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| District of Columbia Department of Health <h2>Certification and Issuance</h2> | | PROCEDURE 1100.000 Implementing Office: Center for Policy Planning and Evaluation/Vital Records Division Training Required: Yes Originally Issued: JUN 13 2022 Revised/Reviewed: |
| Approved by:  LaQuandra S. Nesbitt MD, MPH; Agency Director | Review by Legal Counsel:  Phillip Husband, Esq.; General Counsel | Effective Date: JUN 13 2022 Valid Through Date: JUN 13 2025 |

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| I. Authority | Reorganization Plan No. 4 of 1996; Mayor’s Order 1997-42; The Vital Records Modernization Act of 2018, D.C. Law 22-189, D.C. Official Code §7-231. |
| II. Reason for the Policy | The DC Health Vital Records Division (DCVRD or “the Division”) within the Center for Policy Planning and Evaluation (CPPE) has jurisdiction over District of Columbia birth, death, fetal death, induced termination of pregnancy and domestic partnership records. District laws and regulations establish authority for the Registrar to certify vital records and issue certificates. To minimize risk of vital documents being improperly certified or issued, standardized procedures and internal controls are required. |
| III. Applicability | This document shall apply to all DC Health employees, vendor staff, contract employees, interns, employees of other DC government agencies temporarily assigned to DC Health who are assigned to DCVRD or whose assignment affords access to information in vital documents. These individuals are referred to collectively herein as “employees” or “DCVRD employees.” |
| IV. Policy Statement | The State Vital Records Registrar (the Registrar) is the Program Manager over DCVRD. They are the accountable party for ensuring that all DCVRD employees receive all necessary information and support to ensure that vital documents are appropriately certified and issued. Certification |

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| | <p>DCVRD receives reports of vital events that occur in the District of Columbia. Reports are received from data providers, including but not limited to: institutions, funeral service providers, medical examiners, and other informants. Upon receipt of a complete vital event report and, if necessary, an approved application and identity and entitlement verification of the person, funeral services provider, or institution making the report, the Registrar shall certify the vital record by electronic signature in the Vital Information Tracking Application (VITA).</p> <p>Issuance</p> <p>Upon approval of an application submitted by an individual or organization that has been verified as an entitled applicant, pursuant to the procedure defined in SOP 1127.000 Vital Records Entitlement and Identity Verification, DCVRD employees shall issue a certificate. Certificates generated for issuance must contain the Registrar’s signature, raised government seal, and date of issuance. This constitutes certification or attestation to the accuracy of the information contained in the certificate.</p> <p>Certification is only applied to records resulting from vital event reports that have been accepted for registration. Record certification is made by the Registrar in office at the time the vital event record is registered. Document certification applied to a certificate is made by the Registrar who is appointed at the time a certificate is issued.</p> <p>DCVRD certificates may only be printed on vital records-specific security printers that have been approved by the Registrar for use. Vital records-specific security printers may include locked feeder drawers, special ink, and other overt and covert features intended to apply an additional layer of encryption to the security paper.</p> <p>Issuance – Walk-Up Customers</p> <p>Upon receipt of a request and completion of the procedure defined in SOP 1127.000 Vital Records Entitlement and Identity</p> |
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| | <p>Verification, DCVRD employees assigned to a processing service window shall process the order.</p> <p>DCVRD employees assigned to a processing window may not process and issue certificates for the same applicant. This separation of duties is required by DC law. DCVRD employees who are assigned to a print services window shall issue certificates from a secure area that is segregated from all other DC Health employees.</p> <p>DCVRD employees assigned to a print services window shall retrieve the request and perform a Print Services Identity Verification. Once the applicant's identity has been verified, DCVRD staff shall print a certificate that contains the Registrar's signature on security paper, affix the government seal and issue the certificate to the customer. If the reason for the request requires a live signature for the purpose of apostille or other signature authentication service, the DCVRD employee shall submit the certificate to the appropriate signatory authority. Once the certificate is complete, the DCVRD employee shall issue the certificate to the customer.</p> <p>Issuance – Will Call/ Customer Pick-Up</p> <p>Upon receipt of a request and completion of the procedure defined in SOP 1127.000 Vital Records Entitlement and Identity Verification, DCVRD employees assigned to process funeral home portal, will-call or remote customer pick-up orders shall complete the processing steps. The DCVRD employee shall print a certificate that contains the Registrar's signature on security paper, affix the government seal and issue the certificate to the customer. If the reason for the request requires a live signature for the purpose of apostille or other signature authentication service, the DCVRD employee shall submit the certificate to the appropriate signatory authority. Once the certificate is complete, the DCVRD employee shall place the certificate and its cover sheet inside the appropriate envelope.</p> <p>When the will-call or customer pick-up applicant arrives, DCVRD employees who are assigned to a print services window shall retrieve the request and perform a Print Services Identity</p> |
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| | <p>Verification. After the customer’s identity has been verified, the DCVRD employee shall enter the required pick-up verification information in VITA-Customer Service Management System (VITA-CSMS).</p> <p>The DCVRD employee shall advise the customer to review the certificates prior to leaving the waiting area. Pursuant to SOP 1120.000 Vital Records Division Search and Return of Fees, if the customer discovers an issue with the certificate after leaving the waiting area, an exchange may not be made at a later date. If the customer requires an amendment service for the certificate, the DCVRD employee shall refer them to the DCVRD amendment guidelines.</p> <p>If the will-call or customer pick-up request is not retrieved within five (5) business days of notification of order completion, the DCVRD employee shall ship the order to the shipping address in the application.</p> <p>Issuance – Remote Orders</p> <p>Upon receipt of a request and completion of the procedure defined in SOP 1127.000 Vital Records Entitlement and Identity Verification, DCVRD employees who are assigned to process remote orders shall process the order. The DCVRD employee shall print a certificate that contains the Registrar’s signature on security paper, affix the government seal and issue the certificate to the customer. If the reason for the request requires a live signature for the purpose of apostille or other signature authentication service, the DCVRD employee shall submit the certificate to the appropriate signatory authority. Once the certificate is complete, the DCVRD employee shall place the certificate and the order receipt inside the appropriate envelope and ship the order to the customer. If the remote order customer contacts DCVRD regarding an issue with the certificate they received, the DCVRD employee shall refer them to the amendment guidelines and fee schedule. If the remote order customer contacts DCVRD regarding a missed shipment, the DCVRD employee shall follow mail handling procedures prescribed by the Registrar.</p> |
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| | <p>Issuance – Satellite Operations at the Downtown Day Services Center</p> <p>DCVRD employees assigned to work a satellite location authorized by the State Registrar, such as the Downtown Day Services Center, shall refer to satellite operations procedures prescribed by the Registrar.</p> <p>Any employee in violation of any part of this SOP may be subject to commensurate disciplinary action.</p> |
| <p>IV. Definitions & Acronyms</p> | <p>Applicant- Individual requesting a vital record from DCVRD</p> <p>Certificate- The document, paper, or electronically formatted vital record, issued by the Registrar that contains all or a part of the information on the original vital record, that, when issued by the Registrar, has the full force and effect of the original vital record.</p> <p>Certification- An attestation to the accuracy of information contained in a vital record or on a vital event report.</p> <p>CPPE- Center for Policy, Planning and Evaluation</p> <p>CSMS- Customer Service Management System or the VITA system that facilitates customer order processing and fulfillment.</p> <p>DCVRD- District of Columbia Vital Records Division</p> <p>Entitlement Verification- The process whereby applicants demonstrate through the presentation of specific legal documents that their relationship to the person whose name appears on the requested document allows them to receive that document lawfully from DCVRD.</p> <p>Institution- Any establishment, public or private, that provides in-patient or out-patient medical, surgical, diagnostic care or treatment, nursing, custodial, or domiciliary care, or to which individuals are committed by law.</p> <p>Issuance- The process the Registrar completes to provide a certificate to an entitled applicant.</p> |

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| | <p>Qmatic- A software platform that manages customer flow by assigning numbers to requests, and routing requests to appropriate employees for service.</p> <p>Print Services Identity Verification- The process whereby applicants demonstrate through the presentation of specific legal documents that they are who they claim to be. Identity verification performed at the print services window will consist of a brief visual inspection of the identity documents presented at the processing window for the purpose of confirming that the customer who has appeared at the print services window matches the applicant's name within the CSMS request.</p> <p>Record- A report of information related to a vital event that the Registrar has accepted for registration.</p> <p>Registration or Register- The process the Registrar adopts for accepting reports of vital events and incorporating the information into the official records of the Vital Records Division.</p> <p>Report- A document, paper or electronic file, record, or data transmission, containing information related to a vital event submitted by an individual or entity required to submit the information to the Registrar for the purpose of registering a vital event.</p> <p>Security paper- Paper authorized by the Registrar for the issuance of a vital record to authenticate a document or deter manipulation or copying that contains special characteristics including dithered patterns, special inks, watermarks, metallized threads, phosphorescent fibers, holographic images, or microprinting.</p> <p>Security printer- A printer authorized by the Registrar that includes security features to safeguard and enhance encryption of security paper.</p> <p>VITA- Vital Information Tracking Application or the group of systems that support the activities of the DCVRD.</p> |
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| <p>VI. Procedures</p> | <p>Procedure A: Record Certification</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. VITA will automatically validate reports of vital events that are submitted for registration. Once vital event reports are validated, they are filed and become registered records. 2. Reports of vital events that do not meet validation criteria will be routed by VITA to exception processing queues. DCVRD employees who are assigned to exception processing queues shall refer to the DCVRD record registration guidelines. Once the exceptions have been processed, the DCVRD employees shall manually file the vital event reports. 3. VITA shall affix State Registrar certification to both auto filed and manually filed records. <p>Procedure B: Document Certification and Issuance for Walk-Up Requests</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DCVRD employees who are assigned to a print services window shall retrieve the next request and call the customer to the window. 2. Once the customer arrives at the print services window, the DCVRD employee shall perform a Print Services Identity Verification and shall confirm with the customer that they have previewed the certificate requested during their visit to the processing window. 3. If the customer does not arrive to the print services window within, the DCVRD employee shall navigate to the Qmatic page on the CSMS request. The DCVRD employee shall then click the "Recycle" button to place the request back in the print queue. CSMS will allow DCVRD employees to click the "Recycle" button three times for a request. After the third attempt to call the customer, the recycle button will no longer be available and the DCVRD employee shall place a note on the request and click the "End Visit" button in the Qmatic section of the CSMS request. |
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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Once identity has been verified, the DCVRD employee shall issue the certificate by clicking the "Print" button in CSMS to send the print request to the security printer authorized by the State Registrar.5. The DCVRD employee shall retrieve the printed certificate(s) for the CSMS request from the security printer and use the handheld scanner to record the security paper barcode within the request.6. If the DCVRD employee encounters an issue during printing, the employee shall appropriately record the issue within the CSMS request on the print page. If required, the DCVRD employee shall click the "Reissue" button to print a new copy of the certificate and use the handheld scanner to record the new security paper barcode within the request. If the print issue encountered in this step results in an unusable sheet of security paper, the DCVRD employee shall write "VOID" across the page to be destroyed, such that the lettering is large enough to extend diagonally from top to bottom. The DCVRD employee shall place the voided security paper in the designated bin for appropriate destruction.7. The DCVRD employee shall affix the government seal by placing the certificate inside the electronic sealer. The certificate must be positioned so that the impression is made at the bottom center of the page.8. If the reason for the request requires a live signature for the purpose of apostille or other signature authentication service, the DCVRD employee shall submit the certificate to the appropriate signatory authority.9. The DCVRD employee shall provide the completed certificate to the customer. If the customer requests an envelope, the DCVRD employee shall supply the customer with the appropriate envelope for walk-up requests. |
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10. Once the customer has left the print services window, the DCVRD employee shall click complete on the CSMS request.

Procedure C: Document Certification and Issuance for Will-Call/Customer Pick-Up Requests

1. DCVRD employees who are assigned to a will-call or customer pick-up queue shall retrieve the next request in CSMS.
2. The employee shall process the request. Once the request has been processed, the DCVRD employee shall issue the certificate by clicking the "Print" button in CSMS to send the print request to the security printer authorized by the State Registrar.
3. The DCVRD employee shall retrieve the printed certificate(s) and receipt for the CSMS request from the security printer and use the handheld scanner to record the security paper barcode within the request.
4. If the DCVRD employee encounters an issue during printing, the employee shall appropriately record the issue within the CSMS request on the print page. If required, the DCVRD employee shall click the "Reissue" button to print a new copy of the certificate and use the handheld scanner to record the new security paper barcode within the request. If the print issue encountered in this step results in an unusable sheet of security paper, the DCVRD employee shall write "VOID" across the page to be destroyed, such that the lettering is large enough to extend diagonally from top to bottom. The DCVRD employee shall place voided security paper in the designated bin for appropriate destruction.
5. The DCVRD employee shall affix the government seal by placing the certificate inside the electronic sealer. The certificate must be positioned so that the impression is made at the bottom center of the page.

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">6. If the reason for the request requires a live signature for the purpose of apostille or other signature authentication service, the DCVRD employee shall submit the certificate to the appropriate signatory authority.7. Once the document has been certified, the DCVRD employee shall place the receipt and certificates in the appropriate envelope and store it in the assigned location awaiting pick up.8. Once the customer arrives, they will retrieve a Qmatic ticket from the DCVRD Registration desk for the appropriate service. The DCVRD employee who is assigned to a print services window shall click the "next ticket" button in CSMS to call the customer to the print services window.9. If the customer does not arrive to the print services window, the DCVRD employee shall navigate to the Qmatic page on the CSMS request. The DCVRD employee shall then click the "Recycle" button to place the request back in the print queue. CSMS will allow DCVRD staff to click the "Recycle" button three times for a request. After the third attempt to call the customer, the "Recycle" button will no longer be available and the DCVRD employee shall place a note on the request and click the "End Visit" button in the Qmatic section of the CSMS request.10. Once the customer arrives at the print services window, the DCVRD employee shall request the VitalChek order number or applicant name from the customer.11. The DCVRD employee shall click on the Qmatic tab on the current request and click the "returning customer" link. The DCVRD employee shall then search for the VitalChek order number or applicant's name in CSMS to adjoin the VitalChek order number with the current CSMS request and customer's ticket.12. The DCVRD employee shall request the customer's identification documents and perform a Print Services |
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| | <p>Identity Verification. The DCVRD employee shall verify that the documentation presented matches the name of the person who placed the application or funeral home authorized courier.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">13. Once identity has been verified, the DCVRD employee shall retrieve the customer's envelope from the assigned location.14. The DCVRD employee shall click the "order pickup" button in CSMS, enter the name of the person picking up the order, and scan the barcode on the CSMS receipt into the request.15. The DCVRD employee shall provide the envelope to the customer.16. The DCVRD employee shall navigate to the Qmatic tab and click on "end visit". <p>Procedure D: Document Certification for Remote Orders</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. DCVRD employees who are assigned to a remote order queue shall retrieve the next request in CSMS.2. The employee shall process the request. Once the request has been processed, the DCVRD employee shall issue the certificate by clicking the "Print" button in CSMS to send the print request to the security printer authorized by the State Registrar.3. The DCVRD employee shall retrieve the printed certificate(s) and receipt for the CSMS request from the security printer and use the handheld scanner to record the security paper barcode within the request. The DCVRD employee shall click the "Complete" button.4. If the DCVRD employee encounters an issue during printing, the employee shall appropriately record the issue within the CSMS request on the print page. If required, the DCVRD employee shall click the "Reissue" button to print |
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| | <p>a new copy of the certificate and use the handheld scanner to record the new security paper barcode within the request. If the print issue encountered in this step results in an unusable sheet of security paper, the DCVRD employee shall write "VOID" across the page to be destroyed, such that the lettering is large enough to extend diagonally from top to bottom. The DCVRD employee shall place voided security paper in the designated bin for appropriate destruction.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. The DCVRD employee shall affix the government seal by placing the certificate inside the electronic sealer. The certificate must be positioned so that the impression is made at the bottom center of the page.6. If the reason for the request requires a live signature for the purpose of apostille or other signature authentication service, the DCVRD employee shall submit the certificate to the appropriate signatory authority.7. Once the document has been certified, the DCVRD employee shall place the receipt and certificates in the appropriate envelope and place it in their outgoing mail bin.8. At the end of their shift, the DCVRD employee shall transport the envelopes to the appropriate shipping carrier location designated for DC Health. <p>Procedure E: Document Certification for Satellite Operations at the Downtown Day Services Center Requests</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. DCVRD employees who are assigned to process satellite location orders shall retrieve the next request in CSMS.2. The DCVRD employee shall process the request as instructed in satellite operations procedures prescribed by the Registrar. |
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| VII. Contacts | State Vital Records Registrar Customer Service and Certification Operations Supervisor |
| VIII. Related Documents, Forms and Tools | SOP 1120.000 Vital Records Search and Return of Fees SOP 1127.000 Vital Records Entitlement and Identity Verification Amendment Guidelines DCVRD Record Registration Guidelines |