

SC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Vital Statistics
Vital Records Death Application – 2594-ENG-DPH

PURPOSE: To collect information required to request a certified copy of a death record.

AUDIENCE: An individual requesting a certified copy of a death record.

INSTRUCTIONS: Instructions for completing each item are self-explanatory or embedded within the form. Applicants are instructed to complete each blank.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

DEATHS – SC Law did not require the filing of records until January 01, 1915. Death records on file at SC DPH are not available for public viewing. A death record becomes public record fifty (50) years after the date of death. Non-certified copies of public death records are issued unless a certified copy is specifically requested by an otherwise entitled party. The \$12 “search fee” is required for each request of a public death record.

Death records are available for public viewing fifty (50) years after the date of death ONLY at the SC Department of Archives and History, located at 8301 Parklane Road, Columbia, SC 29223; website: www.scdah.sc.gov

TURNAROUND TIME – The usual turnaround time for ‘waiting’ onsite customers is approximately thirty (30) minutes, excluding amendments, during non-peak hours (8:30AM – 11:00AM). The usual turnaround time for ‘mail’ requests, excluding amendments, is approximately four (4) weeks from the date received by our office.

If it has been more than four (4) weeks since you submitted your request, excluding amendments, please email VRRequestStatus@dph.sc.gov or call (803) 898-3630 to determine the status.

IDENTIFICATION – A valid/current government, school, or employer issued photo identification document of the **applicant** is required before a search of the records will be conducted. Requests that do not contain proper identification will be returned unprocessed. Acceptable documents are:

1. Any United States’ DMV Office issued picture identification, i.e., Driver’s License, ID card, Learner’s Permit (unexpired)
2. Current school or employer picture identification card (if expiration date is not listed, additional verification may be required from issuer)
3. Military card (unexpired – active duty or retired member)
4. United States Passport (unexpired)
5. Foreign Passport (unexpired)
6. Re-Entry Permit (I-327 – unexpired)
7. Refugee Travel Document (form I-571 – unexpired)
8. United States Citizen Identification Card (form I-197)
9. Temporary Resident Card (form I-688 – unexpired)
10. Permanent Resident Card (form I-551 – unexpired)
11. Weapon or gun permit issued by federal, state, or municipal government (unexpired)

WEBSITE – Additional information can be obtained from the website: <https://dph.sc.gov/public/vital-records>

PAYMENT – Acceptable methods of payment for mail requests are a money order or cashier’s check made payable to SC DPH. Onsite customer service also accepts credit/debit cards and cash.

SEARCH FEE – A \$12 “search fee” is required by SC Law, Section 44-63-110. **The \$12 search fee is non-refundable.** The required search fee includes one (1) certification if record is located. If additional copies of the same type of certification are order at the same time, they are \$3 each.

EXPEDITE FEE – A \$5 expedite fee is allowed under SC Code of Regulations 61-19, Section 1300. SC DPH Vital Records defines application of the expedite fee to be charged for all request types with an expected turnaround time of ten (10) business days or less, including onsite in-person, onsite drop-off (if desired), online/internet, and billable orders. Orders sent via mail will not be processed expedited and will have an expected turnaround time of four (4) weeks.

OFFICE MECHANICS AND FILING: Completed applications will be maintained for three years then destroyed under retention schedule 17996.