

Vital Record Tips

Durable Power of Attorney gives the person all the authority as if the person (or subject) is there in person. Example- “I give my cousin, Vinnie, a durable power of attorney and he may do everything I would be able to do, sell my house, close bank accounts, get my birth and marriage certificates as well as my children’s vital records.”

Medical Power of Attorney gives the person authority to make only medical decisions as specified in the document. This does not allow the person to access vital records.

Verifications

Municipal clerks are responsible for maintaining all birth, death, fetal death and marriage records received for filing. These records are considered to be in the custody of the state registrar and are subject to the same requirements regarding *disclosure* as are records in the possession of the state registrar.

Phone Verifications

DRVS highly encourages municipal clerks to adopt a policy within their municipality not to disclose any vital statistics data or information to any individual or organization verbally over the phone. The policy should reference the language in Title 22 §2706 and include the following scenarios:

- Individuals requesting data or information contained in the annual town report should be referred to the municipality’s web-site or a *printed* version of the annual report.
- Individuals requesting data or information from a public vital record should be encouraged to complete an application to obtain a non-certified copy of the vital record in question.
- Researchers engaged in genealogical research who hold a valid researcher identification card should be encouraged to complete an application to obtain a non-certified copy of the vital record in question.
- Municipal clerks may use their own discretion if or when verifying a vital record is filed within their municipality.

A municipal clerk must not disclose personally identifiable information contained in vital records, or issue a copy of all or part of any such record unless the applicant is authorized to obtain such record for a proper purpose or is authorized to obtain such data.

E-mail or Fax Verifications

DRVS does not give out information pertaining to any vital record over the phone or via e-mail. Please do not tell the public to call DRVS for the information.

DRVS does provide verification of vital records to municipal clerks if the vital record is filed in your municipality or is supposed to be. Please become familiar with DRVS Verification Procedure for municipal clerks by viewing pages R1-R2 in your packet.

Retention of Written Requests/Applications

Municipal clerks are required to keep written requests/applications for a vital record for a period of one year. It is highly encouraged to write down the safety/security paper numbers located on the back of the paper on the written request or application. DRVS maintains written requests/applications for a period of three years.