

Donald L. Shumway Commissioner

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES OFFICE OF COMMUNITY & PUBLIC HEALTH

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FUNERAL DIRECTOR NEWS LETTER September 1999

DEATH CERTIFICATE QUALITY CONTROL REVIEW

The Bureau staff has been busy reviewing the original copies of the 99 Death Certificates sent to us. Several areas of concern have been noted for improvement.

ITEMS MAY NOT BE LEFT BLANK. Many of these items are the responsibility of the funeral director. When a Funeral Director files a Death Certificate within the Local Registrars office the Town/City clerk must at a minimum, review the original death record for completeness. Many items are being left blank.

Secondly, they should compare the original record with the ADC'S computer generated copy or in the VRV2000 computer program. <u>All items MUST be the same</u>. Any discrepancies must be dealt with prior to filing the original record with the Bureau. (see page 2 "DEATH CORRECTIONS")

The Local Registrars have been instructed, if need be, to return to the Funeral Director the Death Certificate(s) and request that the problem areas be corrected.

Items in need of attention are:

ITEM # 1, Decedent's Name (Name stated on Certificate MUST match name entered into system)

Signatures

#21a. Funeral Directors

#22a, Individual Pronouncing death

#31b, Certifying Physician

- #12a, 12b Decedent's usual occupation & business/industry
- #21d, Countersigned Agent
- # 26 Medical Examiner referral (yes/no)
- Item #27 Cause of Death. (Part I & II) Need to check spelling & completeness of cause
- *Item # 28a* Autopsy Performed (yes/no)
- Item # 28b (yes / no) if applicable
- Item # 29 Manner of Death
- Item #23, Capacity of Individual Pronouncing Death
 - (If ADME, this item should be #6 Asst. Dep. ME (non MD))
- *Item # 32* Name & *complete* address of certifier (**street and number**)

If you have any questions in regards to the proper filing of the Death record please feel free to contact either *Heather Bentley* @ 271-4649 or *Steve Wurtz* @ 271-4655.

OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY REPORTING

One of the most important factors relating to the health of the working population is the risk involved in the working environment. Data on the relative health risk of various occupations and industries can be used to make decisions on where to concentrate efforts in industrial health work. Proper reporting of occupation and industry information is important for the development of safety regulations covering industrial workers.

Mortality data by occupation and industry can serve many purposes if accurately collected on a nationwide basis. Mortality measures are calculated using the population by occupation and industry observed in the decennial censuses as a denominator and the number of deaths by occupation and industry as a numerator. The reliability of the rates will be affected by the comparability of responses on the death certificate with the census returns.

Because the occupation and industry responses will be coded and classified, any unclassifiable entry will be queried by the Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics; thus the funeral director can eliminate unnecessary correspondence by properly entering the data initially.

Both the occupation and business/industry items on the death certificate are required to accurately describe an individual's occupation. Inadequate description of business/industry has been a major reporting deficiency on death certificates.

The New Hampshire Certificate of Death contains two items relating to occupation and industry: "Decedent's usual occupation" (item # 12a) and "Kind of business/industry." (item # 12b). **Decedent's usual occupation means the** *type of job the individual was engaged in for most of his/her life*. It is not necessarily the highest paid job nor the job considered the most prestigious, but the one occupation, of perhaps several, that accounted for the greatest number of working life. *Kind of business/industry refers to the particular type of activity within which the chosen occupation is found*. Specifying the name of a company is not sufficient unless the name describes the nature of the business.

EXAMPLES:

OCCUPATION KIND OF BUSINESS / INDUSTRY NAME OF EMPLOYER

Maintenance cleaning Leather Shoe Manufacturing Rochester Shoe

Corp.

Secretary Computer Hardware Manufacturing Apollo Computer

Inc.

Math Teacher High School Gilbert High

School

TeacherElementary schoolElm Elementary SchoolNurseHospitalConcord Hospital

Nurse Nursing Home Clipper Nursing

Home

Supervisor of Manufacturing Transistors Sprague

Electric

Electronic Processing

The Handbook "Guidelines for Reporting Occupational and Industry on Death Certificates" is available for anyone interested by calling the Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics at 271-4649.

DEATH CORRECTIONS:

Any correction / amendment made to a death record filed within 6 months from the date the certificate was filed requires a VSX correction. This VSX correction form maybe obtained from any city/town clerk <u>and</u> <u>filled with the Town/City clerk of occurrence</u>.

This procedure is necessary regardless whether or not the paper copies have been filed.

DO NOT correct in your ADC system and re-transmit. By doing so it causes a duplicate record filing of the electronic record in the ADC system.

VRV2000 FUNERAL DIRECTORS:

All deaths filed by a Funeral Director using the VRV2000 system must be sent to the Bureau of Vital Records as they occur. These death records should not be held by the Funeral Director for any reason. If you have a problem or an incomplete record feel free to contact *Heather Bentley* or *Steve Wurtz* at the Bureau for assistance.

VRV2000 UPDATE

SEE BILL FOR INPUT

CAUSE OF DEATH ABBREVIATIONS:

Although the death certificate states "The following shall be typed or printed with NO abbreviations"...occasionally you may receive a death record with an abbreviation listed for the cause of death. We ask that ALL ADC / VRV2000 users spell out all cause of death information into the system. To assist you in transforming abbreviations into the appropriate terms we have enclosed a copy of the "STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS" as your reference guide. This information is also available in your ADC / VRV2000 program by using the drop-down function within the cause of death section.

Please use these guides to determine the exact phrasing to be entered on the death certificate. When the guide indicates that more than one phrase is applicable, contact the certifying physician for clarification. If an abbreviation appears on a certificate that is not contained on the list, please contact the physician or the Bureau of Vital Records for assistance.

FETAL DEATH REPORTS:

The Funeral Director is responsible for completion of Items #32 – 37 of the fetal death report. This section includes information on the disposition of the fetus as well as the name and location of funeral home, funeral Directors signature & License number. The original "Report of Fetal Death" shall remain at the facility of death. Upon completion the hospital is responsible for forwarding the report directly to the Bureau of Vital Records within 6 days after delivery. The Burial-Transit is given to the funeral director when the fetus is to be disposed of outside of the hospital.

TIME OF DEATH AND INJURY:

If there is no hour and minutes given for the time of death and time of injury such as UNKNOWN, UNKNOWN AM/PM, EARLY AM/PM, etc.; the hour and minutes will be entered as **99** and the time indicator will be entered as **UNKNOWN**.