

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

- Mail the following items to our office:
  - 1) Completed “Application for Certified Copy of Death Record” (VS 112).
  - 2) Notarized sworn statement (if applicable).
  - 3) \$21 fee per copy requested.
- Complete a separate application for each record requested.
- Be sure to complete all items required on the application, and provide as much information as possible to help locate the record, otherwise your request may be returned to you for correction.
- Fees are payable to “CDPH Vital Records” via check or money order. International money orders for out-of-country requests should be payable in U.S. dollars. Fees are also non-refundable per state law.
- If we cannot locate the record based on the information you provide, California Health and Safety Code authorizes our office to maintain the fee for the search itself, and we will issue a Certificate of No Public Record (CNPR).
- Fees previously paid to local registrars and county recorder’s offices cannot be transferred to our office.

*Vital Records maintains a permanent, public record of every birth and death that has occurred in California since July 1905, and has more than 50 million records on file.*



California Department of Public Health  
Vital Records – MS 5103  
P.O. Box 997410  
Sacramento, CA 95899-7410  
(916) 445-2684  
[www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)  
CA Relay: 711/1-800-735-2929



## How to Obtain Certified Copies of ***Death Records***

August 2015

### AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS

Before death certificates are registered in the state database and are made available for processing requests for copies, the records are first registered in the county where the death took place. This process is administered through the local county health department (registered) and local county recorder's office (maintained). Once this process is complete, the records are then available for request at the state office.

### IF THE RECORD IS BEING AMENDED

Amendments to original death records are frequently submitted to our office to correct errors or add information to original documents. Copies of amended certificates may be requested at the same time the amendment is submitted. The applicant receives a certified copy once the amendment is completed.

- If you request a certified copy **before** the amendment has been completed, you will receive either: a copy of the un-amended record, or a CNPR if we are not able to locate the record.
- If you know that the record is being amended, and it is the amended record that you want, please wait until after the amendment has been completed before requesting a certified copy.

**ATTENTION:**  
PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION  
BEFORE COMPLETING APPLICATION

### CERTIFIED COPIES AND SWORN STATEMENTS

There are two types of certified copies available upon request:

#### 1) **Certified Copy** (authorized persons only)

If you are requesting a certified copy, you MUST provide a notarized sworn statement (see page 3 of application) declaring under penalty of perjury that you are authorized by law to receive the certified copy (see application for list of authorized individuals).

If you are requesting a certified copy and a notarized sworn statement is not included, we will not be able to accept your request for processing.

A certified copy can be used to establish the identity of the person named on the certificate.

**Note:** Only one sworn statement is required for multiple records that are requested at the same time — but the sworn statement must include the name of each person whose record is being requested and your relationship to that person.

#### 2) **Certified Informational Copy** (any interested person)

If you are requesting a certified informational copy, you DO NOT need to provide a sworn statement.

A certified informational copy has a legend printed on the face of the document that states, "INFORMATIONAL, NOT A VALID DOCUMENT TO ESTABLISH IDENTITY." Persons who are not eligible to receive a certified copy can receive a certified informational copy.

Both types of documents are certified copies of the original document on file with our office. Depending on the exact year of event, some certified informational copies will have signatures and Social Security numbers redacted (concealed).

### APPLICANT NOTIFICATION

Once your request has been received and evaluated:

- If your request is not accepted (e.g., due to insufficient fees, insufficient information, etc.), we will return your request to you with a letter explaining what needs to be corrected; or,
- If your request is accepted, we will process the application and mail out a copy of the certificate(s) you requested.

Please allow a few weeks to receive these documents.

### PROCESSING TIMES

To check current processing times for certified copies of birth certificates, visit our website:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/birthdeathmar/Pages/ProcessingTimes.aspx>

If you need your copy sooner, please refer to the enclosed list of county recorder's offices to contact the county where the event occurred. Because of the large volume of requests we process at the state level, the county offices can usually provide a faster processing time.

All applications and written inquiries should be mailed to:

**California Department of Public Health  
Vital Records – MS 5103  
P.O. Box 997410  
Sacramento, CA 95899-7410**

If you still have any questions, please contact our Customer Service Unit at (916) 445-2684, Monday through Friday, between 8AM – 4PM.