



Indiana
Department
of
Health




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Governor

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State Health Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 4, 2021

To: Funeral Directors, Medical Certifiers, County Coroners, and Local Health Officers

From: D. Shane Hatchett  Chief of Staff
Tasha L. Smith
Acting State Registrar and Director, Vital Records

Subject: VR Memo 2021-02 – Directive to Abandon and Re-Enter Certain Death Records

As of the writing of this Memorandum, there are approximately 900 death records from 2020 from the state's legacy system that have not been registered with the Local and State Registrars. Therefore, these records are not considered valid legal documents. Further, the Acting State Registrar and I have been made aware that these records may be intermittently inaccessible to funeral directors and coroners, which contributes to additional delay.

Therefore, the Acting State Registrar and I direct the following actions:

1. For any death that occurred prior to January 1, 2021 and is not:
 - a. Pending coroner review;
 - b. Medically valid and certified by the Medical Certifier (including date); or,
 - c. Pending affirmation and registration with the Local Registrar

The Funeral Director should abandon the converted case following the instructions appended to this Memorandum as *Appendix A*.

2. The Funeral Director should re-enter a death record in DRIVE and override any duplicate case errors. The record will be listed as Personal Valid With Exceptions once successfully completed by the Funeral Director. It is recommended that users validate each page (prior to saving) and use the *Next* button to navigate.

To **promote**, **protect**, and **improve** the health and safety of all Hoosiers.



3. If the Funeral Director is unable to locate the Medical Certifier in the system and has already made contact with the Certifier's office, the Funeral Director may enter a ticket under the "Medical Certifier Not Registered" category at the Vital Records HelpDesk. This queue will be prioritized and outreach will be made to hospital system leadership to ensure that death records do not continue to age.

This guidance does not apply to birth records. Coroner cases should **not** be abandoned. These cases will be manually placed into the Coroner's queues.

Important resources and user guides for DRIVE can be located at <http://www.in.gov/isdh/drive>.

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Attachment A

Abandoning a Record



In DRIVE, records are not deleted as they were in Genesis. An errant or duplicate record will be assigned a special status of Abandoned when it needs to be discarded from further processing. Below are the steps to identify when a record should be abandoned, how to abandon a record, and how to recognize when a record is abandoned.

When a record should be abandoned

A record should be abandoned when you have been instructed to do so by a registrar, when it is erroneous and cannot be fixed, or when it is a duplicate. Often, this will be related to a validation error such as below. Even once overridden, the errors will display as a notice.

Validation Results	List All Errors	Save Overrides	Hide
Error Message	Override	Goto Field	Popup
DR_0092: One or more records currently exist for this decedent. Please verify this case is not a duplicate. Potential Duplicates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fix	Fix
DR_0094: This social security number already exists in the database. Please verify this case is not a duplicate and the social security number is correct. Potential Duplicates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fix	Fix

Note that the errors were overridden so that the record could be registered. A duplicate record error will prevent the record from going into a valid status. Once overridden, it will show as Personal Valid With Exceptions, as demonstrated below. It will also have a yellow dot next to the page instead of a green check. Both of these things are fine and will not prevent processing.



How to abandon a record

Once you have identified that a record needs to be abandoned, enter the record and scroll to the Other Links section. Click on *Assign Status* and a dialogue will appear (note: not all users have access to assign special statuses). Click *New Special Status* and a drop down and reason field will appear. Select Abandoned under Status and enter the reason for abandoning the record. The reason should include the duplicate case ID.

Click **Save** (to the right of the reason field) and then **Close** (at the bottom of the dialogue). The Assign Special Status dialogue is shown below. Once complete, the record will be pulled out of the processing workflows and listed as **Abandoned**.



If you inadvertently abandon a record or abandon the wrong record, you can delete the abandonment and it should revert to its former status.

How to recognize an abandoned record

An abandoned case may still be visible or trigger a “duplicate record” error as shown above. This is not an issue, but you may want to confirm that the record in fact has been abandoned. You can do this by looking at the status bar under the Case ID and name. The status will show as **Abandoned**. Additionally, you may also hover over the name of the record and a popup will identify the special status as /Abandoned.

11 [REDACTED] : [REDACTED] DEC-29-2020
 /Personal Invalid/Medical Invalid/**Abandoned**/Unsigned/Uncertified/NA

Death Search Results

Case Id	SFN	Decedent's Name	Date of Death	Sex	Place of Death	Date of Birth	Preview
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Female	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Preview
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Female	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Preview

Special Status /Abandoned

Total Records : 2

New Search

Questions or issues

If you experience difficulties or need assistance with duplicate records, please contact the Vital Records Help Desk by submitting a ticket with the appropriate case IDs and describing the issue.

