

Families Acting as Funeral Directors

When no funeral home is being used and the death was natural, the family is responsible for getting the paper report of death completed and filed by the county where the death occurred before a burial transit permit will be issued. Natural deaths are not due to external causes, such as injury or poisoning, and not under the jurisdiction of a medical examiner or coroner.

The family will obtain a Washington State Report of Death, form number DOH 422-024 February 2021, from the vital records office of the county where the death occurred.

Demographics – To be completed by the immediate family. Immediate family means spouse, parents, children, grandparents, and siblings.

Important note: If a funeral home is being used, the death record must be filed electronically using the EDRS system and cannot be completed by this process.

- Complete the demographic section, fields 1-33.
 - Field 31. Name and Complete Address of Funeral Facility - enter the full name and address of the immediate family member signing as the funeral director.
 - Field 33. Funeral Director Signature - this should be the signature of the person identified in field 31.
- If information is not known or does not apply enter Unknown or N\A.

Cause of Death – To be completed by the medical certifier. Medical certifier means an individual identified in RCW 70.58A.010(25).

Important note: If the manner of death is other than natural or under the jurisdiction of a medical examiner or coroner, the death record must be filed electronically using the EDRS system and cannot be completed by this process.

- The family will give the paper report of death to the medical certifier to complete.
- The medical certifier completes sections 34-56, which include the cause and manner of death.
- Cause of death should contain a chain of events that directly caused the death with the associated intervals between onset and death in sections 34. a., b., c., and d.
 - Field 48a. Certifying physician – this should be the signature of the medical certifier filling out the cause and manner of death.
 - Fields 41 to 47 – Injury information should be left blank. If injury information is entered in this section, the record must be filed electronically using the EDRS system.

File the paper report of death – County Vital Records Office

- Bring the completed and signed report of death within five (5) calendar days from the date of death to the county vital records office where the death occurred to be filed.
- The county will complete a burial transit permit to enable final disposition.
- The county will forward the completed report of death to the State Vital Records Office for permanent registration.
- Once registered with the State Vital Records Office then the family can purchase the death certificate.