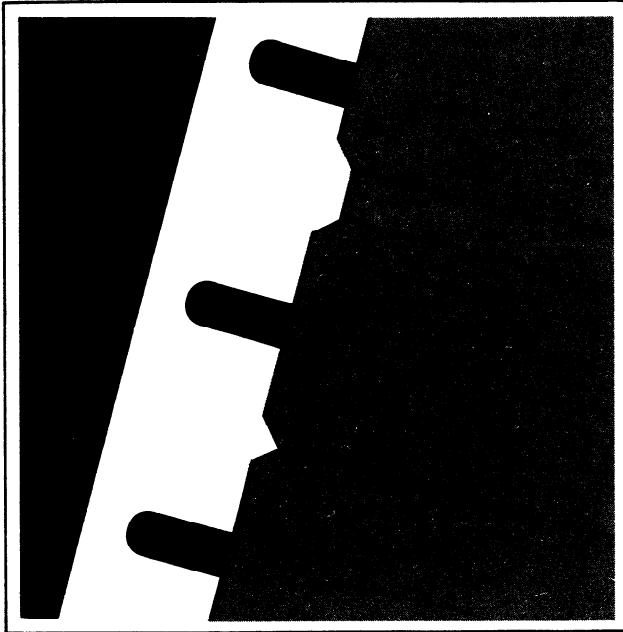


Guidelines for Reporting Occupation and Industry on Death Certificates



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service
Centers for Disease Control
National Center for Health Statistics

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Preface

This handbook is prepared by the National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control, U.S. Public Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services, and contains instructions for funeral directors¹ for completing the occupation and industry items on the death certificate. It pertains to the 1989 revision of the U.S. Standard Certificate of Death and the 1977 revision of the Model State Vital Statistics Act and Regulations. This handbook is intended to serve as a model for adaptation by any vital statistics registration area.

Other handbooks available as references on preparing and registering vital records are:

- *Hospitals' and Physicians' Handbook on Birth Registration and Fetal Death Reporting*
- *Medical Examiners' and Coroners' Handbook on Death Registration and Fetal Death Reporting*
- *Physicians' Handbook on Medical Certification of Death*
- *Funeral Directors' Handbook on Death Registration and Fetal Death Reporting*
- *Handbook on the Reporting of Induced Termination of Pregnancy*
- *Handbook on Marriage Registration*
- *Handbook on Divorce Registration*

¹Funeral service licensees are known by several titles in this country, including funeral director, undertaker, mortician, embalmer, mortuary science licensee, and mortuary science practitioner. For the purposes of this handbook, the term "funeral director" includes all of these titles as they relate to persons who have charge of the disposition of a dead body or fetus and who are responsible for completing and filing death certificates and, in some States, fetal death reports.

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Introduction

This publication was prepared as a guide for reporting occupation and industry on death certificates. Its purpose is to serve as an aid to the funeral director in obtaining information and filling out the occupation and industry items on the death certificate. Funeral service licensees are known by several titles in this country. These include funeral director, undertaker, mortician, embalmer, mortuary science licensee, and mortuary science practitioner. In this handbook the term “funeral director” includes all these titles as they relate to persons who have charge of the disposition of a dead body or fetus and who are responsible for completing and filing the death certificate. This publication is also intended to assist the registrar of vital statistics in determining the acceptability of entries for these items.

Mortality statistics by occupation and type of industry are currently much in demand because of increased interest on the part of both government and private industry in work-related health hazards. Data that can point out potential hazards in the workplace can lead to the development of safety equipment or procedures for the protection of the working population. Because occupation and industry information is entered on death certificates, they are the most logical source of the information needed to study the relationships between decedent’s occupation, type of industry, and mortality. It is, therefore, essential that funeral directors, registrars, and others involved in the registration process be aware of the necessity for accurate and complete reporting of these items. The manner in which these items are completed on the death certificate will have considerable influence on the adequacy of the resulting occupational mortality statistics.

Although the funeral director is responsible for obtaining the personal data on the death certificate, including occupation and business/industry, the responsibility for review and final acceptance of the records falls on the registrar. Therefore, this publication is directed to registrars as well as funeral directors.

Part I—Importance of occupation and industry statistics

One of the most important factors relating to the health of the working population is the risk involved in the working environment. Information made available by life insurance companies provides some indication of the risks in various occupations and industries. However, because this information relates only to the deceased policyholders, it does not necessarily reflect the impact on the health of the total population. Through Workmen's Compensation, some additional information is available on deaths caused by accidents or diseases that can be traced to the workers' occupations and industries. The available data indicate that there is insufficient information for substantiating and evaluating the problems.

The inadequacy of health data by occupation and industry is not due to lack of interest but results from difficulties encountered in the collection and proper classification of the information on the death certificates. Public health workers, industrial organizations, members of the medical and legal professions, as well as the general public, can all benefit from the additional information that would be obtained through proper and complete reporting of these items on death certificates. The occupational and medical entries of a properly completed death certificate of a 63-year-old female are shown in figure 1.

11a. DECEDENT'S USUAL OCCUPATION (Give kind of work done during most of working life. Do not use retired.) Weaver				12a. KIND OF BUSINESS/INDUSTRY Cotton cloth mill	
27. PART I. Enter the disease, injuries, or complications that caused the death. Do not enter the mode of dying, such as cardiac or respiratory arrest, shock, or heart failure. List only one cause on each line.					
IMMEDIATE CAUSE (Final disease or condition resulting in death) → a. Respiratory acidosis				Approximate Interval Between Onset and Death 12 hours	
DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF: b. Bronchopneumonia				4 days	
DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF: c. Byssinosis				5 years	
DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF: d.					
PART II. Other significant conditions contributing to death but not resulting in the underlying cause given in Part I.				28a. WAS AN AUTOPSY PERFORMED? (Yes or no) Yes	
				28b. WERE AUTOPSY FINDINGS AVAILABLE PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF CAUSE OF DEATH? (Yes or no) Yes	
28. MANNER OF DEATH <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural <input type="checkbox"/> Pending Investigation <input type="checkbox"/> Accident <input type="checkbox"/> Investigation <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide <input type="checkbox"/> Could not be determined <input type="checkbox"/> Homicide		29a. DATE OF INJURY (Month, Day, Year)	29b. TIME OF INJURY M	29c. INJURY AT WORK? (Yes or no)	29d. DESCRIBE HOW INJURY OCCURRED
29e. PLACE OF INJURY—At home, farm, street, factory, office building, etc. (Specify)			29f. LOCATION (Street and Number or Rural Route Number, City or Town, State)		

Figure 1. Properly completed entries on death certificate of a 63-year-old female

Data on the relative health risk of various occupations and industries can be used to make decisions on where to concentrate efforts in industrial health work. Proper reporting of occupation and industry information is important for the development of safety regulations covering industrial workers. It is even more important to obtain information on the vast number of persons who are gainfully employed but not protected by regulations applying to the industrial worker. These include millions of agricultural workers, professional persons, and employees in public and private services.

Mortality data by occupation and industry can serve many purposes if accurately collected on a nationwide basis.

1. It is possible to compare death rates among different occupations and industries and to identify high-risk categories.
2. The relative risks (or death rates) for workers in one section of the country can be compared with those of similar workers in other sections of the country.
3. Occupational mortality rates can be used in determining insurance premiums and death benefits for selected groups of workers.
4. Areas in need of further research can be identified, such as the effects of exposure to cancer-causing agents, lung diseases related to dust or chemical exposure, and causes of industrial accidents.

Some additional examples of proper entries of occupation, industry, and cause of death which further point out the importance of proper reporting, particularly as these items may relate to health or cause of death, are shown in figures 2-4.

		12a. DECEDENT'S USUAL OCCUPATION <i>(Give kind of work done during most of working life. Do not use retired.)</i> Miner		12b. KIND OF BUSINESS/INDUSTRY Coal mine		
27. PART I. Enter the diseases, injuries, or complications that caused the death. Do not enter the mode of dying, such as cardiac or respiratory arrest, shock, or heart failure. List only one cause on each line.						
IMMEDIATE CAUSE (First disease or condition resulting in death)		a. Terminal bronchopneumonia			Approximate Interval Between Onset and Death 3 days	
DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF:		Chronic lung disease - Pneumoconiosis suspected			12 years	
b. DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF:						
c. DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF:						
d. DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF:						
PART II. Other significant conditions contributing to death but not resulting in the underlying cause given in Part I.						
				29b. WAS AN AUTOPSY PERFORMED? (Yes or no) No	29c. WERE AUTOPSY FINDINGS AVAILABLE PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF CAUSE OF DEATH? (Yes or no)	
29. MANNER OF DEATH <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural <input type="checkbox"/> Pending Investigation <input type="checkbox"/> Accident <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide <input type="checkbox"/> Could not be Determined <input type="checkbox"/> Homicide		30a. DATE OF INJURY (Month, Day, Year)	30b. TIME OF INJURY M	30c. INJURY AT WORK? (Yes or no)	30d. DESCRIBE HOW INJURY OCCURRED	
30e. PLACE OF INJURY—At home, farm, street, factory, office building, etc. (Specify)			30f. LOCATION (Street and Number or Rural Route Number, City or Town, State)			

Figure 2. Properly completed entries on death certificate of an 85-year-old male

12a. DECEDENT'S USUAL OCCUPATION <i>(Give kind of work done during most of working life. Do not use retired.)</i> Construction worker		12b. KIND OF BUSINESS/INDUSTRY Oil field drilling		
SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON OTHER SIDE	27. PART I. Enter the diseases, injuries, or complications that caused the death. Do not enter the mode of dying, such as cardiac or respiratory arrest, shock, or heart failure. List only one cause on each line.			Approximate Interval Between Onset and Death
	IMMEDIATE CAUSE (Final disease or condition resulting in death) →	a. Cerebral concussion DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF:		Immed.
	Sequentially list conditions, if any, leading to immediate cause. Enter UNDERLYING CAUSE (Disease or injury that initiated events resulting in death) LAST	b. Industrial accident DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF:		Immed.
		c. _____ DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF:		
d. _____				
PART II. Other significant conditions contributing to death but not resulting in the underlying cause given in Part I.				28a. WAS AN AUTOPSY PERFORMED? (Yes or no) Yes
				28b. WERE AUTOPSY FINDINGS AVAILABLE PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF CAUSE OF DEATH? (Yes or no) Yes
29. MANNER OF DEATH		30a. DATE OF INJURY (Month, Day, Year)	30b. TIME OF INJURY	30c. INJURY AT WORK? (Yes or no)
<input type="checkbox"/> Natural <input type="checkbox"/> Pending Investigation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accident <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide <input type="checkbox"/> Could not be Determined <input type="checkbox"/> Homicide		July 21, 1989	2:30 PM	Yes
		30d. PLACE OF INJURY—At home, farm, street, factory, office building, etc. (Specify)	30e. LOCATION (Street and Number or Rural Route Number, City or Town, State)	
		Pinewood oil field Rt. 3, Houston, Texas		
30f. DESCRIBE HOW INJURY OCCURRED Machine malfunctioned and fell on him				

Figure 3. Properly completed entries on death certificate of a 20-year-old male

12a. DECEDENT'S USUAL OCCUPATION <i>(Give kind of work done during most of working life. Do not use retired.)</i> Welder		12b. KIND OF BUSINESS/INDUSTRY Naval shipyard		
SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON OTHER SIDE	27. PART I. Enter the diseases, injuries, or complications that caused the death. Do not enter the mode of dying, such as cardiac or respiratory arrest, shock, or heart failure. List only one cause on each line.			Approximate Interval Between Onset and Death
	IMMEDIATE CAUSE (Final disease or condition resulting in death) →	a. Cor pulmonale DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF:		6 weeks
	Sequentially list conditions, if any, leading to immediate cause. Enter UNDERLYING CAUSE (Disease or injury that initiated events resulting in death) LAST	b. Asbestosis DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF:		15 years
		c. _____ DUE TO IOR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF:		
d. _____				
PART II. Other significant conditions contributing to death but not resulting in the underlying cause given in Part I.				28a. WAS AN AUTOPSY PERFORMED? (Yes or no) No
				28b. WERE AUTOPSY FINDINGS AVAILABLE PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF CAUSE OF DEATH? (Yes or no)
29. MANNER OF DEATH		30a. DATE OF INJURY (Month, Day, Year)	30b. TIME OF INJURY	30c. INJURY AT WORK? (Yes or no)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural <input type="checkbox"/> Pending Investigation <input type="checkbox"/> Accident <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide <input type="checkbox"/> Could not be Determined <input type="checkbox"/> Homicide				M
		30d. PLACE OF INJURY—At home, farm, street, factory, office building, etc. (Specify)	30e. LOCATION (Street and Number or Rural Route Number, City or Town, State)	

Figure 4. Properly completed entries on death certificate of a 61-year-old male

Part II—General instructions for collecting occupation and business/industry data

This guide sets forth the principles for reporting the decedent's "usual occupation" and "kind of business/industry" on death certificates that will correspond as closely as possible to the data collected in the 1990 and subsequent population censuses. Mortality measures are calculated using the population by occupation and industry observed in the decennial censuses as a denominator and the number of deaths by occupation and industry as a numerator. The reliability of the rates will be affected by the comparability of responses on the death certificates with the census returns.

Reference to the instructions that follow will eliminate many of the difficulties that frequently arise in filling out the occupation and industry items on death certificates. Because the occupation and industry responses will be coded and classified, any unclassifiable entry will be queried; thus the funeral director can eliminate unnecessary correspondence by properly entering the data initially.

Definitions of occupation and business/industry

The U.S. Standard Certificate of Death contains two items relating to occupation and industry: "Decedent's usual occupation" and "Kind of business/industry." *Decedent's usual occupation* means the type of job the individual was engaged in for most of his or her working life. It is not necessarily the highest paid job nor the job considered the most prestigious, but the *one occupation*, of perhaps several, that accounted for the greatest number of working years. *Kind of business/industry* refers to the particular type of activity within which the chosen occupation is found. Specifying the name of a company is not sufficient unless the name describes the nature of the business.

Example: An elderly man may have worked between the ages of 25 and 60 as a welder in a steel-fabricating shop and then shifted to lighter work, such as night watchman, prior to retirement. Although he may have been a night watchman for several years before retirement, the proper entry on the death certificate would be "welder" for occupation and "steel fabrication" for industry.

Importance of the business/industry item

Both the occupation and business/industry items on the death certificate are required to accurately describe an individual's occupation. Inadequate description of business/industry has been a major reporting deficiency on death certificates. This item is necessary and is as important as the occupation.

Examples: A person whose occupation was "grinder" may have been employed in a chemical factory, textile mill, car repair shop, feed mill, glass factory, optical factory, television factory, sawmill, sugar refinery, and so forth. The various occupations described in the combinations of "grinder" with the industries range from those requiring skilled craftsmen to unskilled laborers, and the occupational hazards vary with the material involved and the nature of the task. Therefore, the entry of "grinder" for occupation or entries of "grinder" for occupation and "factory" for industry on the death certificate are unacceptable. Many inadequate entries could be rendered acceptable by the proper completion of the industry item. For instance, "laborer" and "molder" are incomplete entries for occupation without the information on business/industry; however, "laborer" for occupation and "sawmill" for industry and "molder" for occupation and "brass factory" for industry are complete and acceptable entries.

Obtaining information from the informant

In obtaining information to complete the occupation and industry items, it is important to determine whether the informant has sufficient knowledge of the decedent's working history to provide an accurate description. If not, it may be necessary to contact other family members or friends to obtain the information needed. Sometimes it is necessary to ask a number of probing questions, particularly if the decedent has had several different occupations.

The following are examples of questions that might be asked to obtain an accurate description of the decedent's occupation and place of employment during the majority of his or her working years.

"For whom did _____ work?"

"What kind of business or industry was this?"

"What kind of work was _____ doing?"

"How long had _____ been doing this kind of work?"

If the decedent had multiple occupations or worked for several businesses, it will be necessary to continue questioning the informant until it can be determined which would be the appropriate or "usual" occupation.

Appropriate entries

Fancy or lengthy entries are not desired. For instance, an entry of “interior decorator” for a person who did painting of inside walls and woodwork would result in improper classification.

Family members have a tendency to report the decedent’s occupation as one perhaps more prestigious than the facts warrant. There also appears to be a tendency to report positions to which the decedent was elected or appointed even though that position was held for a relatively short time.

On the other hand, family members will sometimes report the decedent’s occupation as printer, baker, or brewer, when the occupation should be proprietor (owner) of a publishing firm, bakery, or brewery.

Some examples of proper entries relating to occupation and business/industry on the U.S. Standard Certificate of Death are as follows:

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Business/Industry</i>
Timber cutter	Logging
Shoe designer	Leather footwear factory
Tire tester	Tire manufacturing
Petroleum analyst	Petroleum refining

Clarification of selected entries

If the decedent is under 14 years of age, enter “infant,” “child,” or “student” in the occupation or business/industry item. Certificates for decedents 14 years and over *are not* acceptable if the items for occupation and business/industry are blank or if a dash (-) has been entered. An appropriate entry should be made, such as, construction laborer, student, or never worked.

Some of the most common incomplete entries are described in the remainder of this section. Proper entries are also explained.

Retired—Never enter “retired.” If the deceased was retired, enter the kind of work done during most of his or her working life.

Institutionalized, disabled, and unemployed—The usual occupation and business/industry of the decedent should be entered if he or she was ever employed, even if institutionalized, disabled, or unemployed for a long period of time.

Self-employed—If the person was self-employed, the kind of work performed must be determined. “Manager” should not be listed as the occupation unless the person

actually spent most of his or her time in the management of the business. If the person spent most of his or her time in the particular trade or craft, enter that as the occupation; for example, shoe repairman, beautician, or carpenter. The entry for business/industry for the self-employed should include both the proper industry and the entry “self-employed”; for example, “Self-employed—retail grocery store.”

Care must be exercised in the completion of occupation and business/industry for the following categories of people. Acceptable entries are as follows:

1. *Housewife, Househusband, Homemaker*—In the case of an adult woman, be certain to ask if she worked outside the home. If the decedent was a housewife or homemaker and also worked outside her own home during most of her working life, enter the usual occupation and business/industry worked outside the home. If the decedent was a housewife or homemaker and worked only in her own home enter “Housewife” or “Homemaker” for occupation and “Own home” for business/industry. If the decedent was a househusband, follow the same procedures as listed for a housewife.

If the decedent was a homemaker and worked in someone else’s home during most of his or her working life, enter “Homemaker” for occupation and “Someone else’s home” for business/industry.

Example: “Was _____ a housewife in her own home?”

“Did she also have a job outside the home?”

“Was _____ a homemaker in Mrs. Jones’ home?”

2. *Student*—If the deceased was a student at the time of death, the term “student” should be entered for occupation and type of school, such as high school or college, entered for business/industry.
3. *Never worked*—If the decedent was not a student or homemaker and had never worked at the time of death, the occupation entry should be “never worked.”
4. *Unknown*—“Unknown” should be entered only after every effort has been made to determine the facts.

Part III—Completing the occupation item

In the space for “usual occupation” on the death certificate, the word or words which most clearly describe the nature of the duties or the kind of work performed should be entered. The answer to the question should clearly specify the kind of work or nature of duties performed by the deceased person during his or her life.

Professional, technical, and skilled occupations usually require lengthy periods of training or education. Therefore, in reporting the occupation for a very young person, careful inquiry should be made to determine whether the person was actually a trainee, apprentice, or helper; for example, accountant trainee, electrician trainee, apprentice electrician, electrician’s helper.

More and more men and women are employed in positions formerly associated with either a male or a female. However, when trades such as plumber or carpenter are given for a woman, or homemaker for a man, it is necessary to verify by appropriate questions that he or she did perform that type of work.

There are many occupations that may sound strange. The title given by the respondent should be used in these cases whenever he or she is absolutely sure that the title is correct; for example, “sand hog” is the title for a certain worker engaged in the construction of underwater tunnels, and “printer’s devil” is sometimes used for an apprentice printer. Where these or any other unusual occupation titles are entered and the combined entries for occupation and business/industry do not clarify the occupation, a few words of description should be added for clarification.

It is important that the entry for occupation be very specific. General or vague terms are not satisfactory. For some occupations the common titles are inadequate. The following list may be helpful in clarifying certain unusual occupations:

1. Contractor versus skilled worker: A “contractor” would have been engaged principally in obtaining contracts and supervising the work. A “skilled worker” would have worked with his or her own tools as a carpenter, plasterer, plumber, or electrician. A “skilled worker” may have hired others to work for him or her.

2. Housekeeper (paid) versus housemaid: A “paid housekeeper” would have had the full responsibility for the management of the household. A “housemaid” (general housework), hired helper, or kitchen maid would not have been a housekeeper.
3. Interior decorator versus painter or paperhanger: An “interior decorator” would have been responsible for decoration plans for the interior of homes, hotels, offices, and so forth, and supervised the placement of furniture. Therefore, a house painter or paperhanger should not be reported as having been an interior decorator.
4. Machinist versus mechanic or machine operator: “Machinist” refers to a skilled craftsman who constructs metal parts, tools, and machines through the use of blueprints, machine and hand tools, and precise measuring instruments. The duties of a “mechanic” would have been to inspect, service, and repair or overhaul machinery. A “machine operator” would have operated a factory machine; for example, a drill press or winder.
5. Secretary versus official secretary: “Secretary” should be reported for a person who performed secretarial duties in an office. A secretary who was elected or appointed as an officer in a business should be reported as “official secretary.”
6. Names of departments or places of work: Occupation entries that give only the departments or a place of work are unsatisfactory. Examples of unsatisfactory entries are “worked in a warehouse,” “worked in a shipping department.” A proper entry would be “stock clerk, delivery” and business/industry as “electronic parts, retail.”
7. Various activities: If the deceased was engaged in a variety of activities (for example, a farmer who performed a variety of farm tasks, or a factory relief worker who operated several different machines), try to determine the activities or duties that most clearly indicate the occupation of the deceased person.

The following list consists of examples of occupations for which care must be taken. Included in this listing are examples of entries considered inadequate as well as the correct or adequate entries. The most frequent inadequately reported occupations are designated by an asterisk. Note that the examples listed as adequate entries do not include all acceptable occupation titles.

Inadequate

Accounting,
Accounting work

Adequate

Certified public accountant
Accountant
Accounting machine operator
Tax auditor
Accounts payable clerk

Inadequate

Adjuster

Agent

Analyst

Broker

Caretaker or custodian

Claims adjuster

Clerk

*Consultant

*Contractor

Adequate

Brake adjuster

Machine adjuster

Merchandise complaint adjuster

Insurance adjuster

Freight agent

Insurance agent

Sales agent

Advertising agent

Purchasing agent

Cement analyst

Food analyst

Budget analyst

Computer systems analyst

Procedure analyst

Air analyst

Stock broker

Insurance broker

Real estate broker

Livestock broker

Janitor

Guard

Building superintendent

Gardener

Groundskeeper

Sexton

Property clerk

Locker attendant

Unemployment benefits claims taker

Auto insurance adjuster

Right-of-way claims agent

Merchandise complaint adjuster

Stock clerk

Shipping clerk

Sales clerk or salesperson (person who sold goods in a store)

Financial consultant

Legal consultant

Tax consultant

Construction contractor (specify working or administrative type duties)

Managerial contractor

Painting contractor (specify administrative, managerial, or working)

Inadequate

*Counselor

Data processing

Doctor

Engineer

Entertainer

Equipment operator

Factory worker

Farmworker

Adequate

Educational counselor
Personnel counselor
Rehabilitation counselor
Guidance counselor
Marriage counselor

Computer programmer
Data typist
Keypunch operator
Computer operator
Coding clerk
Card tape converter operator

Physician
Dentist
Veterinarian
Osteopath
Chiropractor

Civil engineer
Locomotive engineer
Mechanical engineer
Aeronautical engineer
Electrical engineer
Construction engineer

Singer
Dancer
Acrobat
Musician

Road grader operator
Bulldozer operator
Trencher operator

Electric motor assembler
Forge heater
Turret lathe operator
Weaver
Loom fixer
Knitter stitcher
Punch-press operator
Spray painter
Riveter

Farmer or sharecropper (person responsible for operation of farm)
Farmhand (person who did general farmwork for wages; may be a family member)
Farm helper (household relative who worked on family farm without pay)
Farm manager (person who was hired to manage a farm for someone else)

Inadequate

Farmworker (continued)

Fireman

Foreman (craft or activity involved should be specified)

Heavy equipment operator (type of equipment should be specified)

Helper

Investigator

*Laborer

Layout worker

Adequate

Farm service worker (worker who went from farm to farm to harvest, reap, or do similar operations on contract basis usually using own equipment)

Farm supervisor (person hired to supervise a group of farmhands)

Fruit picker (person hired to do a particular job)

Migratory farmhand (person who moved from place to place to assist in planting and harvesting of crops)

Locomotive fireman

City fireman (city fire department)

Kiln fireman

Stationary fireman

Fire boss

Carpenter foreman

Truck driver foreman

Ranch foreman

Clam-shovel operator

Derrick operator

Monorail crane operator

Dragline operator

Euclid operator

Baker's helper

Carpenter's helper

Janitor's helper

Insurance claim investigator

Income tax investigator

Financial examiner

Detective

Social welfare investigator

Sweeper

Cleaning person

Baggage porter

Janitor

Stevedore

Window washer

Car cleaner

Section head

Handtruck laborer

Pattern maker

Sheet-metal worker

Composer

Commercial artist

Structural steelworker

Draftsperson

Coppersmith

Inadequate

*Maintenance worker

*Mechanic

*Nurse

Office clerk,
Office work,
Office worker

Program specialist

Programmer

Ranch worker (see Farmworker)

Research (field of research should be specified; "associate" or "assistant" should be included if part of title)

Sales worker

Adequate

Groundskeeper

Janitor

Carpenter

Electrician

Auto engine mechanic

Auto transmission mechanic

Airplane mechanic

Elevator mechanic

Office machine mechanic

Auto brake mechanic

Registered nurse

Nurse-midwife

Practical nurse

Nurse's aide

Student nurse

Nurse practitioner

Typist

Secretary

Receptionist

Comptometer operator

File clerk

Bookkeeper

Physician's assistant

Program scheduler

Data processing systems supervisor

Metal-flow coordinator

Computer programmer

Electronic data programmer

Radio or TV program director

Production planner

Rancher

Ranch hand

Research physicist

Research chemist

Research mathematician

Research biologist

Research associate chemist

Assistant research physicist

Research associate geologist

Advertising sales

Insurance sales

Bond sales

Canvasser

Driver—sales (route selling)

Fruit peddler

Newspaper sales

Inadequate

*Scientist

Shipping department

*Supervisor

Systems analyst

Teacher (occupation for a teacher should be reported at the level taught; subject should be included for those who taught above the elementary level)

Technician

Tester

Trucker

Works in stock room, office, etc. (names of departments or place of work are unsatisfactory)

Adequate

Political scientist

Physicist

Sociologist

Home economist

Oceanographer

Soil scientist

Shipping and receiving clerk

Crater

Order picker

Typist

Parcel wrapper

Typing supervisor

Chief bookkeeper

Shop steward

Kitchen supervisor

Head buyer

Cutting and sewing supervisor

Sales director

Route supervisor

Computer systems analyst

Contract coordinator—manufacturing

Production planner

Preschool teacher

Kindergarten teacher

Elementary school teacher

High school English teacher

College professor (mathematics)

Medical laboratory technician

Dental laboratory technician

X-ray technician

Cement tester

Instrument tester

Engine tester

Battery tester

Truck driver

Trucking contractor

Electric trucker

Hand trucker

Shipping clerk

Filing clerk

Truck loader

Part IV—Completing the business/industry item

There should be an entry in the space for “Kind of business/industry” if an occupation is reported. Only terms that clearly and specifically describe the kind of business/industry at the location where the decedent was employed should be used. The terms used should indicate both a general and a specific function; for example, copper mine, fountain pen manufacturer, wholesale grocery, retail bookstore, road construction, shoe repair service. Words such as mine, manufacturer, wholesale, retail, construction, and repair service show the general function. Words such as copper, fountain pen, grocery, bookstore, road, and shoe further identify the industry by giving the product.

Company names should not be used. Many large companies, such as Du Pont and U.S. Steel, are engaged in several types of businesses or industries. For small companies, because the nature of the business is only known locally, usually no useful information can be obtained from the company name.

Asking the appropriate questions of the respondent is very important. For example, if the respondent reports that the decedent worked for a metal furniture company, he or she should be asked, “Do they manufacture or do they just sell metal furniture?” If the response is that they just sell, then ask “Do they sell to other stores (wholesale) or to individuals (retail)?” Accordingly, the possible entries would be “metal furniture manufacturer,” “furniture wholesaler,” or “furniture retailer.” Where possible, always specify for furniture manufacturers the major material used, such as wood, metal, plastic, and so forth.

Reporting government agencies

The name of the government agency is adequate when the activity of the agency is absolutely clear; for example, U.S. Bureau of the Census, city fire department. If the government agency is responsible for several activities, it would be necessary to report that information along with the name of the agency. For example, for a person who had been employed by a city department of public works, an additional clarifying entry might be one of the following—“street repair,” “garbage collection,” “sewage disposal,” or “water supply.” The entry should also clearly state the level of government; for example, Federal, State, county, and so forth.

Distinguishing among manufacturing, wholesaling, retailing, and service establishments

Even though a manufacturing plant sells its products in large quantities to other manufacturers, wholesalers, or retailers, it should not be reported as a wholesale company. It is a manufacturing company. A wholesale company buys, rather than makes, products in large quantities for resale to other retailers. A retailer sells primarily to individual users. Service establishments, such as hotels, laundries, cleaning shops, advertising agencies, and automobile repair shops, provide services to individuals and organizations. For example, an establishment where hardware is made is a hardware manufacturing company even though there is a sales office in the factory. An establishment that buys hardware in large quantities for resale to retailers is a wholesale hardware company.

Businesses located in person's own home

Some people conduct their businesses in their own homes. These businesses should be reported in the same manner as regular business establishments; for example, dressmaking shop, lending library, cabinetmaking shop, radio repair shop, physician's office, and so forth.

Persons who do not work at one specific location

Some people's work may have been done on the spot rather than in a specific store, factory, or office. In these cases, report the kind of organization for which they worked. For example, among those who normally work at different locations at different times are census interviewers, building painters, and refrigeration mechanics; their industry might be U.S. Bureau of the Census, building contractor, or refrigeration repair service.

Domestic and other private household workers

If the name of an individual is given as the name of the employer, ask whether the person worked at a place of business or in a private home. The proper business/industry entry for a domestic worker who was employed in the home of another person is "Someone else's home." For a person who cleaned offices located in private homes, such as doctor or lawyer, the proper entry would be "doctor's office," "lawyer's office," and so forth.

Firms with more than one business

Some firms are engaged in more than one business or industrial activity. If the activities are carried on in separate places, describe the business in which the person actually worked. For example, the business/industry of a chemist who worked in a papermill operated by the Eastman Kodak Company should be reported as “papermill,” not camera factory. Where two or more activities are carried on in the same place, report the major business/industry of the establishment. For example, the industry for a miner who worked in a coal mine operated by the U.S. Steel Corporation should be reported as “coal mine,” not steel mill.

For some industries, the common titles are not adequate. The following are examples of industries that require special caution in reporting. Included in this listing are examples of entries considered inadequate as well as the correct or adequate listing. Note that the listing of adequate titles does not include all acceptable titles.

Inadequate

Agency

Aircraft components,
Aircraft parts

Auto or automobile components,
Auto or automobile parts

Bakery

Box factory

City or city government

Adequate

Collection agency
Advertising agency
Real estate agency
Employment agency
Travel agency
Insurance agency

Airplane engine parts factory
Propeller manufacturing
Electronic instruments factory
Wholesale aircraft parts

Auto clutch manufacturing
Wholesale auto accessories
Auto tire manufacturing
Retail sales and installation of mufflers
Battery factory

Bakery plant (makes and sells to wholesalers,
retail stores, restaurants)
Wholesale bakery (buys from manufacturer and
sells to grocers, restaurants, etc.)
Retail bakery (sells only on premises to
private individuals)

Paper box factory
Wooden box factory
Metal box factory

City street repair department
City board of health
City board of education

Inadequate

Club, private

Coal company

County or county government

Credit company

Dairy

Discount house,
Discount store

Electrical parts manufacturing

Engineering company

Express company

Factory, mill, or plant

Foundry

Adequate

Golf club
Fraternal club
Nightclub
Residence club

Coal mine
Retail coal yard
Wholesale coal

County recreation department
County board of education

Credit rating bureau
Loan company
Credit clothing company

Dairy farm
Dairy depot
Dairy bar
Wholesale dairy products
Retail dairy products
Dairy products manufacturing

Retail drug store
Retail electrical appliances
Retail general merchandise
Retail clothing store

Electronic tube factory
Memory core manufacturing
Transistor factory
Tape reader manufacturing

Civil engineering consultants
General contracting
Wholesale hearing equipment
Construction machinery factory

Motor freight
Railway express agency
Railroad car rental (for Union Tank Car Co.,
etc.)
Armored car service

Steel rolling mill
Hardware factory
Aircraft factory
Flour mill
Hosiery mill
Commercial printing plant
Cotton cloth mill

Iron foundry
Brass foundry
Aluminum foundry

Inadequate

Freight company

Fur company

Laundry

Lumber company

Manufacturer's agent (product sold
should be specified)

Mine

Nylon factory

Office

Adequate

Motor freight

Air freight

Railway freight

Water transportation

Fur dressing plant

Fur garment factory

Retail fur store

Wholesale fur

Fur repair shop

Own home laundry (for a person who
laundered for pay in own home)

Laundering for private family (for person who
worked in the home of a private family)

Commercial laundry (for person who
worked in a steam laundry, hand laundry,
or similar establishment)

Sawmill

Retail lumberyard

Planing mill

Logging camp

Wholesale lumber

Jewelry manufacturer's representative

Lumber manufacturer's agent

Electric appliance manufacturer's
representative

Chemical manufacturer's agent

Coal mine

Gold mine

Bauxite mine

Iron mine

Copper mine

Lead mine

Marble quarry

Sand and gravel pit

Nylon chemical factory (where chemicals
are made into fibers)

Nylon textile mill (where fibers are made
into yarn or woven into cloth)

Women's nylon hosiery factory (where yarn is
made into hosiery)

Dentist's office

Physician's office

Public stenographer's office

Inadequate

Oil industry

Packing house

Pipeline

Plastics factory

Public utility (all services should be specified, such as gas and electric utility, or electric and water utility)

Railroad car shop

Repair shop

Research

Adequate

Oil field drilling
Petroleum refinery
Retail gasoline station
Petroleum pipeline
Wholesale oil distributor
Retail fuel oil

Meat packing plant
Fruit canner
Fruit packing shed (wholesale packers and shippers)

Natural gas pipeline
Gasoline pipeline
Petroleum pipeline
Pipeline construction

Plastic materials factory (where plastic materials are made)
Plastic products plant (where articles are manufactured from plastic materials)

Electric light and power utility
Gas utility
Telephone
Water supply utility

Railroad car factory
Diesel railroad repair shop
Locomotive manufacturing plant

Shoe repair shop
Television repair shop
Radio repair shop
Blacksmith shop
Welding shop
Auto repair shop
Machine repair shop

Permanent-press dresses (product of company for which research was done)
Brandeis University (name of university where research was done for its own use)
St. Elizabeth's Hospital (name of hospital at which medical research was done for its own use)
Commercial research (if research is the main service of the company)
Brookings Institution (name of the nonprofit organization)

Inadequate

School (public and private schools, including parochial, must be distinguished, and the highest level of instruction should be identified, such as junior college or senior high school)

Tailor shop

Terminal

Textile mill

Transportation company

Water company

Well

Adequate

City elementary school
Private kindergarten
Private college
State university

Dry cleaning shop (provides valet service)
Custom tailor shop (makes clothes to customer's order)
Men's rental clothing store

Bus terminal
Railroad terminal
Boat terminal
Airport terminal

Cotton cloth mill
Woolen cloth mill
Cotton yarn mill
Nylon thread mill

Motor trucking
Moving and storage
Water transportation
Air transportation
Airline
Taxicab service
Subway
Elevated railway
Railroad
Petroleum pipeline
Car loading service

Water supply
Irrigation systems
Water filtration plant

Oil field drilling
Oil well drilling
Salt well drilling
Water well drilling

Part V—Inadequate entries most frequently reported in the occupation and business/industry items

1. “Civil Service/government” entered in occupation.

Specify: Clerical
Warehouseman
Official
Statistician

2. “Electronics” entered in occupation or business/industry.

Occupation item

Specify: Electronics salesperson
Electronic repairman

Business/Industry item

Specify: Electronics,
Electronics, Communication equipment } Manufacturing
Electronics, Computer equipment } Wholesale
or
Retail

3. “Odd jobs,” “various jobs,” and so forth, reported as usual occupation or kind of business/industry should be specified as *type* of job:

Construction job
Yardwork
Repair work (or all of the above)

4. Union/Local No. reported as usual occupation or kind of business/industry requires clarification.

Was decedent a paid union official?
What kind of workers does Local No. represent?

Examples: Dock workers
Tobacco workers
Plumbers
Electricians
Hospital workers

Part VI—Summary

Items to check in filling out occupation and business/industry

1. All death certificates for persons 14 years of age or older must have entries for both “decedent’s usual occupation” and “kind of business/industry.”
2. Do not use “retired.” If the decedent had retired from his or her usual occupation, the “usual occupation” and “business/industry” of the decedent must be specified.
3. “Self-employed” by itself is incomplete. The kind of work must be determined. The entry for business/industry should include both the proper business/industry and the entry “Self-employed.”
4. Give the kind of industry, not the company name.
5. In the case of an adult woman, be certain to ask if she worked outside the home. If the decedent was a housewife or homemaker and also worked outside her own home during most of her working life, enter the usual occupation and business/industry worked outside the home. If the decedent was a housewife or homemaker and worked only in her own home, enter “Housewife” or “Homemaker” for occupation and “Own home” for business/industry. If the decedent was a househusband, follow the same procedures as listed for a housewife.

If the decedent was a homemaker and worked in someone else’s home during most of his or her working life, enter “Homemaker” for occupation and “Someone else’s home” for business/industry.

6. Occupations such as the following are incomplete and must be qualified:

Accounting	Caretaker or custodian	Data processing
Accounting work	Claims adjuster	Doctor
Adjuster	Clerk	Engineer
Agent	Consultant	Entertainer
Analyst	Contractor	Equipment operator
Broker	Counselor	Factory worker

Farmworker	Nurse	Shipping department
Fireman	Office clerk	Supervisor
Foreman	Office worker	Systems analyst
Heavy equipment operator	Office work	Teacher
Helper	Program specialist	Technician
Investigator	Programmer	Tester
Laborer	Ranch worker	Trucker
Layout worker	Research	Works in stock room, office, etc.
Maintenance worker	Sales worker	
Mechanic	Scientist	

See part III for examples of adequate entries for these and other occupations. If necessary, the respondent should be questioned further so that more complete information can be entered.

7. Industries such as the following are inadequate:

Agency	Laundry
Aircraft components	Lumber company
Aircraft parts	Manufacturer's agent
Auto or automobile components	Mine
Auto or automobile parts	Nylon factory
Bakery	Office
Box factory	Oil industry
City or city government	Packing house
Club, private	Pipeline
Coal company	Plastics factory
County or county government	Public utility
Credit company	Railroad car shop
Dairy	Repair shop
Discount house	Research
Discount store	School
Electrical parts manufacturing	Tailor shop
Engineering company	Terminal
Express company	Textile mill
Factory, mill, or plant	Transportation company
Foundry	Water company
Freight company	Well
Fur company	

See part IV for examples of adequate entries for these and other industries. If necessary, the respondent should be questioned further so that more complete information can be entered.

8. See part II for specific questions to help clarify the occupation and business or industry of a decedent.

Illustrations of acceptable entries for both occupation and industry

The following examples, in addition to those previously given, illustrate the method for reporting some of the more common occupations and industries.

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Business/industry</i>
Attorney	Self-employed
Attorney	Legal aid society
Auditor	Savings and loan
Bookkeeper	Wholesale drugs
Camera operator	Television station
Carpenter	Building construction
Carpet installer	Retail carpet sales and installation company
Cashier	Bank
Chaplain	State prison
Chauffeur	City fire department
Chauffeur	Taxicab company
Chemist	Plastic film manufacturing
Computer programmer	Life insurance company
Delivery Driver	Wholesale bakery
Dressmaker	Dressmaking shop
Electrician	Electric light and power company
Field examiner	Veterans Administration (U.S. Government)
Flight engineer	Aircraft company (manufacturing, retail, or wholesale)
Geologist	Petroleum exploration
Insurance agent	Life insurance company
Janitor	City office building
Judge	County court
Mechanic, auto	Engine repair shop
Medical doctor	Board of health (State Government)
Miner	Coal mine
Motor operator (retired)	Urban transit system
Owner (Embalmer and Manager)	Funeral home
Owner/Manager	Retail grocery store
Pilot	Commercial airline
Plant manager	Petroleum refinery
President	Business college
Printer (Apprentice)	Printing shop
Production cost estimator	Auto body repair shop
Professor (English)	College
Quarry worker	Marble quarry
Radio operator	College radio station
Registered nurse	Hospital

Occupation

Senator
Stationary firefighter
Student
Supervisor (Weaving)
Supervisor (Office)
Teamster (Tractor Driver)
Weaver

Business/industry

U.S. Congress
Steel mill
Junior college
Cotton cloth mill
Health and accident insurance company
Logging camp
Cotton cloth mill

These examples of acceptable entries of occupation and business/industry contain titles developed by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for proper classification of the labor force. These are provided as a guide for proper reporting.

Appendixes

A. The U.S. Standard Certificate of Death

B. The Vital Statistics Registration System in the United States

Appendix A

The U.S. Standard Certificate of Death

TYPE-PRINT IN PERMANENT BLACK INK FOR INSTRUCTIONS FOR OTHER SIDE AND HANDBOOK		U.S. STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF DEATH				STATE FILE NUMBER	
LOCAL FILE NUMBER		DECEDENT'S NAME (First, Middle, Last)		2. SEX	3. DATE OF DEATH (Month, Day, Year)		
		John Leonard Palmer		Male	June 20, 1989		
4. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER		5a. AGE—Last Birthday (Years)	5b. UNDER 1 YEAR (Months)	5c. UNDER 1 DAY (Hours)	6. DATE OF BIRTH (Month, Day, Year)	7. BIRTHPLACE (City and State or Foreign Country)	
123-45-6789		78			April 25, 1911	San Francisco, CA	
8. WAS DECEDENT EVER IN U.S. ARMED FORCES? (Yes or no)		9a. PLACE OF DEATH (Check only one. See instructions on other side)					
Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> Hospital <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inpatient <input type="checkbox"/> ER/Outpatient <input type="checkbox"/> DDA <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing Home <input type="checkbox"/> Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)					
9b. FACILITY NAME (If not institution, give street and number)		9c. CITY, TOWN, OR LOCATION OF DEATH		9d. COUNTY OF DEATH			
Mountain Memorial Hospital		Frederick		Frederick			
10. MARITAL STATUS—Married (Never Married, Widowed, Divorced (Specify))		11. SURVIVING SPOUSE (If wife, give maiden name)		12a. DECEDENT'S USUAL OCCUPATION (Give kind of work done during past of working life (Do not use retired))		12b. KIND OF BUSINESS/INDUSTRY	
Married		Sheila Marie Somner		Public Accountant		Self-employed	
13a. RESIDENCE—STATE		13b. COUNTY	13c. CITY, TOWN, OR LOCATION	13d. STREET AND NUMBER			
Maryland		Frederick	Thurmont	245 Lone View Road			
13a. INSIDE CITY (ZIP CODE (LIMITS) (Yes or no))		14. WAS DECEDENT OF HISPANIC ORIGIN? (Specify No or Yes—If yes, specify Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc.)		15. RACE—American Indian, Black, White, etc. (Specify)	16. DECEDENT'S EDUCATION (Specify only highest grade completed) Elementary/Secondary (0-12) College (1-4 or 5+)		
No		20212		White	4		
17. FATHER'S NAME (First, Middle, Last)		18. MOTHER'S NAME (First, Middle, Maiden Surname)					
Stanley Leonard Palmer		Lorraine Ellen Russell					
19a. INFORMANT'S NAME (Type/Print)		19b. MAILING ADDRESS (Street and Number or Rural Route Number, City or Town, State, Zip Code)					
Sheila Marie Palmer		245 Lone View Road, Thurmont, MD 20212					
20a. METHOD OF DISPOSITION		20b. PLACE OF DISPOSITION (Name of cemetery, crematory, or other place)		20c. LOCATION—City or Town, State			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Burial <input type="checkbox"/> Cremation <input type="checkbox"/> Removal from State <input type="checkbox"/> Donation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)		Wesley Memorial Cemetery		Frederick, MD			
21a. SIGNATURE OF FUNERAL SERVICE LICENSEE OR PERSON ACTING AS SUCH		21b. LICENSE NUMBER (of Licensee)	22. NAME AND ADDRESS OF FACILITY (Specify only highest grade completed)				
<i>Robert G. Boone</i>		2569114	Boone and Sons Funeral Home 475 E. Main St., Frederick, MD 20216				
23a. TIME OF DEATH		23b. DATE PRONOUNCED DEATH (Month, Day, Year)		23c. LICENSE NUMBER	23d. DATE SIGNED (Month, Day, Year)		
3:05 AM		June 20, 1989		624998075	June 20, 1989		
24. TIME OF DEATH		25. DATE PRONOUNCED DEATH (Month, Day, Year)		26. WAS CASE REFERRED TO MEDICAL EXAMINER/CORONER? (Yes or no)			
3:05 AM		June 20, 1989		No			
27. PART I. Enter the diseases, injuries, or complications that caused the death. Do not enter the mode of dying, such as cardiac or respiratory arrest, shock, or heart failure. List only one cause on each line. IMMEDIATE CAUSE (Final disease or condition resulting in death)		DUE TO (OR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF):				Approximate Interval Between Onset and Death	
Pulmonary Embolism						Minutes	
DUE TO (OR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF):		DUE TO (OR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF):				4 days	
Congestive Heart Failure		DUE TO (OR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF):				7 days	
Acute Myocardial Infarction		DUE TO (OR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF):				8 years	
Chronic Ischemic Heart Disease							
PART II. Other significant conditions contributing to death but not resulting in the underlying cause given in Part I		28a. WAS AN AUTOPSY PERFORMED? (Yes or no)		28b. WERE AUTOPSY FINDINGS AVAILABLE PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF CAUSE OF DEATH? (Yes or no)			
Diabetes mellitus, Hypertension		No		No			
29. MANNER OF DEATH		30a. DATE OF INJURY (Month, Day, Year)	30b. TIME OF INJURY	30c. INJURY AT WORK? (Yes or no)	30d. DESCRIBE HOW INJURY OCCURRED		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural <input type="checkbox"/> Pending investigation <input type="checkbox"/> Accident <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide <input type="checkbox"/> Could not be determined <input type="checkbox"/> Homicide			M				
31a. CERTIFIER (Check only one)		30a. PLACE OF INJURY—At home, farm, street, factory, office, building, etc. (Specify)		30b. LOCATION (Street and Number or Rural Route Number, City or Town, State)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CERTIFYING PHYSICIAN (Physician certifying cause of death when another physician has pronounced death and completed item 23) To the best of my knowledge, death occurred due to the cause(s) and manner as stated. <input type="checkbox"/> PRONOUNCING AND CERTIFYING PHYSICIAN (Physician both pronouncing death and certifying cause of death) To the best of my knowledge, death occurred at the time, date, and place, and due to the cause(s) and manner as stated. <input type="checkbox"/> MEDICAL EXAMINER/CORONER On the basis of examination and/or investigation, in my opinion, death occurred at the time, date, and place, and due to the cause(s) and manner as stated.							
31b. SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF CERTIFIER		31c. LICENSE NUMBER	31d. DATE SIGNED (Month, Day, Year)				
<i>Edmund M. Stone, M.D.</i>		1299654	June 22, 1989				
32. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO COMPLETED CAUSE OF DEATH (ITEM 27) (Type/Print)		33. REGISTRAR'S SIGNATURE		34. DATE FILED (Month, Day, Year)			
Edmund Matthew Stone, M.D. 23 Porter Drive Frederick, MD 29885		<i>Lori T. Burrette</i>		June 23, 1989			

Appendix B

The Vital Statistics Registration System in the United States

The registration of births, deaths, fetal deaths, and other vital events² in the United States is a State and local function. The civil laws of every State provide for a continuous, permanent, and compulsory vital registration system. Each system depends to a very great extent on the conscientious efforts of the physicians, hospital personnel, funeral directors, coroners, and medical examiners in preparing or certifying information needed to complete the original records. For a graphic presentation of the registration system, see the accompanying chart, "The Vital Statistics Registration System in the United States."

Most States are divided geographically into local registration districts or units to facilitate the collection of vital records. A district may be a township, village, town, city, county, or other geographic area or a combination of two or more of these areas. In some States, however, the law provides that records of birth, death, and/or fetal death be sent directly from the reporting source (hospital, physician, or funeral director) to the State vital statistics office. In this system, functions normally performed by a local registration official are assumed by the staff of the State office.

In States with a local registrar system, the local registrar collects the records of events occurring in his or her area and transmits them to the State vital statistics office. The local registrar is required to see that a complete certificate is filed for each event occurring in that district. In many States this official also has the duty of issuing burial-transit permits to authorize the disposition of dead human bodies. In many States this official is also required to keep a file of all events occurring within his or her district and, if authorized by State law and subject to the restrictions on issuance of copies as specified by the law, may be permitted to issue copies of these records.

The State vital statistics office inspects each record for promptness of filing, completeness, and accuracy of information; queries for missing or inconsistent information; numbers the records; prepares indexes; processes the records; and stores

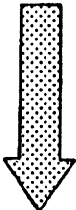
²Vital events are defined as live births, deaths, fetal deaths, marriages, divorces, and induced terminations of pregnancy, together with any change in civil status which may occur during an individual's lifetime.

the documents for permanent reference and safekeeping. Statistical information from the records is tabulated for use by State and local health departments, other governmental agencies, and various private and voluntary organizations. The data are used to evaluate health problems and to plan programs and services for the public. An important function of the State office is to issue certified copies of the certificates to individuals in need of such records and to verify the facts of birth and death for agencies requiring legal evidence of such facts.

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) in the Public Health Service is vested with the authority for administering vital statistics functions at the national level. Data tapes of information derived from individual records registered in the State offices—or, in a few cases, copies of the individual records themselves—are transmitted to NCHS. From these data or copies, monthly, annual, and special statistical reports are prepared for the United States as a whole and for the component parts—cities, counties, States, and regions—by various characteristics such as sex, race, and cause of death. The statistics are essential in the fields of social welfare, public health, and demography. They are also used for various administrative purposes, in both business and government. NCHS serves as a focal point, exercising leadership in establishing uniform practices through model laws, standard certificate forms, handbooks, and other instructional materials for the continued improvement of the vital statistics system in the United States.

The Vital Statistics Registration System in the United States

The Vital Statistics Registration System in the United States

<i>Responsible Person or Agency</i>	<i>Birth Certificate</i>	<i>Death Certificate</i>	<i>Fetal Death Report (Stillbirth)</i>
Hospital authority	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completes entire certificate in consultation with parent(s). 2. Files certificate with local office or State office per State law. 	<p>When death occurs in hospital, may initiate preparation of certificate: Completes information on name, date, and place of death; obtains certification of cause of death from physician; and gives certificate to funeral director.</p> <p>NOTE: If the attending physician is unavailable to certify to the cause of death, some States allow a hospital physician to certify to only the fact and time of death. With legal pronouncement of the death and permission of the attending physician, the body can then be released to the funeral director. The attending physician still must complete the cause-of-death section prior to final disposition of the body.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completes entire report in consultation with parent(s). 2. Obtains cause of fetal death and other medical and health information from physician. 3. Obtains authorization for final disposition of fetus. 4. Files report with local office or State office per State law.
Funeral director		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Obtains personal facts about decedent and completes certificate. 2. Obtains certification of cause of death from attending physician or medical examiner or coroner. 3. Obtains authorization for final disposition per State law. 4. Files certificate with local office or State office per State law. 	<p>If fetus is to be buried, the funeral director is responsible for obtaining authorization for final disposition.</p> <p>NOTE: In some States the funeral director, or person acting as such, is responsible for all duties shown above under hospital authority.</p>
Physician or other professional attendant	For inhospital birth, verifies accuracy of medical information and signs certificate. For out-of-hospital birth, duties are same as those for hospital authority, shown above.	Completes certification of cause of death and signs certificate.	Provides cause of fetal death and other medical and health information.

<p>Local office* (may be local registrar or city or county health department)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Verifies completeness and accuracy of certificate and queries incomplete or inconsistent certificates. 2. If authorized by State law, makes copy or index for local use. 3. Sends certificates to State registrar. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Verifies completeness and accuracy of certificate and queries incomplete or inconsistent certificates. 2. If authorized by State law, makes copy or index for local use. 3. If authorized by State law, issues authorization for final disposition on receipt of completed certificate. 4. Sends certificates to State registrar. 	<p>If State law requires routing of fetal death reports through local office, the local office performs the same functions as shown for the death certificate.</p>
<p>City and county health departments use data derived from these records in allocating medical and nursing services, following up on infectious diseases, planning programs, measuring effectiveness of services, and conducting research studies.</p>			
<p>State registrar, office of vital statistics</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Queries incomplete or inconsistent information. 2. Maintains files for permanent reference and is the source of certified copies. 3. Develops vital statistics for use in planning, evaluating, and administering State and local health activities and for research studies. 4. Compiles health-related statistics for State and civil divisions of State for use of the health department and other agencies and groups interested in the fields of medical science, public health, demography, and social welfare. 5. Sends data derived from records or copies of records to the National Center for Health Statistics. 		
<p>Public Health Service, National Center for Health Statistics</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepares and publishes national statistics of births, deaths, and fetal deaths; constructs the official U.S. life tables and related actuarial tables. 2. Conducts health and social-research studies based on vital records and on sampling surveys linked to records. 3. Conducts research and methodological studies in vital statistics methods, including the technical, administrative, and legal aspects of vital records registration and administration. 4. Maintains a continuing technical assistance program to improve the quality and usefulness of vital statistics. 		

* Some States do not have local vital registration offices. In these States, the certificates or reports are transmitted directly to the State office of vital statistics.