

Submitter: Deborah Wardrop-Threadgill
On Behalf Of:
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Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3127

Aside from the death itself, waiting for certified death certificates can be the most stressful event in a family's life. The reason for this is that a death certificate is the key to financial accounts. Often times, bank accounts are frozen resulting in bills not being paid, insurance benefits cannot be processed, real estate or vehicle transactions are delayed, etc.

Thus, getting death certificates as quickly as possible is the goal of every funeral director. When doctors sign electronically, we can usually receive the death certificate from the county within a week.

However, when medical providers do not (and some actually refuse to) use the electronic system, we have to mail the death certificate to the provider, wait for them to sign it, then wait for the office to put it in the mail. Sometimes the doctor only comes into the office a couple of times a week, or is on vacation. Occasionally, a death certificate has been lost in the mail. Once we receive the death certificate from the doctor, we then mail it to the County Vital Records and wait for them to mail the certified copies to us. The entire process can take up to 3 weeks or more. Many times, we will drive to the county with the copy from the doctor in order to avoid the delay of the USPS.

As a funeral director and co-owner of a family owned and operated funeral home, who has worked directly with families on a daily basis, I can attest to the need for medical providers to use the electronic death certificate system. We actually include a OVERS brochure in every death certificate that we mail to the provider, encouraging them to consider using the electronic system. Medical providers have been using the electronic medical records system in their clinics and hospitals for years and thus should be able to add signing death certificates electronically to their skill set.

I join with hundreds of funeral directors throughout Oregon asking you to pass HB 3127 in relieving some of the stress of grieving families.

Thank you,
Deborah Wardrop-Threadgill
Funeral Director, Co-Owner Threadgill's Memorial Services
4815 SW Jamieson Road
Beaverton Oregon 97005
503-526-3952 ext 1