

VRIRSA Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: What is VRIRSA?

A: VRIRSA is the Vital Records Image Redaction and Statewide Access system. The system was designed and will be implemented pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 247 (Chap. 914, Stats. of 2002). Among other things, SB 247 established specific requirements for persons authorized to obtain certified copies of birth and death records. Those who are unable to meet the requirements for regular certified copies may only obtain informational copies that are marked "INFORMATIONAL, NOT A VALID DOCUMENT TO ESTABLISH IDENTITY." SB 247 requires that the informational copies be printed from the statewide database and be electronically redacted to remove any signatures.

Q: Can a county choose to not participate in VRIRSA?

A: No. Participation is mandatory. SB 247 requires that informational copies be printed only from the statewide database. "Local registrars and county recorders shall not issue informational copies from any source other than the statewide database prepared by the State Registrar" (Health and Safety Code, Section 103526(f)). The only exceptions to this requirement are for records that pre-date the current automation efforts.

Q: What years will be available in VRIRSA?

A: Initially, only birth certificates from 1985 to the present and death certificates from 1996 to the present will be available through VRIRSA. The State is in the process of digitizing all back records and will announce the release of the records as soon as they are available in VRIRSA. These records are being processed in yearly batches and will be released on a flow basis.

Q: How soon will recent birth and death records be available in VRIRSA?

A: Current birth and death records are processed as quickly as possible once they reach the State office. Typically, there is a 30 to 90-day delay before new records are added to the production imaging system. This timeframe will be different for each county depending on a number of factors, including the number of records submitted, local processing times for shipping records to the State office, and participation in the State's automated birth and death registration systems.

Q: What if a record is not found in VRIRSA but is located in a County's records?

A: If county staff cannot locate a record in VRIRSA but have a copy in their own office, a query must be made to the State Office of Vital Records to establish the validity of the record before a copy may be issued. This is best done through use of the helpdesk ticketing system in VRIRSA. By law, all informational copies of birth and death certificates must be printed from VRIRSA. The only exceptions are for records that pre-date the current automation efforts or records that, for some reason, are not found in the State's database although they have been registered locally.

Q: Do we need to redact records that come from the County but are not issued out of VRIRSA?

A: Manual redaction is not required for records that predate the range of records currently in VRIRSA. However, informational copies must still contain the legend "INFORMATIONAL, NOT A VAILD DOCUMENT TO ESTABLISH IDENTITY."

Q : How do we report fees for certificates issued out of VRIRSA?

A: Continue reporting and remitting fees to the State in the usual manner. VRIRSA will not replace the established fee reporting process currently on place.

Q: Who do I contact if I have additional questions or need help using VRIRSA?

A: Please contact the VRIRSA support staff at VRIRSA_Support@cdph.ca.gov or by phone at (916) 322-2306. The support desk will be available from Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm (excluding furlough days and State holidays).