

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SUBJECT/TITLE:	Death Certificate Issuance
SCOPE:	Vital Statistics
CONTACT PERSON & DIVISION:	Olivia Roston, Vital Statistics Registrar
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PURPOSE

The intent of this document is to establish guidelines for proper issuance of death certificates. Adherence to this standard will:

1. Ensure requests for death certificates are complete and accurate;
2. Ensure any and all documentation needed to obtain death certificates is verified; and
3. Ensure the completeness and accuracy of the printed certified death certificate.

POLICY

The Galion City Health Department issues to requestors, for a fee, certified copies of death certificates for events occurring within the city limits of Galion from December 1908 to present.

BACKGROUND

The issuance of death certificates must be done in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code 3705.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following definitions are relevant to this document.

SSN – Social Security Number

ODH – Ohio Department of Health

PROCEDURES & STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

- Upon the receipt of a completed and signed application and the appropriate fee, the local registrar or deputy registrar shall issue a certified copy of a death certificate. If more copies of the application are needed, print them from "[Application for Certificates](#)" (PDF in the Vital Stats folder on the "Q" drive). Online ordering is now available. Periodically throughout the day, you must check Permitium for online orders, <https://galionoh.permitium.com/applist>. When you log into, ensure you are on the "Unassigned" tab with "Open" selected in the drop-down box, click search. If an order is visible, click on the order number to process. Once order is open, click the print button on the right-hand side, and choose "Print Application". If document cannot be located or there are errors, contact the customer and/or deny the application if necessary.
 - First ensure the application is complete and signed. Also, if the death has occurred within the five years prior to the application being presented for certified copies, determine if the "SSN Included" or "SSN Not Included" box is checked.
 1. If the death has not occurred within the five years prior to the application being presented for certified copies OR the "SSN Not Included" box is checked, skip to (I)(B). If the death has occurred within the five years prior to the application being presented for certified copies AND the "SSN Included" box is checked, determine

what legal category the applicant has indicated on the bottom or back of the application as his/her reason for being eligible to have the SSN included. If requesting the SSN to be included, the applicant must present proof of his/her identity. **Document on the bottom of the application how identity was established.** If the applicant has indicated he/she is:

- a. The decedent's spouse, he/she must show a valid, government issued photo id and either be on the death record as "spouse", show a valid marriage license, or complete the "[Death Certificate SSN Affidavit](#)." It is acceptable if the applicant is known by a health department staff member as such or if the health department staff knows the applicant and only views the appropriate additional documentation.
- b. A county veteran's service office or an agent of that officer, he/she must present either of the following indicating his/her status as a veteran's service officer or officer's agent: photo id such as employment badge or signed and dated letter on the officer's letterhead.
- c. An official who is authorized to cause the burial or cremation of a dead person at the expense of the township or municipal corporation, he/she must be known by a health department staff member as such or have township or municipal corporation identification.
- d. A lineal descendant of the decedent, he/she must show a valid, government issued photo id and either valid birth certificate(s) showing relationship or complete the "[Death Certificate SSN Affidavit](#)." It is acceptable if the applicant is known by a health department staff member as such or if the health department staff knows the applicant and only views the appropriate additional documentation.
- e. An individual with a class A or B license issued by the director of the Ohio Department of Public Safety to engage in the business of private investigation, he/she must be known by a health department staff member as such or show a valid, government issued photo id and his/her current private investigation license.
- f. An official of the federal or state government or of a political subdivision of the state charged by law with detecting or prosecuting crime, he/she must be known by a health department staff member as such or show photo id employment badge or a valid, government issued photo id and signed and dated letter on his/her department's/agency's letterhead.
- g. An individual engaged in the work of, or connected with or employed by, any media organization or media association if the individual seeks the death certificate of the purpose of gathering, procuring, compiling, editing, disseminating, or publishing news, he/she must be known by a health department staff member as such or show photo id employment badge or a valid, government issued photo id and signed and dated letter on his/her department's/agency's letterhead.
- h. The executor or administrator of the decedent's estate, or an attorney representing the executor or administrator, he/she must show a valid, government issued photo id and legal paperwork naming him/her as such. It is acceptable if the applicant is known by a health department staff member as such or if the health department staff knows the applicant and only views the appropriate additional documentation.
- i. An agent, as defined in the Ohio Power of Attorney Act, of the decedent, when the decedent had been the principal under a power of attorney created pursuant to the Ohio Power of Attorney Act, he/she must show a valid, government issued photo id and legal paperwork naming him/her as such. It is acceptable if the applicant is known by a health department staff member as such or if the health department staff knows the applicant and only views the appropriate additional documentation.
- j. The adult or group of adults to whom a decedent, before death, assigned the right to direct the disposition of the decedent's remains and make certain arrangements related to the decedent's funeral, he/she/they must show a valid, government issued photo id and legal paperwork naming him/her as such. It is acceptable if the applicant is known by a health department staff member as such or if the health department staff knows the applicant and only views the appropriate additional documentation.
- k. A licensed funeral director, or an employee or agent of that individual, he/she must be known by a health department staff member as such or have funeral home identification. However, per state guidance, if the applicant has brought the original death certificate to be registered, it is acceptable to assume he/she is a licensed funeral director, or an employee or agent of that individual.

- I. Any person who is authorized by law to act on behalf of the decedent or the decedent's estate but is not listed above, he/she must show a valid, government issued photo id and legal paperwork naming him/her as such. It is acceptable if the applicant is known by a health department staff member as such or if the health department staff knows the applicant and only views the appropriate additional documentation.
- B. Once any/all necessary documentation and fees have been received, reviewed and/or copied, the death certificate may be issued.
 1. If the original death certificate was brought in with the request by a funeral home, register the certificate (see [VS Death Certificate Registration](#)) and use it to issue the copies. **If the funeral home indicates the record was electronic only**, it can be issued from EDRS and a copy may not be in the file cabinets yet, skip to 1 B. If the original was not brought in with the request**, locate the death certificate in the gray file cabinets behind the vital statistics/reception desk. They are organized by date of death. Remove the needed death certificate from the file. For online orders go back to Permitium to complete processing. If the record was on file, click the green check for "Volume/page" in the office use section. This will enter "Pass" and the date on the volume/page line. Enter your initials the middle box on corresponding line. If the social was requested to be visible and identification verified, then click the green check for "ID furnished" and "Proof of Rep." Enter your initials the middle box on corresponding lines. Click the "Save Progress" button, and now click the "Print" button again and choose the print envelope option. Place an envelope in the HP printer's manual tray face up and stamp towards printer. Now approve the application by clicking the green "Approve Application" button on right-hand side. Re-access the application by clicking the "All" tab with "Approved" selected in the drop-down box, click search. Re-open the application by clicking the order number and click the "Document Delivered" button.

**Note: Any death record 2007 and after can be printed from EDRS. However, the overall record status in EDRS must be "Registered," otherwise the paper copy must be issued. If printing from EDRS, you MUST still check the paper records to ensure there are no supplements and/or affidavits for the record.

- A. **Printing from Paper:** Place the death certificate face down on glass of the copy machine with the top on the left edge of the glass and the left side of the certificate on the top edge of the glass, also place a blank white sheet of paper on the top of the record overlapping it so the blank sheet "makes the page 8 ½ x14" size" (This will eliminate the copy machine printing sideways). Get the death certificate paper (8 ½ x 14) out of the bottom drawer of the lateral file, retrieving the same number of pieces as were requested to be purchased. If the SSN is to be redacted, get the clear sheet with a small white block on it out of the bottom that is in front of the death certificate paper. This needs to be placed under the death certificate on the copier glass. Line up the white box to cover the SSN on the certificate. Then place the death certificate paper face down in the bypass tray of the copy machine, 3 red watermarks up and two watermarks closest to the copier. Press the button on the copier to select the paper size and choose the 8 ½ x 14 "landscape" option (☐), then select the number of copies, and press start. If death affidavits are received/attached to the death certificate, they are copied in the same manner as the death certificate. Affidavits must be stapled to the back of the death certificate and are NO additional charge. Go to step 2.
- B. **Printing from EDRS:** Deaths 2007 and after can be printed out of EDRS if the overall record status is "Registered". All coroner cases are completed, filed, and registered electronically. There is no notification or prompt that they have been registered in the system. If a request is made for a record that was filed electronically and there is no paper copy, it must be issued from EDRS. There is no need to verify any information on the record as it has already been registered. To issue, login to the State Issuance side of EDRS. Click on "Search", "Death". Enter the decedent's name and date of death and search. Open the person's record. Click on "Requests." Depending on what the requestor's application says regarding the inclusion of the social security number click on the appropriate option, "Print: Death Certificate NO SSN" or "Print: Death Certificate with SSN". These records need to be printed on the death certificate paper. Pull the requested number of pages out of the bottom of the lateral file and put them in the HP Printer tray 3 with the three red dots pointing into the printer. You must take the paper out of the bypass tray and close Tray 2. Click the print icon on the record image on the computer.

2. Stamp the certified copy(ies) with the Trodat DC & File Copy BC stamp in the bottom, left desk drawer (check the date). Stamp just to the right of the seal that is already on the bottom of the certificate.
3. If this was not an online order, all copies are \$25, write out a receipt. On the "In re:" line, write the number of DC copies, the name of decedent on the DC, and the security paper number(s) (on the back of the death certificate paper). I.E. – 1 DC – Jane Doe H3972000; 3 DCs – Jane Doe H3972000-02; or 2 DCs – 1- Jane Doe H3792000 & 1 – John Doe H3792000. On the bottom of the application, document the receipt number and your initials in the corresponding boxes. Receipts are not written for online orders. They are tracked on the "Security Paper Logs" only. To complete the online order application, write "online" in the signature box with the date, write "logged" in the receipt # box, and enter your initials in the corresponding box. All completed applications are kept in the file holder to the right of the front desk.
4. If there are any errors when copying or stamping death certificates, redo the certificate and KEEP the wasted copy. The barcode and number must be saved and recorded on the "Security Paper Logs." Cut the strip of paper off that contains the barcode (the strip should be 8 ½" long and the height the size of the barcode and number). The strips should be kept in the envelope in the file holder where the completed applications are kept. Once recorded, store them in the appropriate bin on top of the safes 1 & 2.
5. Once the copies and receipts have been issued, place the death certificate copy back in the folder in the death certificate file cabinet if the paper copy was used. Or if it was the original, copy it and place the copy in the file cabinet in the appropriate folder and place the original in the Vital Statistics envelope for the weekly mail to ODH. If the record was electronic only, print the electronic record on plain white 8 ½ x 11 paper and put the copy in the death certificate file cabinet in the appropriate folder.

CITATIONS

Ohio Revised Code 3705

CONTRIBUTORS

The following staff contributed to the authorship of this document:

1. Olivia Roston, primary author

APPENDICES

Appendix A: [Death Certificate Registration](#)

REFERENCE FORMS

[Application for Certificates](#)

[Death Certificate SSN Affidavit](#)

SIGNATURES

Andrea Barnes, RS
Interim Health Commissioner

_____/_____/_____
Date