

9.6 Verification of Vital Statistics

Effective 4/10/90 – Updated 2002

PURPOSE

Verification of vital statistics is necessary to assure that the information on legal documents is correct. Verified full names, birthplaces, and dates of children named on petitions more clearly identify and separate these individuals from others of similar name. Verified marriages, divorces, and deaths more clearly establish family relationships, especially for purposes of service.

Using unverified vital statistics on petitions or other legal documents (e.g., orders or motions) increases the likelihood of additional legal steps, e.g., motions to amend and/or service of corrected or new documents.

PRACTICE STANDARDS

1. Efforts to verify vital statistics must be made for all petitions.
2. Verifications of all vital statistics for child protective families should be commenced early on when court action is likely:
 - a. Births
 - b. Marriages
 - c. Divorces
 - d. Deaths

PROCEDURES

1. Written verification should be obtained whenever practical from official public vital records, via the Department's Division of Vital Records, utilizing proper forms, or its out of state counterpart.
2. Out of state verification is obtained by writing a letter to the out of state vital records division (see American Public Welfare Association annual directory for addresses and costs). Contact Regional Administration about procedures to obtain a check payable to the out-of-state vital records division for the costs of verification. Enclose the check with the letter.
3. Verification may also be obtained from the Income Maintenance verification form (SWIM-021) in Income Maintenance files.
4. Oral verifications may be obtained from Vital Records only in emergencies, or from cooperative town offices. Staff will:
 - a. Identify themselves, their function and region.

- b. State that verification is necessary to commence emergency child protective proceedings.
- 5. If verifications could not be completed prior to commencing a petition, and verification later establishes that there is error on the petition or other legal documents, contact the Assistant Attorney General for advice.

Options include filing a Motion to Amend or filing a new petition, which may require formal service to all parties.

- 6. Verifications section on the back of the Legal Routing Form (SWSS-014) which serves as a routing sheet for Child Protective Services legal documents will be completed.
- 7. See Legal Billing subsection X.