



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How many days are allowed for the completion and filing of a death certificate?

South Carolina Regulation 61-19, Section 700 requires a death certificate to be filed within five (5) days from the date of death for each death that occurs in South Carolina.

What is the time period allowed for a medical certifier (physician, advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) and/or coroner) to complete medical certification on a death record?

The medical certification shall be completed and returned to the funeral director within forty-eight (48) hours after ***being notified*** of the death by the physician or APRN in charge of the patient's care for the illness or condition which resulted in death, except when inquiry is required by medical examiner or coroner.

Does the forty-eight hour period include weekends?

If the time period terminates on a weekend, federal holiday, or state holiday, the physician or APRN must file the certification by the end of the next business day.

Who is considered “in charge of patient’s care for the illness or condition which resulted in death”?

According to *Physicians’ Handbook on Medical Certification of Death* issued by the CDC National Center for Health Statistics, “the attending physician is responsible for certifying the cause of death.” In some cases, he or she will both pronounce death and certify the cause of death.

Effective July 23, 2019, Section 44-33-34 of the South Carolina Code of Law was amended to allow Advanced Practice Registered Nurses to certify the manner and cause of death and sign death certificates pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 63, Title 44 and Chapter 8, Title 32.

What happens if the attending physician or APRN is not available to certify the cause of death?

In the absence of said physician/APRN or with his or her approval, the certificate may be completed by his or her associate physician, the chief medical officer of the institution in which death occurred or by the pathologist who performed an autopsy upon the decedent.

How do I determine if the medical certifier is participating in the Web Death system?

The record must be designated to the physician or APRN. If the physician or APRN is participating in Web Death, the name and address will appear in Medical tab 3. Once the medical certifier has been designated, they will receive an e-mail notifying them a death is in the queue for completion of medical certification.

How do I retrieve a death record that has been initiated by the medical certifier?

The funeral home and medical certifier may not have access to the same key fields (social security number, medical record number or Burial Removal Transit Permit (BRTP) number) to link the record. Therefore, it is **VERY IMPORTANT** that the funeral home contact the medical certifier to obtain the information entered to start the record.

Communication between funeral home and medical certifier is the **KEY** to completing a death certificate in a timely manner.

What should I do if my pin/password is not working?

The Funeral Director should check demographic tab 4 to ensure the intended Funeral Director's name is listed in the field. The Physician/APRN should verify their name is in the medical certifier field. After verifying they are listed correctly, and pin/password are still not working:

- Contact the Field Consultants at 803-898-3409 between the hours of 8:30am-5:00pm, Monday through Friday excluding state holidays.
- For security reasons, we must speak to the individual needing to have pin/password reset.