



NYS EDRS Newsletter

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EDRS Support Hours

For the fastest support, contact the EDRS team via email:

- For EDRS case creation and registration, send inquiries to edrs@health.ny.gov
- For death amendment inquiries, send a message to AmendCorrect@health.ny.gov

Support is available M-F: 8 am - 5 pm

- Although some situations are unavoidable, please plan accordingly to allow EDRS staff to assist you during support hours.
- Please refrain from calling staff directly.

Remember, there are a lot of resources on the [EDRS public website](#) and role-specific subpages. Bookmark/Add to Favorites in your web browser for quick reference.

New HCS Web Address

The Health Commerce web address (URL) changed its domain name to align with other New York State site addresses.

Users should automatically be redirected; however, if an old address is bookmarked or saved to Favorites you may experience connectivity issues. Make sure your saved HCS site address is:

<https://commerce.health.ny.us/>

Amendment Documentation and Secure File Transfer

New York State cannot accept emailed documents

In the past, funeral firms were able to present original or copied documentation that supported death certificate amendments to local registrars. With the September implementation of electronic death amendments submitted directly to the State for electronically filed cases, documentation now needs to get to the State. These documents contain personally identifiable information such as images of social security cards or birth certificates.

DO NOT send personally identifiable documents via unsecured email!

In the future, the State hopes to leverage EDRS functionality for uploading documents in the database with the amendment submittal. The use of this technology will allow electronic images to be directly linked to an amendment securely inside the EDRS. In the meantime, we suggest and *highly* recommend signing up for and using the Health Commerce System's [Secure File Transfer utility](#) (SFT). It is a one-time, one-click registration linked to your HCS account and works like email, but securely within the HCS. Review the [HCS Secure File Transfer 2.0 Quick Reference Guide](#) or [our internally created job aid](#) for instructions. Check out the HCS [SFT Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information.

You may still submit documentation via fax or e-fax to (518) 474-2785. Again, do not send documents by email.

(See Amendments, continued on page 3)

All EDRS User should Monitor Messages and Work Queues

There are many actions in EDRS that trigger system-generated emails, but still others that only send internal EDRS messages. Don't be caught off guard by only depending on the emails!

Check your EDRS Messages (Main menu option or the **Messages** Fast Links button on your EDRS Home page) or your Registration Work Queue (from the Queues menu), to see if a case is awaiting action from you or another user. Work Queue categories only display results if there is at least one active case awaiting action.

Key Fields for Medical Certifiers to Complete

What Constitutes "Last Seen By" Attending Physician Dates

In the current climate with tele-medicine or virtual appointments becoming more customary, the determination of when a decedent was "last seen" by a primary/attending physician may be questioned.

By definition, if the medical provider or practice accepted a co-pay and billed an insurance company, a medical appointment was completed and the patient "was seen" by the physician. Understandably, a physician certifying on behalf of the attending physician may not know this date. All efforts should be made to ascertain the accurate dates based on the definition above. However, the edit rules can be overridden in EDRS by the certifier if all efforts are made and the dates are still unknown.

Reporting When a Decedent Was "Transferred From Another Medical Facility"

If a death occurs in a medical facility, and the decedent was transported to that facility directly from another medical facility, the "Was decedent Transferred from Another Medical Facility?" field should be completed with a "yes" response and that medical facility selected from the database using the Look-up tool (magnifying glass icon) after the section of the EDRS page expands.

Although not reported to the CDC/NCHS, this data is extremely important for information gathering by New York State. A medical facility can be another hospital, a nursing home, long term care facility that provides medical services, or a hospice facility.

Was the Decedent hospitalized in the last two months?

Another New York State specific field, the question of if a decedent was hospitalized in the last two months, is important data to track patient care. The reason for hospitalization may not be directly related to the etiology of the death, but will elaborate on the decedent's health in the time leading up to his or her death.

Cause of Death Reporting

The importance of accurate and thorough reporting on the etiology of a death cannot be stressed enough. The "Part 1" cause of death (CoD) reports the certifier's medical opinion of a sequential chain of disease(s) or injury leading to death with one cause per line. These conditions may or may not be a direct line of events, meaning the events may be unrelated but still contributed to the final cause, beginning with the immediate cause then working backwards as each cause occurred. Specificity is necessary for accurate coding, including naming drugs if drug use or an overdose contributed to the decedent's death.

Neither the location (we've seen "hospice care" in Line A!) **nor the mechanism of death should be listed in the etiology** as it only represents the fact of death. Cardiac arrest, for example, is a mechanical response in the body and not acceptable as part of the etiology; whereas Acute Myocardial Infarction would be acceptable as a condition.

NYS was selected as one of only two states to participate in a federal Cause of Death (CoD) Quality Improvement Initiative. Only 160 of over 41,000 NYS licensed certifiers participated in COD self-paced training in 2019-2020. We need facility and practice leadership to support this initiative. [Contact the EDRS team for training options!](#)

Troubleshooting the Dreaded “404 error” and Other Access Issues

Having trouble accessing or working in EDRS? Try some of the below options before contacting the Help Desk or EDRS.

Are you accessing the correct URL?

[https://
commerce.health.state.ny.us/](https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/)

You might need to clear your browser cache. With the browser active, click Ctrl-Shift-Delete

When was the last time you verified your HCS profile?

From the HCS Home page, go to [My Content > Change my contact information](#)

Verify your HCS account profile at least annually

What EDRS Role is assigned to you in the HCS?

You should only have ONE (1) EDRS role. Contact your HCS Coordinator for help.

From the HCS Home page, go to [My Content > See what roles I hold](#)

EDRS not showing in your HCS *My Applications* bar?

From the HCS Home page, click [Refresh My Applications List](#)

Did you log into the correct office that owns the case?

Confirm the office in the blue banner at the top of the EDRS page. If you need to change offices, go to Main > Change Office

Invalid user message when attempting to Af-firm?

Verify your user information is on the Disposition (Funeral Director or Local Registrar) or Certifier page

New Local Registrar Onboarding Project

The Bureau of Vital Records, in consult with a team of local registrars, initiated development of an onboarding program for new Local Registrars. The project includes “welcome” and “term expiration” packets, a revamped Local Registrar Procedure Manual (aka the Blue Book), and new training curriculum. Watch for the packets after the November election and new training in 2021!

(Amendments, continued from page 1)

...Amendments

Whether sending supporting documents via SFT or fax, please always

- Type a Description when starting a new electronic amendment, even if the description is “Funeral Director error.” This helps the team when reviewing the submitted amendment.
- Include a cover sheet with the Case ID and Amendment ID and amendment description. The best bet is to take a screenshot of the Amendment Page, or print it out using your browser’s Print function.

Funeral Homes should also be aware that if the amendment is a change to the Funeral Home overseeing disposition, the new firm will not have access to the case in EDRS. If the new firm needs a Working Copy or Burial Permit, that will have to be sent through SFT or fax and should be noted with the submitted amendment documents. Just another reason to set up your SFT access!

Learn more about electronic amendment submittal by reviewing the [EDRS Amendments Quick Reference for Funeral Directors and Funeral Firm Staff](#) (PDF), the [EDRS Amendments User Manual](#) (PDF) or watch the [Submitting and Monitor E-Amendments in EDRS](#) all posted on the Funeral Directors subpage of the EDRS public website.

For questions, please contact AmendCorrect@health.ny.gov.

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