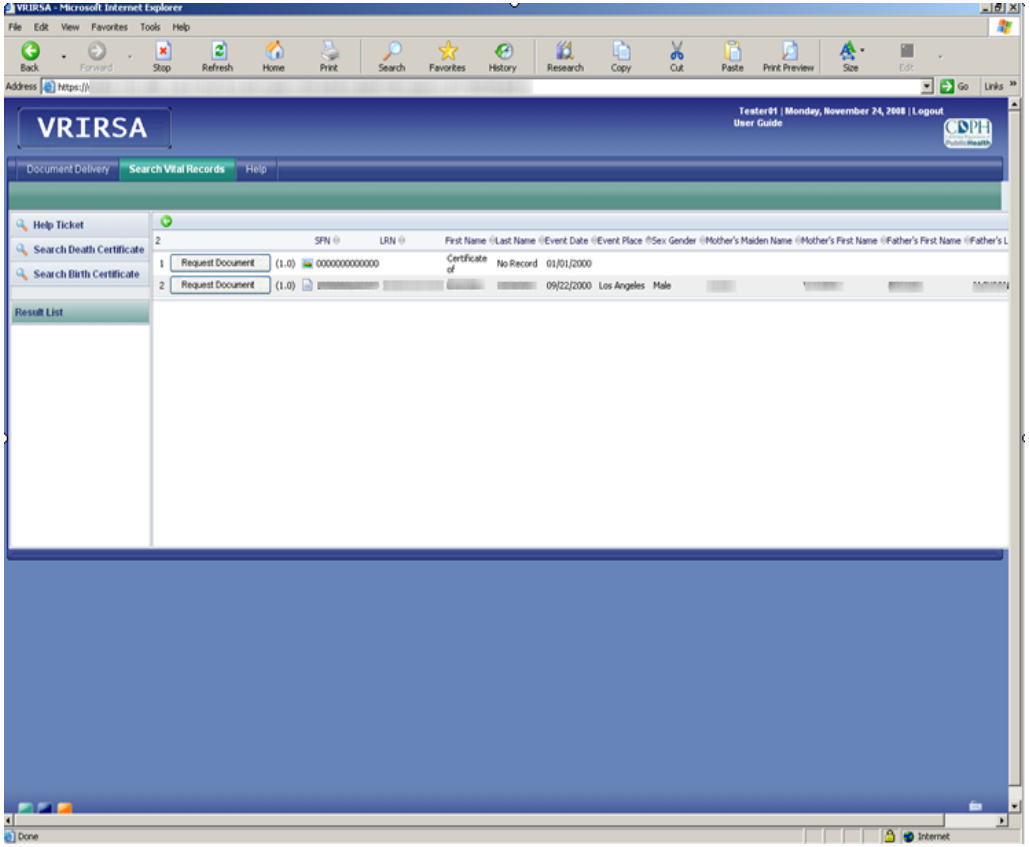
In the Result List screen, you will notice that items in the list are identified by county.

CDPH employees using the VRIRSA system will have access to view and request birth, and death certificates from all counties.

County Recorders and Local Registrars may only view, request and distribute certificates from their own county.

However, records from other counties will appear in the Result List. This information is made available to county staff so they can better help the customer. In cases where the record being sought is not in the county making the request, county staff can now advise the customer where the certificate was found. The customer can make the request to the appropriate county or directly to the state Office of Vital Records.

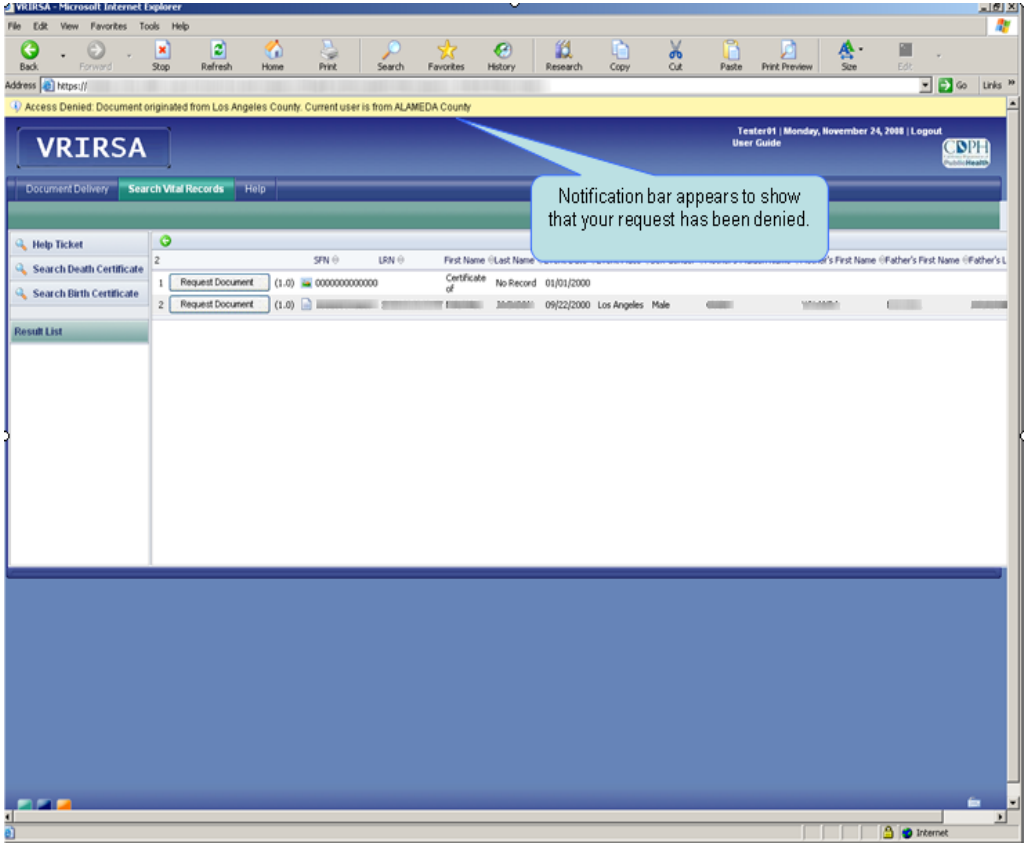
A county employee will not be able to use the 'Request Document' button to retrieve a record from another county.



3.4 Wrong County Error Message

If you are a County Recorder or Local Registrar, and you try to request a certificate from a County other than your own, you will see a message similar to the one at right.

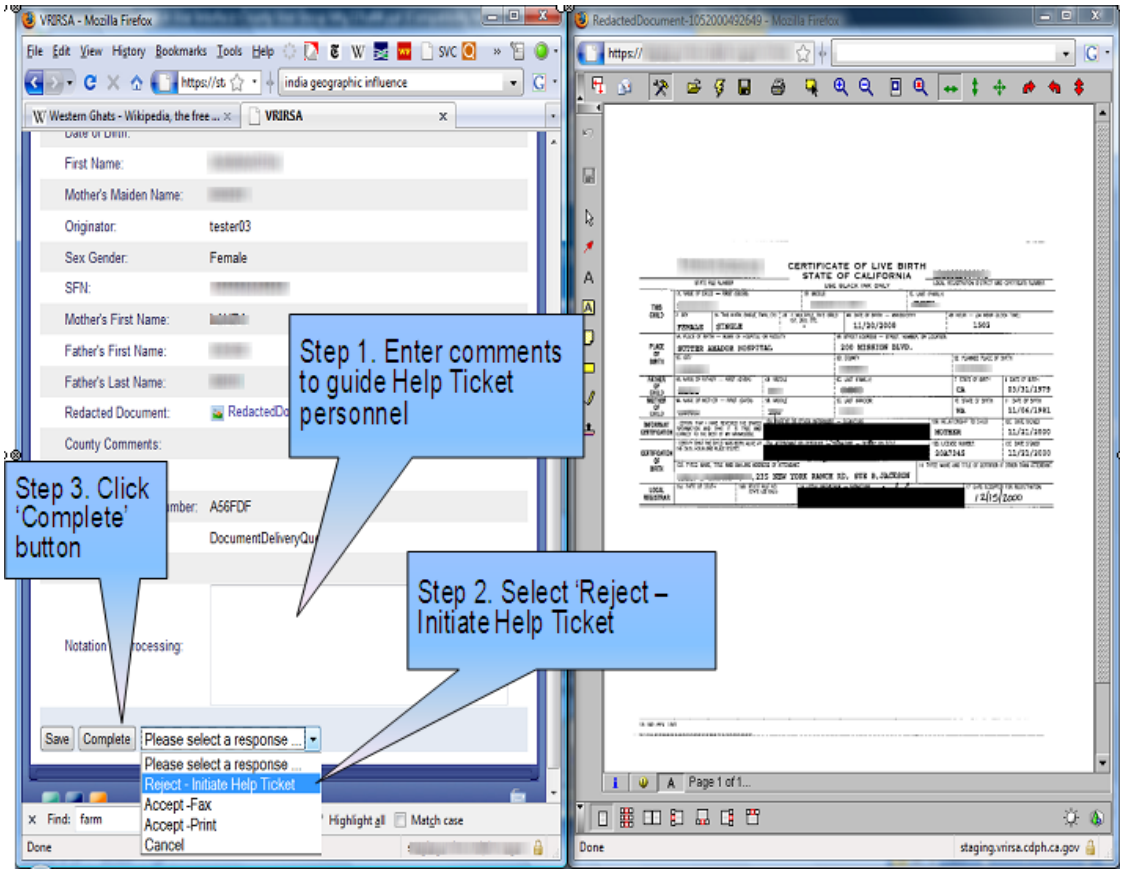
The banner at the top of the screen displays the error message that access is denied to records from other counties.



3.5 Rejecting a Certificate

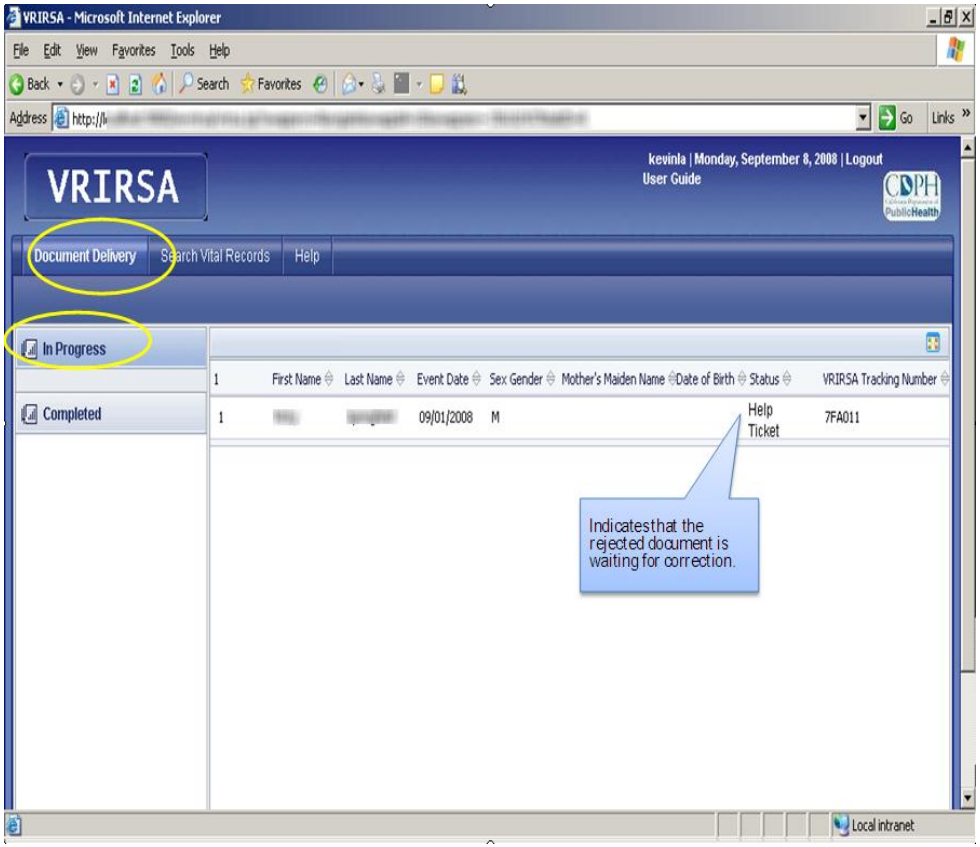
If you notice anything incorrect when you review the redacted certificate you requested, you can reject the document. This initiates a help desk ticket to the VRIRSA support team for their review. If they can correct the problem, they will do so and release the document back to your 'Completed' queue. In any case, they will create a response to your help desk ticket and move that to your Completed queue as well.

In order to submit a help desk ticket you are required to enter comments. The comments are necessary to guide the VRIRSA team as to what is wrong with the document.



3.6 Status of Rejected Document

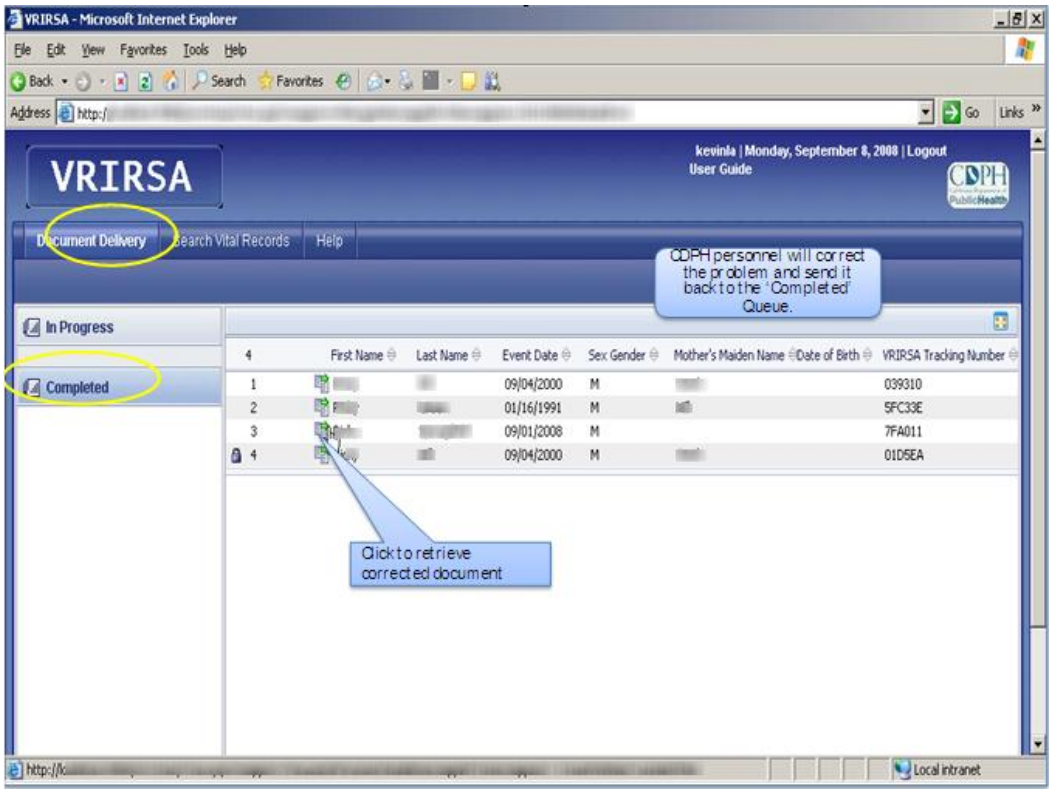
When you reject a document and submit a ticket to Help Desk, the system moves your help ticket to the "In Progress" queue. It will stay in this queue until resolved by the VRIRSA support team. You can track its status here as well.



3.7 Cleared Help Desk Ticket

If the help ticket can be addressed and corrected, the VRIRSA support team will do so, and then move it to your “Completed” queue.

You can then open, view and print or fax the document, as covered previously in this manual.



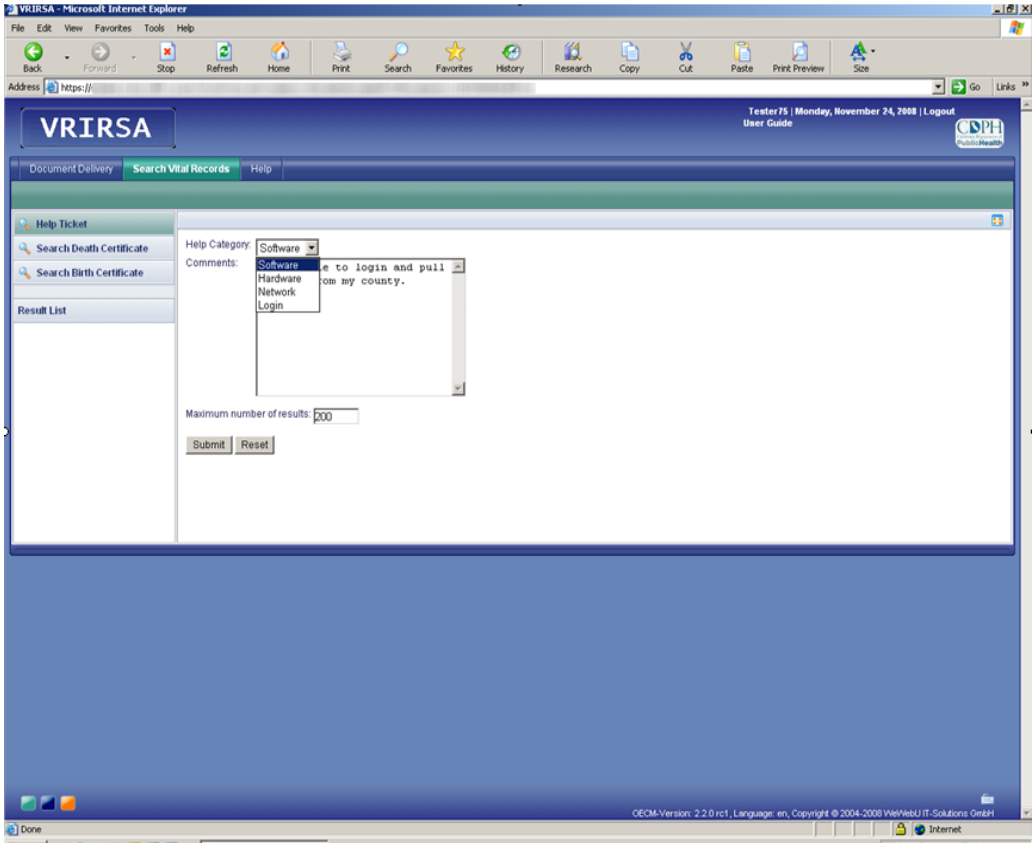
3.8 General Help Ticket

You can file a Help Ticket for the VRIRSA support team either on a specific document or with a general request.

In this example, we have filed a help ticket for a general request. There are four categories available to the user. The categories are: Software, Hardware, Network and Login.

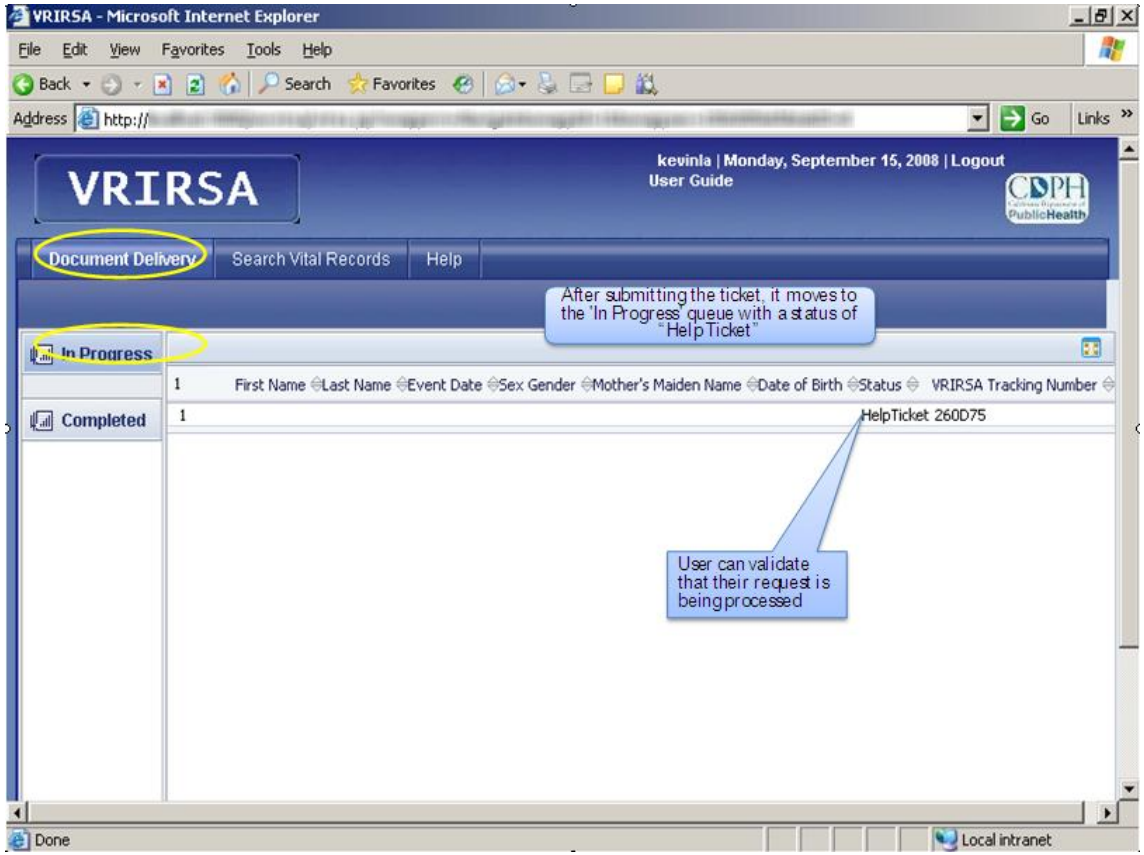
Once the category is selected, then the user needs to enter comments and then press 'Submit' to send the help ticket to the VRIRSA team.

Note that both the category selection and a filled out 'Comments' field are required in order to file the Help Ticket.



3.9 Help Ticket / In Progress Queue

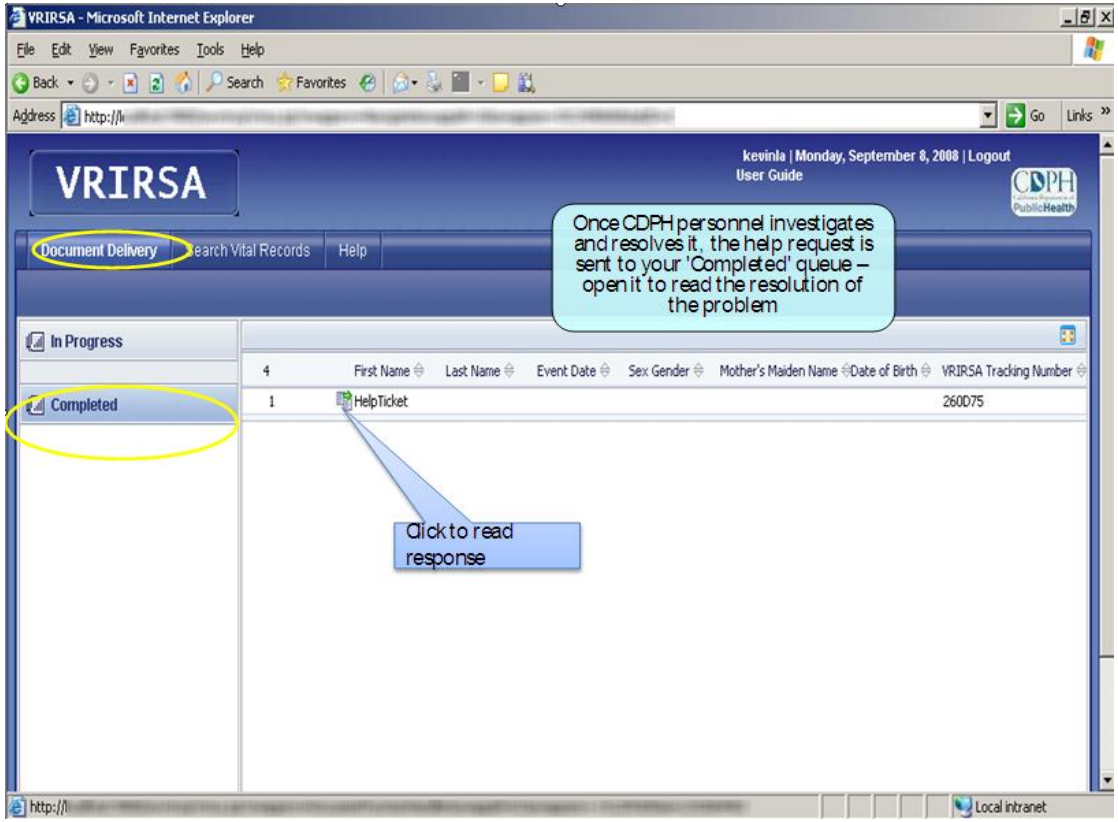
After submitting the ticket, it moves to the 'In Progress' queue with a status of “Help Ticket”



3.10 Help Ticket Cleared

Once VRIRSA support team investigates and resolves it, the help request is sent to your 'Completed' queue.

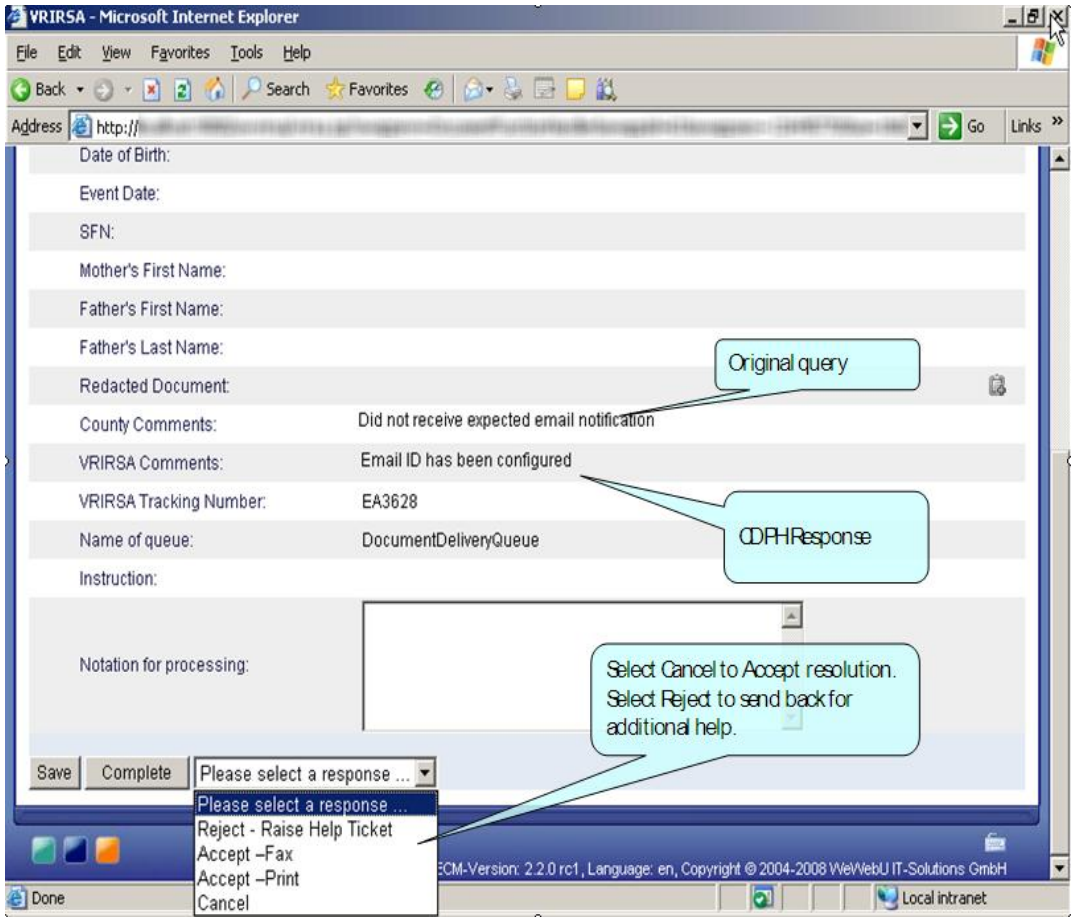
At this point, the user would open the help ticket to read the resolution of the problem



3.11 Accepting or Rejecting Help Response

After reading the resolution provided by the VRIRSA support team, the user can:

- Accept the resolution by hitting the Cancel key (removing the ticket from the queue)
- Reject the resolution and send it back for additional help.



4. Support for the VRIRSA System

For reporting system issues, please use the information below to contact the VRIRSA support team.

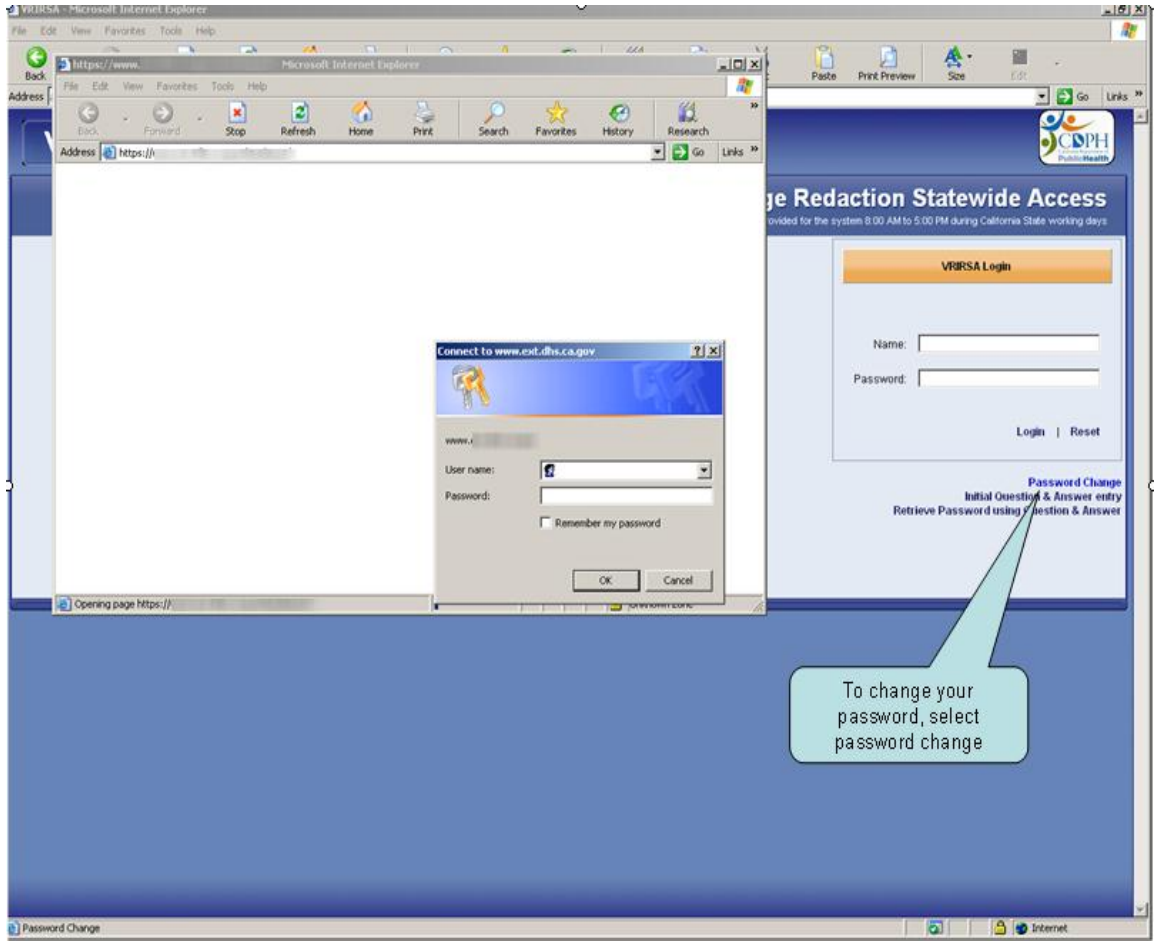
You may also use the Help Ticket tab of the VRIRSA System interface to communicate with the support team regarding routine search and retrieval issues. See Section **3.8 General Help Ticket** above.

VRIRSA Team Contact List	
Main phone number	(916) 322-2306
General email contact	**vrirsasupport@cdph.ca.gov**

Support is provided for the system 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM during State of California workdays (excluding weekends and State holidays).

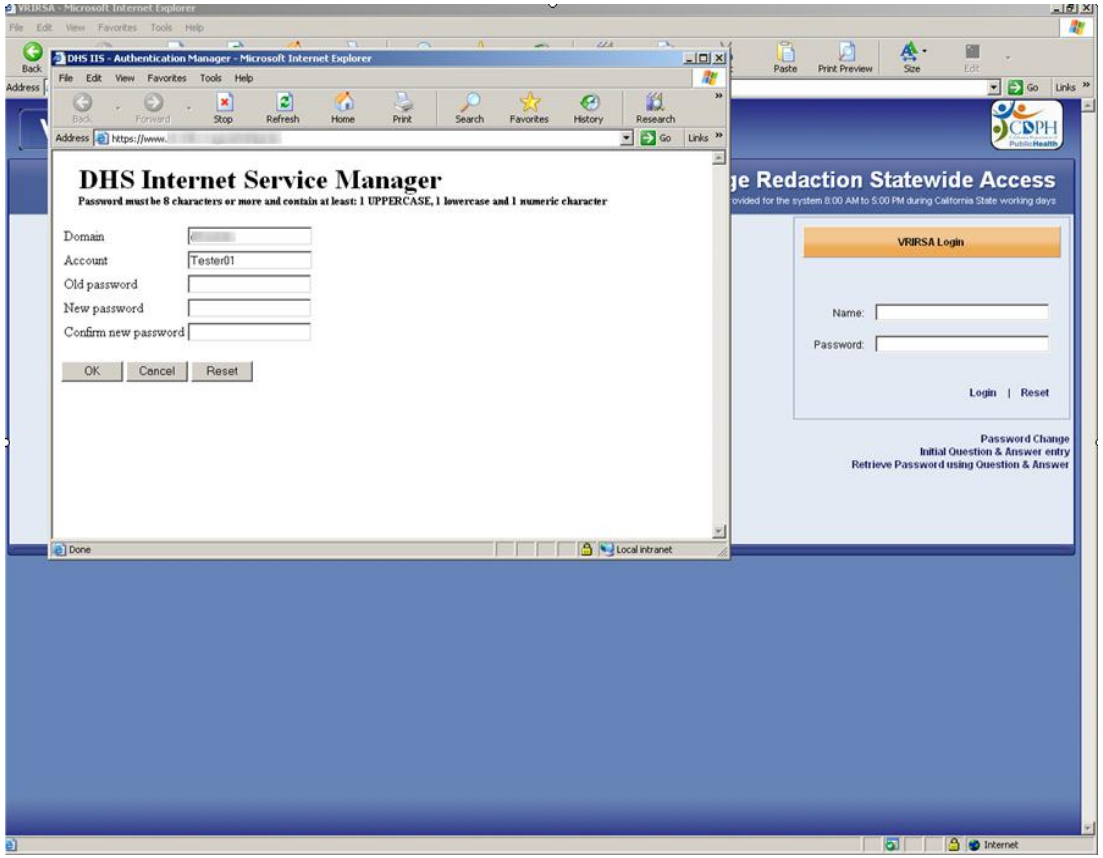
4.1 Password Maintenance

- Password maintenance requests can be made with a help desk ticket, or the request can be made directly to the VRIRSA team via the contact information provided above to restore, reset, or add a new user to the system.
- A user can change their password via the VRIRSA system.
- The user must select password change.
- A dialogue box then opens asking for your user name and password.



4.2 User Password Change

- Enter your user name and password to start the change process
- Enter the old password, and the new password; twice to confirm
- After pressing 'OK', the password change is successfully completed.



4.3 What Happens If….

- What happens if you receive an error indicating that “work item locked for use by another user”?
  - This usually occurs when another VRIRSA user has opened the document that you are attempting to view.
- What do I do if my password has expired?
  - Contact the VRIRSA support staff to restore the password at **vrirsasupport@cdph.ca.gov**.
- What do I do to change my password?
  - From the login page, select the password change link. See **Section 4.2 User Password Change** for further instructions.
- What happens if I am an OVR user and can’t log into QA to view a document that was not automatically redacted?
  - Contact the VRIRSA support staff to get assistance with a change in profile.
- What happens if I am unable to see my record in the completed document queue?
  - Contact the VRIRSA support staff to clear the old records out of the queue so you can more easily navigate through the list of current records.

5. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. What exactly is the VRIRSA system designed to do?

The VRIRSA System lets County and Center for Health Statistics (CHS) users search for digital copies of birth, death and marriage certificates that are stored in the centralized image repository at CHS.

Once the right certificate is found, the County or CHS user can ask for a redacted image of the certificate to print out on banknote paper and give to the public as an **Informational Copy**.

2. What do you mean by "redacted image"?

The digital image of the original certificate is copied and areas with sensitive information are covered up – signatures and social security numbers are covered with black boxes, confidential health information is eliminated by covering it with a white area; essentially cutting off that part of the form.

3. Is VRIRSA available to the public directly?

No. As they do now, the public makes requests for Informational copies to County Recorders, Local Registration Districts, and directly to the State (CHS Office of Vital Records (OVR)).

4. Who will use the VRIRSA system?

Staff at County Recorders' offices, Local Registration Districts, and CHS-OVR, or CHS-ITSS will use the system to search for certificates and produce redacted Informational copies for printing and delivery to public requesters.

5. How do I use the system to look for a certificate?

Here's the normal way of doing things (answers about exceptions are provided further down):

a. First you get information from the requester about the certificate they are looking for (such as a date range for birth or death, name, County, possibly more information if necessary).
b. You interact with the VRIRSA system (using a web browser) to search the index using that information.
c. The VRIRSA system responds with a list of matching certificates that may include the one you're looking for.
d. If you get no results, you can search again, or you may contact VRIRSA support for assistance.

6. If I find the right certificate, how do I request an Informational copy?

If the index search returns the certificate you're looking for, you select it from the list and ask the system to make a redacted copy.

7. Once I request an Informational copy, what happens next?

Your request will appear on your screen in a queue (list) called 'In Progress.' When the finished document arrives, your request disappears from the 'In Progress' queue and appears in the 'Completed' queue. Then you review the image on your screen, hit print, and send it to a printer stocked with banknote paper.

Once you print it and confirm your acceptance, it will disappear from the Completed queue.

8. Are there any other methods for receiving a redacted certificate?

Yes, via fax – if you have provided a fax number to the VRIRSA system during your setup process, you can elect to have the VRIRSA system send the redacted document to your fax machine. Once you receive the fax, you will need to copy it onto your banknote paper using a copy machine. After you finish, you will also need to complete your request in the VRIRSA system by confirming that this request was received.

9. How is the Informational copy produced?

After you select the record and request a redacted certificate (Informational Copy), the system automatically makes a digital copy of the image from the state repository where it permanently resides. By the way, nothing you do, and nothing the system does on your behalf, will affect the image repository.

The system takes the copy it made and blacks out (redacts) the signature information and social security number (if present). It covers any confidential health information with white space, and then sends it through the system's workflow back to your screen in your Completed queue. This should all happen within a matter of minutes.

In very few cases there may be a delay because the certificate couldn't be automatically redacted. You can come back to the system later for the certificate (see question 11).

10. Does anyone at the state Vital Records Registration Branch (VRRB) office need to handle either emailing or faxing the certificate?

No, this is all taken care of automatically by the VRIRSA system.

11. How does the system produce the redacted image of the certificate?

a. When you request an informational copy of a birth or death certificate, the VRIRSA system communicates with the system that keeps all of the images of certificates.

e. The certificate you requested is automatically copied to the VRIRSA system, which gives it (automatically) to the redaction subsystem.
f. Without human intervention, the system examines the image and tries to match it to a set of known certificate formats it has for that County and that year (of the event).
g. In 95% of the cases (or more), the right format is found, which tells the system where to put black or white boxes over parts of the certificate you requested (to redact it).
h. The new image, with black and/or white redactions, is sent back to you as described in previous answers.

12. Who's in charge of the system?

The VRIRSA system is run by the VRIRSA support team within Public Health Informatics Branch-Electronic Archival Section. The team is responsible for maintenance, operations and support of the system. They will establish a help desk and staff the help desk during regular State business hours.

13. Where is the system located?

The main components of the system are hosted within the CDPH Intranet and in the secure 'Extranet' data center maintained by Department of Health Care Services (DHCS).

14. How many requests per day do we expect to receive via the VRIRSA system?

At present, the VRIRSA system fulfills public requests for Informational Copies of birth certificates from 1970 to present, and for death certificates from 1993 forward. The total number of Informational Copies requested by both County and State staff is expected to be <u>less than 300 per day</u>.

As additional birth and death records are converted to computerized images over the next several years, more informational copy requests will be handled by VRIRSA.

15. What happens when preparing a certificate needs human intervention?

We currently estimate that more than 95% of the requests for birth or death certificates (or amendments) will automatically go through the system and be returned to the requester without any VRIRSA support team intervention. Less than 5% will need some human intervention. The normal reason for this is that the certificate is not in a recognized format, and the system is not completely sure where to place the black or white redaction boxes to cover up sensitive information on the form.

As each certificate image goes through the redaction subsystem, it is given a score measuring the level of confidence that the document can be handled correctly, based on the quality of the image and how well it matches

known formats. If this score is below 90 (out of 100), the image is sent to a queue for the VRIRSA support team to review. If visual inspection shows that the redaction worked properly, the employee clicks a button to release the redacted Informational Copy and the system automatically sends it to the requester. If the system has trouble with properly recognizing and redacting an image, then the VRIRSA support team can use VRIRSA's manual redaction software to draw boxes on the image and release it.

16. How many requests will need manual intervention from the VRIRSA support team?

Based on current testing, we believe such manual intervention cases will occur in less than 5% of all requests. For example, if there are 300 VRIRSA requests a day, less than 15 of them will require any manual intervention.

17. How long will it take to manually redact an image that has Medium or Low confidence?

It should take a few seconds to release an image that is already properly redacted and, if it is not, perhaps 30-60 seconds to correct any errors in an image and release it. If there are 15 such work items a day, this should account for less than one hour of staff time based on estimated request volumes.

18. Why can't the CRs or LRDs do the QA check on the redacted image and fix the redacted portions if needed?

The specialized software needed for manipulating the digital images to manually add redaction boxes is only available in the VRRB offices in Sacramento.

19. Do I need to contact VRRB to obtain a Local Office Copy (LOC)?

If you need a certificate for your files, you don't need to contact the State office as in the past you can request a copy by selecting the LOC button on the search result list. Print it out and place in your files. If you don't find an LOC copy in VRIRSA then contact the VRRB for further assistance.

20. How much training will I need to request Informational Copies?

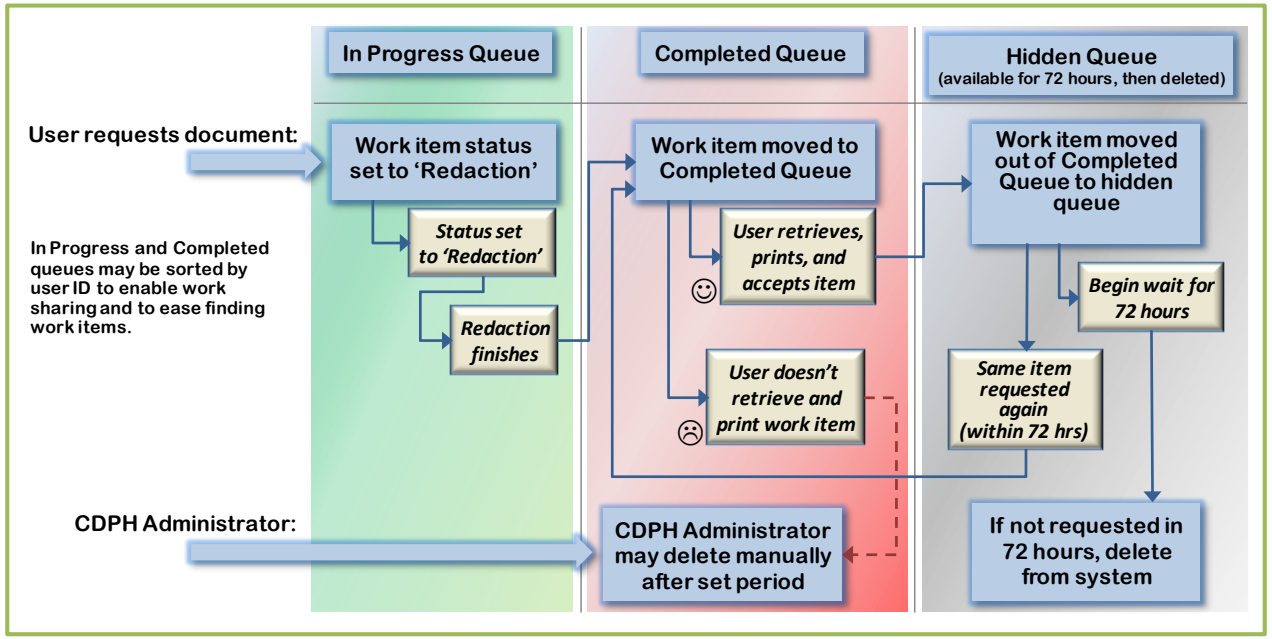
The human interface for the VRIRSA system is provided in a web browser. There will be online help available, and there will be a training module to introduce you to using the system. If you are already familiar with using a computer to perform searches, and using web browsers, the VRIRSA system will be relatively simple to master.

21. If I am an LRD can I request marriage certificates?

22. The search, request and retrieve function to obtain marriage certificates is based on the person's security group association. If a person is in the County Recorders security group then they will have the ability to interact with the marriage screen but if the person belongs to the Local Registrars security group then this screen is not present. Will the 'Completed' queue of redacted documents ever get too big to easily find what I'm looking for?

No. We have designed the system so that as soon as a redacted document is picked up by the staff member who originated it, or by anyone else in the office for that matter, it will disappear from the Completed queue and move into a hidden queue while it waits to expire and be deleted after 72 hours. During that time, if it is needed again, a request for the same item will bring it back from that queue, rather than going through the entire redaction process from scratch.

Of course, it's reasonable to expect that not all work will be picked up and printed, so we will set up a process and system policies whereby the VRIRSA Team managing the system will be able to monitor those queues and get rid of older work that has been left behind. Here is a graphic showing how the queues work:


In Progress Queue
Completed Queue
Hidden Queue
(available for 72 hours, then deleted)
User requests document:
Work item status set to 'Redaction'
Work item moved to Completed Queue
Work item moved out of Completed Queue to hidden queue
In Progress and Completed queues may be sorted by user ID to enable work sharing and to ease finding work items.
Status set to 'Redaction'
Redaction finishes
User retrieves, prints, and accepts item
Begin wait for 72 hours
User doesn't retrieve and print work item
Same item requested again (within 72 hrs)
CDPH Administrator:
CDPH Administrator may delete manually after set period
If not requested in 72 hours, delete from system

6. Glossary

- **Auto Redaction –** The VRIRSA system recognizes the format of a requested certificate and can automatically redact any sensitive fields and send the image back to the requester.
- **Confidence Level –** This term governs whether the redacted document will be automatically redacted by the system or whether some human intervention must occur on the part of VRIRSA support staff. The confidence score is calculated based on the similarity of the certificate being processed to the template images the system keeps to guide redaction.
- **CR users –** County Recorder's Office staff.
- **Document Delivery –** This is the VRIRSA screen on the website where you find lists of documents that have been requested. There are two sections of document delivery: the In Progress queue and the Completed queue.
- **FileNet –** The IBM software that forms the foundation of the VRIRSA system. It handles requests and searches the database for the birth and death records.
- **Help –** The system provides some online help related to the web interface, and also provides a link to this User Manual for download.
- **Help Desk Ticket –** This is used when the end user has encountered a problem with a redacted document or when the end user is having software, hardware, login, or security issues. The help desk ticket communicates the problem to the VRIRSA help desk for resolution.
- **LOC –** Local Office Copy is similar to the Request Document process except that death certificates are not redacted and the redacted fields on birth certificates are limited.
- **LRD users –** Local Registration District staff
- **Manual Redaction –** If the document has a low confidence score, the document has to be manually redacted by a member of the VRIRSA support team.
- **OpenWorkDesk (OWD) –** This is the software package that provides the web interface for OVR and County users to use the VRIRSA system.
- **OVR users –** Office of Vital Records staff
- **Quality Assurance (QA) –** If a document has a medium confidence number, then the document will be sent to QA to be reviewed before going on to FileNet.
- **Redaction –** In the VRIRSA system, this is a process by which the original birth or death certificate has black or white rectangles applied to the image – hiding sensitive information such as signatures, social security numbers, and health status.

- **Request Document –** Once you locate a document in the VRIRSA system, you can request the document; which triggers a process wherein the birth or death certificate is redacted; either automatically or with intervention by a VRIRSA support team member.
- **Result List –** The result list contains a set of records that match the criteria you entered in the search screen.
- Search Vital Records **– The VRIRSA system enables you to search and retrieve only the available digital images of birth and death records for redaction and distribution as Informational Copies. Many older certificates may not be available now, although they will be added in the future. This manual contains instructions on how to search for vital records by entering search criteria and selecting from results of your search. For further information on searching see** Section **2.2 Search for a Birth Certificate document**, Section **2.3 Search Screen Fields**, Section **2.4 Understanding Partial Name Searches**, Section **2.5 Search for a Death Certificate, and 2.6 Search for a Marriage Certificate.**
- **Split Screen –** A split screen displays when the system shows you the redacted image of the certificate you requested, as well as the index data associated with that form.
- **URL –** Universal Record Locator; an internet address. The URL field at the top of your browser is where you enter the VRIRSA URL in order to navigate to the VRIRSA system.
- **VRIRSA Tracking Number (VTN) –** This is the number used internally by the VRIRSA system to track documents that have been requested for redaction and further output.
- **VRIRSA Team –** This is the team responsible for providing support and maintenance of the VRIRSA system. The team will run the help desk and provide training to CR, LRD, and OVR staff.