



California Department of Public Health Logo

Affidavit To Amend A Death Record

Amending a Death Certificate

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Center for Health Statistics and Informatics – Vital Records

Upon request, this document will be made available in alternate formats. To obtain a copy in an alternate format, please call or write:

California Department of Public Health
Vital Records - M.S. 5103
P.O. Box 997410
Sacramento, CA 95899-7410
Telephone: (916) 445-2684
California Relay: 711/1-800-735-2929

Website address: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/>

Amending a Death Certificate

What information can be changed with an amendment?

Amendments are used to correct **errors** on the death certificate. Documentation supporting the correction may be requested and not returned. Keep copies of documents submitted.

The VS 24 form can be used to:

- Correct spelling errors.
- Add information not known at the time of death.
- Add an “AKA” (“also known as”) to decedent’s name.
- Correct most items on the certificate.

See page 7 for more information.

What is the fee to amend a death certificate?

Within One Year of the Death:

- There is no fee to amend a record within one year of the date of death, but there is a fee to receive an updated certified copy of the death certificate.
- Within the first year, the fee for each certified copy of the amended record is \$21.

If the Death Occurred More Than One Year Ago:

- There is a \$23 fee, which includes one Certified Copy of the amended record.
- Additional copies are \$21 each.

Fees should be paid by check or money order payable to **CDPH Vital Records**. International money orders for out-of-country requests must be payable in U.S. dollars.

Please Note

If it is within the first year of death and you do not want a Certified Copy, your request will be processed and you will not receive any further contact from the California Department of Public Health – Vital Records (CDPH-VR) office. A copy of the amended record will be provided to the local county recorder in the county where the death occurred.

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What do I submit to amend a death certificate?

If you ARE requesting an authorized Certified Copy of the amended death certificate, you need to submit the following:

- Completed Affidavit to Amend a Record, VS 24 form with original signatures (including back side).
- Photocopy of the current death certificate. (Although this item is ***not required***, it would help CDPH-VR identify the exact record to be amended).
- Signed and notarized Sworn Statement.
- Appropriate fee.

If you ARE requesting an informational Certified Copy of the amended death certificate, you need to submit the following:

- Completed Affidavit to Amend a Record, VS 24 form with original signatures (including back side).
- Photocopy of the current death certificate. (Although this item is ***not required***, it would help CDPH-VR identify the exact record to be amended).
- Application for Certified Copy, VS 112.
- Appropriate fee.

If you do not require a copy of the amended death certificate AND it is within one year of the date of death, you only need to submit the following:

- Completed Affidavit to Amend a Record, VS 24 form with original signatures.
- Photocopy of the current death certificate. (Although this item is ***not required***, it would help CDPH-VR identify the exact record to be amended).

Mail these items to the CDPH-VR office using the address on the front of this pamphlet.

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Why do I need a Sworn Statement?

Effective July 1, 2003, the law requires that only an authorized person (as defined by Health and Safety Code 103526 (c)) may receive a Certified Copy of a birth or death record. To help protect against identity theft, you must complete and submit a signed, notarized Sworn Statement declaring under penalty of perjury that you are authorized by law to receive an authorized Certified Copy. [Download a Sworn Statement form](#) – page 3 of 3 (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/Sworn-Statement.aspx>).

When do I need to submit a Sworn Statement?

If you are requesting an authorized Certified Copy of the amended record, you must complete and submit a notarized sworn statement.

Where can I get the VS 24 form?

Due to the high volume of CDPH-VR telephone calls, the Internet is usually the faster way to obtain the VS 24 form. You may:

- [Download a fillable form](#) (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/PSB/Pages/BirthDeathMarriageCertificates.aspx>).
- [Order paper forms](#) electronically to be mailed to you by completing the VS 140 form available on the CDPH-VR forms webpage (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/PSB/Pages/BirthDeathMarriageCertificates.aspx>).

You may also:

- Call the Customer Service Unit at (916) 445-2684.
- Contact the County Recorder or County Health Department in any California county.

The Physician/Certifier's Amendment, VS 24A form, is also available in the same manner as noted above.

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How do I complete the VS 24 form?

PART I:

Complete the information exactly as it appears on the current death certificate.

Note: If you need a copy of the current death certificate to complete this section, you can download a fillable application form for a certified copy at the CDPH-VR website or you may obtain a paper form in the same manner as noted in the previous section. Complete and submit the application, notarized Sworn Statement, and \$21 fee to the CDPH-VR office (see address on cover page).

PART II:

- **Item 8:** Enter the item number from the current death certificate that needs to be corrected. List only one item per line.
- **Item 9:** Enter the ***incorrect*** information ***as it appears*** on the current death certificate.
- **Item 10:** Enter the ***correct*** information ***as it should appear*** on the death certificate.
- **Item 11:** Briefly state why the original information was not correct.

Who may sign supporting affidavits?

Items 12A and 13A on the VS 24 form:

- Two persons having knowledge of the facts must complete the supporting affidavits. See next section for additional information. The signed affidavits must be included on the bottom of the VS 24 form and not as a separate document.
- ***Two signatures are required.***

Note: The law states “*whenever the facts are not correctly stated... the person asserting that the error exists may make an affidavit under oath stating the changes necessary to make the record correct, that shall be supported by the affidavit of one other credible person having knowledge of the facts, and file it with the state or local registrar.*” (Health and Safety Code 103225).

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Are there situations where specific persons must sign the affidavits?

Yes.

When correcting the date, time, place, or cause of death:

- Only the certifying or attending physician, coroner, or medical examiner can amend these items, by completing the Physician/Certifier's Amendment, VS 24A form. Please see page 5 for information on obtaining an original form.

What makes a VS 24 form "acceptable?"

Important Information

Because the amendment you submit becomes an actual part of this legal document, it must adhere to strict guidelines:

- Every item on the amendment must be completed.
- The form must be completed using the 26 alphabetical characters of the English language.
- Appropriate punctuation includes: a hyphen such as in "Smith-Jones," an apostrophe as in "O'Hare," a period as used with "Jr.," and a comma as with "Smith, Jr."
- Unacceptable entries include: drawings, pictures, or symbols, and accents, or marks added to a letter to indicate pronunciation or to distinguish it in some way, such as with è, ñ, ē, or ç.
- Because the amendment form becomes part of the official record, every word and letter must be extremely clear and legible. **Typing entries on the form ensures that the information is interpreted clearly.**
- If you are completing the downloadable amendment form, print on standard 8½" x 11" letter size, plain white paper, using black ink only, at 100% scale.
- If you are not able to type the amendment form, it is extremely important that you take the extra time to print **very clearly and legibly**. Documents that are not legible will be returned to you to complete again.
- **Only black ink is acceptable** (per Health and Safety Code Section 102125).
- **There cannot be any erasures, whiteout, alterations, or extraneous markings.**

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How long will it take to process the amendment?

The [processing time](#) for death amendments can be located on the CDPH-VR website (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/Vital-Records-Processing-Times.aspx>).

Once I file the amendment, what happens to the original record?

- The original record remains unchanged, and the amendment becomes an additional page to the death certificate - making it a multiple-page document (per Health and Safety Code Sections 102140 and 103255).
- Anyone receiving a copy after the amendment is applied will receive a copy of the complete record.

What if I have additional questions?

Please call the Customer Service Unit at (916) 445-2684. If you are checking the status of your request, please wait until after the processing time has passed before contacting CDPH-VR.

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In Summary, What Links to Forms and References May Be Required?

[California Department of Public Health home page](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/)
(<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/>)

[Sworn Statement](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/Sworn-Statement.aspx) – Application and Sworn Statement:
Certified Copy of Death Record – VS 112 form – *page 3 of 3*
(<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/Sworn-Statement.aspx>)

[Vital Record Applications \(forms\)](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/PSB/Pages/BirthDeathMarriageCertificates.aspx) – VS 24 – Affidavit to Amend a Record
(<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/PSB/Pages/BirthDeathMarriageCertificates.aspx>)

[Vital Record Applications \(forms\)](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/PSB/Pages/BirthDeathMarriageCertificates.aspx) – VS 24A – Physician/Certifier's Amendment
(<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/PSB/Pages/BirthDeathMarriageCertificates.aspx>)

[Request for Amendment or Registration Form](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/PSB/Pages/BirthDeathMarriageCertificates.aspx) – VS 140 –
(<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/PSB/Pages/BirthDeathMarriageCertificates.aspx>)

[Processing Times](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/Vital-Records-Processing-Times.aspx)
(<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/Vital-Records-Processing-Times.aspx>)

[Directory of County Vital Records Offices](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/County-Registrars-and-Recorders.aspx)
(<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/County-Registrars-and-Recorders.aspx>)