

## Changes Unit FAQ's for Changing, Correcting or Amending Death Certificates

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### Who Can Amend, Correct, or Change a Registered Death Record

#### **Q: Who Is Authorized to Request Changes to a Death Record?**

**A:** The following individuals or professionals may request to amend, correct, or change information on a registered death record, based on their role and the type of information:

1. **Informant listed on the death certificate:**
  - May request changes to personal information only.
2. **Next of kin (within 5 years of the date of death):**
  - Must provide proof of next of kin relationship.
  - If next of kin cannot be determined or more than 5 years have passed since the date of death, a court order is required.
  - Next of kin is determined in this order: surviving spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, then siblings.
  - May request changes to personal information only.

**3. Funeral Director:**

- May request corrections to personal information on behalf of the family.
- May correct administrative errors made by the funeral home.
- May update funeral home and disposition (burial or cremation) information.

**4. Certifying Physician:**

- May amend the date of death, place of death, and medical facts (e.g., contributing health conditions).
- Cannot change the manner or cause of death unless they certified the death in the role of a medical examiner or deputy medical examiner.

**5. Medical Examiner:**

- May amend the manner of death, cause of death, and medical facts.
- If identifying or re-identifying the decedent, the medical examiner may also amend or add personal information.

**Requirements for Informants and Next of Kin to Request Changes to a Death Record**

**Q: If I am the informant or next of kin, what do I need to provide to request a change, correction, or amendment to a death certificate?**

**A:** To request a change to a Michigan death record, you must submit a complete application packet to the Vital Records Office. This includes the following:

**1. Non-refundable fee:**

- \$50.00, payable to the *State of Michigan*.

**2. Completed application form:**

- Use the *Application to Correct a Michigan Death Record* form.(DCH-0856)
- Must be filled out completely and signed by the applicant.

**3. Valid photo ID:**

- A copy of government-issued photo identification for each applicant.

**4. Proof of next of kin relationship (if applicable):**

Acceptable documents include, but are not limited to:

- Court order determining heirs of the deceased
- Birth certificates
- Marriage licenses
- Death certificates of related individuals

**5. Documentation supporting the requested change:**

- Documents must be clearly dated and show the correct information.
- They must specifically relate to the deceased individual named on the death record.

**6. Examples of supporting documents (depending on the correction requested):**

- Court order
- Birth certificate
- Death certificate
- Marriage license
- School records
- Social Security records

- Military records
- Government agency records
- Medical records
- Property tax records

**Important:** No action will be taken until *all required items* are received by the Vital Records Office.

### **Requirements for Funeral Director's to Request Changes to a Death Record**

**Q: If I am the funeral director for the decedent, what do I need to submit to request a change to the death record?**

**A:** To request a correction or amendment to a Michigan death record, funeral service providers must submit a complete application, which includes the following:

**1. Non-refundable fee:**

- \$50.00, payable to the *State of Michigan*.

**2. Completed application form:**

- Use the *Application to Correct a Michigan Death Record. (DCH-0856)*
- Must be filled out completely and signed.

**3. Valid photo ID:**

- A copy of government-issued photo identification.

**4. If requesting a change to personal information on behalf of the informant or next of kin:**

- Provide **required dated documents** that clearly support the requested correction.
- If the correction involves **marital status** and is not an administrative error made by the funeral home, a court order is required.

**Suggested supporting documents include:**

- Court order
- Birth certificate
- Death certificate
- Marriage license
- School records
- Social Security records
- Military records
- Government agency records
- Medical records
- Property tax records

**5. If correcting an administrative error made by the funeral home:**

- Submit a letter on letterhead stating the mistake and a copy of the **worksheet or documentation** that clearly identifies the administrative error made by the funeral director.

**Important:** No action will be taken until all required documents and payment are received by the Vital Records Office.

### **Requirements for Certifying Physician to Request Change to a Death Record**

**Q:** If I am the Certifying Physician of the decedent, what do I need to provide to the Vital Records office to begin the process?

**A:** To request a correction to the medical information on a Michigan death record, the Certifying Physician must submit the following to the Vital Records office:

1. A non-refundable fee of \$50.00, payable to the *State of Michigan*
2. A completed and signed **Physician Application to Correct a Michigan Death Record (Form DCH-0862)**
  - Use the form for **deaths that occurred before January 1, 2004**, or
  - Use the version for **deaths that occurred on or after January 1, 2004**

### **What items can be changed on a death record**

**Q:** What items can be changed on a Michigan death certificate?

**A:** Any item listed on our current form can be amended, corrected or changed. Many items listed on older certificates are no longer required on the current form. Since those changes will not be displayed in the new format, only items on our current form can be changed.

### **Ancestry change document requirements**

**Q:** What documents are required to change the Ancestry on the Michigan death certificate?

**A:** The ancestry of a decedent may be changed one time with a signed application by an eligible applicant. Any subsequent change or correction would require a court order.

### **Residential address change requirements**

**Q:** How do I change the decedents residence on the Michigan death certificate?

**A:** The residence may be changed by submitting one document dated within one year before the date of death which indicates the correct address to be changed.

### **Age or birth date correction requirements**

**Q:** How do I change the age or date of birth for the decedent?

**A:** To change the age or date of birth:

- Copy of the decedent's birth certificate
- OR**
- Two documents containing the correct date of birth dated before the date of death.

If you need to change the age, date of birth, or date of death, all three must be consistent with each other.

### **Birthplace correction requirements**

**Q:** How do I change the birthplace of the decedent?

**A:** To change the decedent's place of birth, submit the following:

- Copy of the decedent's birth certificate

**OR**

- Two documents containing the correct date of birth dated before the date of death.

### **Cause of death change requirements**

**Q:** How do I change the cause of death?

**A:** The cause of death can only be changed by an eligible physician or medical examiner.

### **Date of death requirements**

**Q:** How do I change the date of death?

**A:** The date of death can only be changed by an eligible physician or medical examiner. Must be consistent with other dates on the certificate.

### **Parental information: requirements for adding information**

**Q:** How do I add the name of one or both parents if they are missing on the certificate of death?

**A:** To add the name of one or both parents when their name was omitted on the death certificate:

One acceptable document is required to make the change showing the correct information. Decedent's birth certificate would be accepted to add parent(s) names if parent's name is listed on the birth certificate.

### **Parental information: requirements for amending, correcting or changing names**

**Q:** How do I change the name of a parent on the death certificate?

**A:** In the case of a change of name, the documents submitted must establish the association between the person named and the decedent. Documents that establish parentage such as: Birth Certificate, Adoption Order, Order of Filiation, Affidavit of Parentage or Court Order.

### **Marital status change requirements**

**Q:** How do I change the marital status of decedent on the death certificate?

**A:** Court order naming the surviving spouse or if the mistake was made by the funeral director a letter on letterhead stating the mistake, accompanied by the funeral home worksheet or other document proving the mistake.

### **Decedent name: requirements for amending, correcting or changing**

**Q:** How do I change the name of the decedent?

**A:** Changes to the decedent's name where identification is not an issue, such as spelling or completion of the name:

1. One acceptable document dated before the date of death that shows the correct name.

To change the decedent's name due to error:

1. At least one document to establish the correct information. Documents must establish that the information is related to the decedent which records parentage in common with the death certificate such as birth certificate, marriage certificate or a combination of legal name change order and birth or marriage certificate.

**Decedent name: requirements for adding additional legal names (maiden name or alias)**

- Q:** The Decedent had legally used other names than the one listed on the death certificate, how do I have the alias or maiden name listed on the death certificate?
- A:** An alias or maiden name for the decedent may be added when supported by one document such as birth certificate or marriage license.

**Informant name change requirements**

- Q:** How do I change the name of the informant on a death certificate?
- A:** Changes to the identity of the informant's name must be requested by the funeral director. A copy of the funeral directors records with the correct name is required.
- A:** Spelling changes to the informant's name can be requested by an eligible applicant and require one acceptable document showing the correct spelling of the name.

**Social security number change requirements**

- Q:** How do I change the social security number of the decedent on the death certificate?
- A:** A copy of the social security card/record or one acceptable document that records the social security number dated before the date of death.

**Name of surviving spouse change requirements**

- Q:** How do I change the name of the surviving spouse of decedent on the death certificate?
- A:** A change in identity requires a court order naming the surviving spouse.
- A:** If the mistake was made by the funeral director, the funeral director must apply with a letter on letterhead stating the mistake, accompanied by the funeral home worksheet or other document proving the mistake.
- A:** A spelling error or completion of the name requires one acceptable document dated before the date of death with the correct name.

**Veteran status change requirements**

- Q:** How do I change the veteran status of the decedent on the death certificate?
- A:** One acceptable document to verify veteran status such as DD214 dated before the date of death.