

House Bill 2420 Work Group Report:

Recommendations for Equitable Access to Birth and Death Records



Contents

Executive summary	3
Introduction	5
Legislative direction	5
Background	6
Overview of OHA's Process	10
Hein Consulting Group Role and Report	11
The HB 2420 Work Group	13
Work Group Recommendations	17
Appendix	22
Summary of Meetings by Month	22

Executive summary

In 2023, the Oregon legislature passed House Bill 2420, directing the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to convene a work group to propose options for equitable access to birth and death certificates throughout the state and equitable revenue to maintain and improve the state and county vital records systems.

OHA convened a work group to represent a variety of partners invested in the vital records system, with county representatives provided by the Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials (CLHO). As required by HB 2420, the work group brought together representatives of county vital records offices, funeral home directors, and other partners and community members.

Work group facilitation and report development was led by Hein Consulting Group (HCG), an independent consulting firm. The OHA team selected Hein Consulting Group (HCG) from among a pool of equity-focused contractors for this purpose.

Using Interest-Based Problem-Solving, HCG guided the work group through an information gathering and collaborative process before the work group proposed and selected options. The HB 2420 Work Group developed 14 recommendations, guided by the language of House Bill 2420 and expanded fees to include any type of revenue to create five categories.

The Problem: How to ensure equitable access to birth and death records for all residents of Oregon and equitable revenue to maintain and improve the county and state vital records system.

Equity Statement: The recommendations advance equity for the people in Oregon by proposing options to ensure equitable access to birth and death certificates throughout the state and equitable revenue to maintain and improve the state and county vital records systems.

Recommendations: The HB 2420 Work Group recommends the following options:

1	Equitable access to birth certificates throughout the state
1.1	Authorize counties to be able to issue birth certificates for 1 year from the date of the event for births that occurred in their county.
1.2	Require birth facilities and midwives who submit birth records to scan and attach in the Oregon Vital Events Registration System (OVERS) the Acknowledgment of Paternity (AOP) and birth worksheet and authorize the state to amend records based solely on these documents.

2	Equitable access to death certificates throughout the state
2.1	Authorize counties to be able to issue death certificates for 1 year from the date of the event for deaths that occurred in their county.
2.2	Establish law requiring all death records for deaths that occur in Oregon be completed in OVERS, with some allowance for the State Registrar to determine exceptions, e.g., home burial.
3	Equitable access to the vital records system throughout the state
3.1	Establish and enforce penalties (such as progressively increasing fines or reporting to licensing board) for facilities, medical certifiers, or funeral directors who fail to meet the law for required timeliness of vital record submission.
3.2	Mandate automatic registration in OVERS when medical practitioners earn their medical licenses or are newly hired.
3.3	Evaluate current law to ensure it is clear who is ultimately responsible if a record is not certified.
4	Equitable revenue to improve the state and county vital records system
4.1	Ask the legislature for funds to support digitizing older vital records.
4.2	Ask the legislature for funds to support vital records modernization projects as well as additional funding for future growth of the system.
5	Equitable revenue to maintain the state and county vital records system
5.1	Establish fee sharing between the counties and the state.
5.2	Increase fees to ensure the viability of the vital records system through 2034.
5.3	Increase the amount that other government agencies pay for services.
5.4	Ask for general funds to cover the revenue that the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) Office of Children’s Advocates generates from the registration and issuance of birth records under ORS 417.825 that is a cost to the state and the counties.
5.5	Establish an annual prorated fee to be paid by the counties to maintain the vital records and statistics system that accounts for order volume and/or county size.

[A copy of this report and all associated materials can be found online here.](#)

Introduction

Legislative direction

[House Bill 2420](#) was passed by the House on April 10, 2023, and was passed by the Senate on June 21, 2023. The Bill was sponsored by Representative Owens, Senator Findley and Representative Dexter at the request of Beverly LaFollette.

It reads:

“Relating to vital records; and declaring an emergency. Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. (1) The Oregon Health Authority shall designate a work group comprised of representatives of county vital records offices, funeral directors, other partners and community members to propose options for equitable access to birth and death certificates throughout the state and equitable fee revenue to maintain and improve the state and county vital records system.

(2) The authority shall report to an interim committee of the Legislative Assembly related to vital records on the options proposed by the work group no later than January 1, 2025.

SECTION 2. Section 1 of this 2023 Act is repealed on January 2, 2025.

SECTION 3. This 2023 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2023 Act takes effect on its passage.”

Background

Oregon law ([ORS 432](#)) requires all vital events such as birth, death, marriage and divorce to be permanently recorded and registered. Access and changes to these records are strictly regulated, as they are confidential and the primary documents used to establish a person's legal identity. Without these records, Oregonians would be unable to document vital events that define their lives. For example, a birth certificate is a legal document used to establish identity. It shows who you are, when and where you were born, and who your legal parents are. You need a birth certificate to enroll a child in school, to get a Social Security card, a driver's license, a job, or government benefits or to apply for a passport. A death certificate is needed to settle the affairs of your loved one. It has information about the person who died and the cause of their death. Insurance companies, the Social Security Administration and other agencies and entities require a death certificate as proof of death.

Information from vital records is foundational for understanding the health of a population. Vital statistics data allow the examination of health disparities by race, ethnicity, age, marital status, gender and education. Without these statistics, communities and government agencies would be unable to see themselves in our population data.

Oregon has been collecting vital records since 1903. Records are stored on paper, microfilm or electronically depending on the type of record and when it was created. Electronic registration of all birth records began in 2008, death records in 2006 and marriages records in 2016.

State

The Center for Health Statistics (CHS) is the state-level vital records office that maintains, operates and advances the system of vital records and statistics throughout the state in cooperation with appropriate units of county government. It is housed in the Public Health Division of the Oregon Health Authority. It is a mission critical program for the state of Oregon.

CHS responsibilities include:

- Registering vital records (the official creation of a vital record after it has been deemed legally sufficient). These records include births, deaths, marriages, divorce, induced termination of pregnancies and fetal deaths.

- Amending vital records (evaluating requested changes to records to meet legal requirements). Amendments include paternity establishment, adoptions, court ordered name changes, delayed filing of births, changes to birth records to reflect gender identity, and corrections to minor errors.
- Issuing certificates (also known as certification, this is providing copies of records on secure certificate paper to those who are eligible). Certificates for any vital record back to 1903 are issued if eligibility and identity of the person ordering the certificate is established as required in law. Orders are received via mail, internet, phone and in-person.
- Providing and analyzing foundational statistics used by epidemiologists, public health programs, researchers, and at the community at the local, state and national level.
- Developing and maintaining the mission critical electronic system, the Oregon Vital Events Registration System (OVERS). It is a secure web-based environment that supports robust, stable and flexible operations for all vital records and statistics operation in the state from the creation of vital records, changes to those records, to the production of certified copies and statistical reporting.
- Supporting partners and communities by providing training, publishing monthly newsletters, completing triennial reviews, and sharing information on all new laws, policies and procedures related to vital records. County vital records offices are key partners. Other partners include hospitals, birthing centers, funeral directors, doctors, Medical Examiners, County Clerks and Circuit courts.

CHS is primarily funded by the vital records fees for their services (60%). Federal funds comprise 10% of CHS' funding and the remaining 30% comes from Oregon Government Agencies, such as the Division of Child Support or Oregon Department of Human Services, that use vital records to conduct their business. CHS does not receive direct General Fund investments for any operations. No funds are provided by the County Vital Records offices to support the vital records system that is needed to issue certificates at the county level.

Counties

County vital records offices work in coordination with CHS as required in [ORS 432](#). Commissioned County Registrars oversee local vital records offices that issue birth and death certificates. Current law limits the county's ability to issue and provide certified copies of records of live birth or deaths to those occurring in the county within the last six months. All birth certificates and almost all death certificates issued by County Vital Records offices are issued from the state vital records system (OVERS) to people who are legally eligible to receive the certificates.

Counties are diverse in their geography, culture and government structure. Often a county's vital records office is housed within the public health department, but in some cases, it is the responsibility of the County Clerk. County vital records staff commonly have mixed responsibilities for other programs and maintain expertise in a variety of fields.

County responsibilities include:

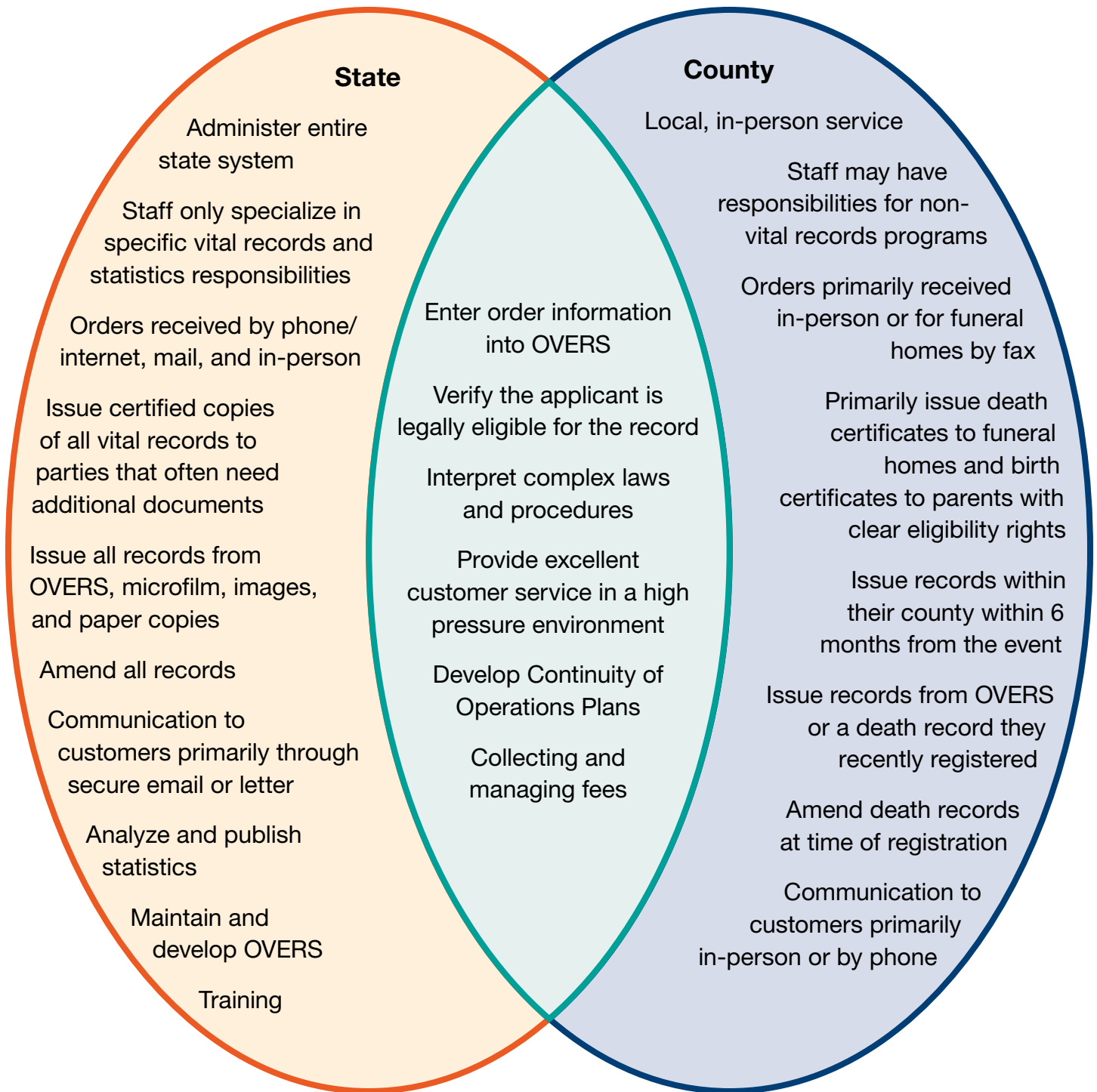
- Registering paper death records.
- Processing initial amendments to paper death records.
- Issuing birth and death certificates for events that occur in their county for the first six months. Certificates are issued to individuals who meet eligibility and identity criteria established in law. Orders are primarily submitted in-person, by mail or faxed. Some county vital records offices process orders submitted via the internet.



County vital records offices are primarily funded by the vital records fees for their services. Whether the fees cover all operations of the county vital records offices varies across the state, with smaller counties that have fewer issuances of certificates not being able to fund all operations with fees. Larger counties with more issuances of certificates may be able to cover operations with fees. Other than the \$1 per birth certificate issued by counties, counties keep the vital records fees they receive for certificates they issue.

The diagram on the next page illustrates the different roles the County and the State vital records offices fulfill along with roles that are similar to both.

Roles of County and State



Nine Federally Recognized Tribes in Oregon

Currently none of the Nine Federally Recognized Tribes in Oregon have a state-designated vital records office, but there is a mechanism for their establishment under [ORS 432](#). It is anticipated that a vital records office established by one of the Tribes would function similarly to the county vital records offices.

Overview of OHA's Process

OHA convened the following staff to begin the work assigned by HB 2420:

- Jennifer Woodward, State Registrar, OHA Public Health Division, Center for Health Statistics (Participant of HB 2420 Work Group)
- Derrick Patterson, Vital Records Analyst and County Liaison, OHA Public Health Division, Center for Health Statistics (Participant of HB 2420 Work Group)
- Karen Rangan, Manager, Partner Services Training and Communications, OHA Public Health Division, Center for Health Statistics
- James Kracker, Logistics and Support Specialist, Partner Services Training and Communications, OHA Public Health Division, Center for Health Statistics

Work group facilitation and report development was led by Hein Consulting Group (HCG), an independent consulting firm. OHA selected HCG from among a pool of equity-focused contractors for this purpose.

The OHA team:

- Requested CLHO provide a list of work group members to represent County Vital Records offices throughout the state.
- Recommended work group members representing funeral home directors, other partners and community members. The team strived to get members representing geographic areas throughout the state as well as different sized entities that were being represented.
- Met with HCG for pre-planning meetings and monthly debriefings.
- Approved agendas.
- Reviewed and approved the notes.
- Participated in requested presentations.
- Coordinated ongoing communications.
- Posted information on the OHA HB 2420 website.
- Assisted with revisions of the report.

Hein Consulting Group Role and Report

In November 2023 the OHA team began meeting with HCG to establish the direction of the work group.

Under the scope of work for the contract with OHA, HCG:

- Coordinated the meeting logistics.
- Compiled notes and provided these notes to the participants.
- Coordinated presentations or participation by outside parties as requested by the work group.
- Set agendas in advance of monthly meetings.
- Facilitated collaborative work group meetings.
- Served as impartial mediator.
- Led discussion of work group meetings.
- Guided work group in identifying, documenting, and developing proposed options for inclusion in final report.
- Checked with work group participants periodically to assess their needs and ensures all participants are heard.
- Mediated disputes and concerns among participants.
- Ensured that report options reflect diverse viewpoints from the work group.
- Summarized proposed options and considerations identified by the work group.
- Completed necessary revisions to secure approval of report by work group.
- Drafted the final report.

With the goal of creating and maintaining an environment of collaboration, trust and equity among work group participants, HCG facilitated the work group with the collaborative approach of Interest-Based Problem Solving to generate, explore and consider potential solutions from everyone.

Interest-Based Problem Solving focuses on the goal of trying to understand and uncover people's interests, rather than taking positions and trying to persuade, in order to enrich and deepen the conversation and to generate collaborative and creative approaches.

The steps involved were to:

- Identify the needs.
- Brainstorm options, generating as many ideas as possible.
- Evaluate options.
- Eventually narrow down to agreed-upon options.

A primary goal was to create an information-rich environment in which the work group members had the resources they needed to be as informed as possible about all the needs involved in the vital records system.

Since the work group members represented diverse agencies and regions, it was critical to learn about each other and ask questions.

In the first two work group meetings held in 2023, HCG asked the members to generate topics based on questions they had about the vital records system. From this list, a monthly calendar of topics was generated for 2024.

Over the first part of the year, a Resource Library was compiled and published, to serve as a reference for the HB 2420 Work Group members throughout this process, as well as for the communities they represented, and were made accessible to all on the OHA website.

[The Resource Library](#) contains the notes from each month's meeting, as well as links to the PowerPoint presentations, the Q&As from each presentation and panel discussion, summaries of the options generated by the work group and drafts of the report.

In the facilitation of the monthly meetings, HCG:

- Provided the agenda and any published materials in advance of the meeting.
- Took notes that were sent out after each meeting.
- Built community through introductions and reminders of the ground rules for engagement.
- Ended each meeting with a Plus/Delta evaluation to see if there was a need for course correction.
- Continually invited members to reach out with any questions or concerns along the way.
- Personally reached out to members to check-in about participation.
- Guided the work group through the Interest-Based Problem-Solving method while working through the process of generating options and then narrowing to the recommendations.

After several rounds of revisions of the preliminary report, HCG submitted the final report on October 29, 2024 for OHA to finalize.

The HB 2420 Work Group

HB 2420 Work Group members are listed below.

Name	Role	Organization	Representation	Geographic Area
Representative Mark Owens *Stacy Clark attended	State Representative Chief of Staff	Oregon State Legislature, House District 60	Legislative	Baker, Grant, Harney, Lake, Malheur, Deschutes Counties
Shawna Peterson	Estate Attorney	S Peterson Law, LLC	Community; Certificate requestor	Malheur County
Sarah Reynolds	Funeral Home Office Manager	Macy & Son Funeral Home	Funeral Home	Yamhill County
Michael Collins	Director of Managed Care	Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs	Tribes	Central
Beverly LaFollette	Owner	Burns Mortuary of Pendleton; LaFollette's Chapel	Funeral Director	Umatilla County
Wally Ordeman	Executive Director	Oregon Funeral Director Association; Fisher Funeral Home	Oregon Funeral Director Association	Linn County
Chad Dresselhaus	Executive Director	Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board	Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board	
Lucyann Gibson	Federal Revenue Specialist	Child Welfare-District 4 (Lincoln-Benton-Linn Co.)	Government Agency; Certificate requestor	Lincoln, Benton, Linn Counties
Joy Goodwin	County Registrar	Douglas County Clerks Office	County Clerks	Douglas County
Paola Soles	County Registrar	Clackamas County Vital Records	County Vital Records	Clackamas County

Name	Role	Organization	Representation	Geographic Area
Ginger Cerola	Lead Deputy Registrar	Jackson County Vital Records	County Vital Records	Jackson County
Lisa Mendoza*	Deputy Registrar	Umatilla County Vital Records	County Vital Records	Umatilla County
Janet Fredrickson**	Deputy Registrar	Josephine County Vital Records	County Vital Records	Josephine County
Jael Barron-Garcia	Lead Deputy Registrar	Malheur County Vital Records	County Vital Records	Malheur County
Virginia Lopez	Deputy Registrar	Harney County Vital Records	County Vital Records	Harney County
Jennifer Woodward	State Registrar	Center for Health Statistics	State Vital Records	
Derrick Patterson	Liaison to Counties	Center for Health Statistics	State Vital Records	

* Stepped down from county role in April 2024.

** Replaced Lisa Mendoza in May 2024.

Multiple efforts by the facilitator were made to connect with work group members who were unable to attend meetings. Some members retired or stepped away from their roles and were unable to fully complete the set of work group meetings or vote on the proposals. All communications, documents and surveys were sent to the full work group roster. Inclusion of proposals was based on which proposals secured a majority of attending participant’s votes at the September and October work group meetings.

The structure of the HB 2420 Work Group:

- All meetings were conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams.
- Non work group members could attend, but not participate.
- All meetings were conducted in accordance with Oregon public meetings law.
- All monthly work group meetings were public and recorded.
- For each work group meeting, members received a meeting request and the agenda in advance.
- Notes were taken and shared within two weeks.
- Transcripts and Recordings of the meetings were shared and published on the [OHA HB 2420 Website](#).

- The majority of the materials presented in the meetings were shared with the work group members in advance.

Month	Topic/Task	Links to Resources
November 2023	Inaugural meeting	
December 2023	Generating questions and topics to be addressed	
January 2024	Vital Records and Statistics System Overview , presented by Jennifer Woodward	Questions and Answers About the Vital Records and Statistics System Overview
February 2024	Center for Health Statistics Overview , presented by Jennifer Woodward	Questions and Answers about the Center for Health Statistics Overview
March 2024	Panel Discussion with County Work Group Representatives	Questions and Responses from the Panel Discussion with County Work Group Representatives
April 2024	Panel Discussion with Funeral Home Work Group Representatives	Questions and Responses from the Panel Discussion with the Funeral Home Work Group Representatives
May 2024	Panel Discussion with Members who Interact with the Vital Record System in Various Ways	Questions and Responses to the Panel Discussion with Members who Interact with the Vital Record System in Various Ways
June 2024	Generating a list of needs of the vital records system, and brainstorming ways to meet these needs.	

Month	Topic/Task	Links to Resources
July 2024	<p>Identifying ways to address the needs of the vital records system and discussing options to meet these needs.</p> <p>To ensure everyone’s voices were heard, there was a homework assignment work group members were asked to complete before the August meeting, asking the work group members to list all their ideas for options to meet the needs of the vital records system.</p>	
August 2024	<p>Review of options generated by the homework assignment.</p> <p>There was a homework assignment in advance of the September meeting asking work group members to fill out a rating exercise of all the viable options using a Likert scale and an optional entry for comments.</p>	<p>Reporting of Options Generated by the HB 2420 Work Group</p>
September 2024	<p>Review of results from the options rating survey and voting on options.</p>	<p>Reporting of the Results of the HB 2420 Options Rating Survey</p>
October 2024	<p>Voting on remaining options and reviewing draft of the report.</p>	
October 29, 2024	<p>Submission of Report to OHA</p>	

Work Group Recommendations

The Problem: How to ensure equitable access to birth and death records for all residents of Oregon and equitable revenue to maintain and improve the county and state vital records system.

Equity Statement: The recommendations advance equity for the people in Oregon by proposing options to ensure equitable access to birth and death certificates throughout the state and equitable revenue to maintain and improve the state and county vital records systems.

The recommendations of the HB 2420 Work Group were guided by the language of HB 2420 and expanded fees to include any kind of revenue to create five categories:

1. Equitable access to birth certificates throughout the state
2. Equitable access to death certificates throughout the state
3. Equitable access to the vital records system throughout the state
4. Equitable revenue to improve the state and county vital records system
5. Equitable revenue to maintain the state and county vital records system

The HB 2420 Work Group developed 14 recommendations, grouped into these five categories.

Recommendations: The HB 2420 Work Group recommends the following options:

1	Equitable access to birth certificates throughout the state
1.1	<p>Authorize counties to be able to issue birth certificates for 1 year from the date of the event for births that occurred in their county.</p> <p>This recommendation allows customers to order birth certificates at the county where the birth took place for 1 year from the date of the event rather than the current 6 months. This option would cost the state an estimated \$390,000 to \$780,000 loss per biennium in revenue if 40% to 80% of the birth certificates now issued at the state would be issued by the counties. How much revenue the counties would gain is uncertain. Counties that have large numbers of births will benefit more than counties that have fewer births since only births that occurred in a respective county can be issued by that county's vital records office. Counties would also have an increased workload and need for training and oversight by the state. This will require changes to the electronic system, OVERS, which are estimated to cost \$25,000 to \$30,000.</p>

1.2	<p>Require birth facilities and midwives who submit birth records to scan and attach in the Oregon Vital Events Registration System (OVERS) the Acknowledgment of Paternity (AOP) and birth worksheet and authorize the state to amend records based solely on these documents.</p> <p>This recommendation would improve the timeliness of registration and amending of birth records at the state. Faster registration and amending of birth records means that birth certificates can be issued to families by the state and county faster. This will require changes to the electronic system, OVERS, which are estimated to cost \$10,000. It will also require additional training for hospital staff. Vital records staff would no longer need to query hospital staff and wait for their response when there are errors on records and hospital staff would no longer need to review worksheets when there is an error or enter amendments.</p>
<p>2 Equitable access to death certificates throughout the state</p>	
2.1	<p>Authorize counties to be able to issue death certificates for 1 year from the date of the event for deaths that occurred in their county.</p> <p>This recommendation allows customers to order death certificates at the county where the death took place for 1 year from the date of the event rather than the current 6 months. This option would cost the state an estimated \$122,000 to \$245,000 loss per biennium in revenue if 40% to 80% of the death certificates now issued at the state would be issued by the counties. How much revenue the counties would gain is uncertain. Counties that have large numbers of deaths will benefit more than counties that have fewer deaths since only deaths that occurred in a respective county can be issued by that county's vital records office. Counties would also have an increased workload and need for training and oversight by the state. This will require changes to the electronic system, OVERS, which are estimated to cost \$20,000 to \$30,000.</p>

2.2	<p>Establish law requiring all death records for deaths that occur in Oregon be completed in OVERS, with some allowance for the State Registrar to determine exceptions, e.g., home burial.</p> <p>This recommendation would result in 99% of death records being registered electronically. Death records filed electronically are available for issuance as certified copies an average of 6 days after death compared to 23 days after death for records not registered electronically. Therefore, the state and county vital records offices will be able to provide death certificates to customers faster. Having fully electronic death records reduces workload and costs at the county vital records offices since they would no longer have to register and amend paper death records. Increased staff time would be required at the state to facilitate increased OVERS enrollment and training of medical certifiers.</p>
<p>3 Equitable access to the vital records system throughout the state</p>	
3.1	<p>Establish and enforce penalties (such as progressively increasing fines or reporting to licensing board) for facilities, medical certifiers, or funeral directors who fail to meet the law for required timeliness of vital record submission.</p> <p>Currently there is no recourse when data providers egregiously miss timelines that are outlined in law and refuse to complete records. This recommendation would apply to all partners that report vital events and allow the state the ability to enforce the law with penalties at their discretion when all other methods of encouragement have failed. This recommendation may require additional staffing at the state to track compliance, establish procedures for enforcement, and process payments. Since the cost of penalties would need to be established, it is unclear if the penalties received would outweigh the costs for administration.</p>
3.2	<p>Mandate automatic registration in OVERS when medical practitioners earn their medical licenses or are newly hired.</p> <p>The goal of this recommendation is to improve electronic registration of death records resulting in more timely access to death certificates for families. Requiring all medical practitioners to enroll in OVERS, regardless of their need to complete death records, would require additional staffing at and cost to the state to enroll the approximately 2,500 newly licensed medical practitioners annually.</p>
3.3	<p>Evaluate current law to ensure it is clear who is ultimately responsible if a record is not certified.</p> <p>To enforce penalties for failing to meet the law for required timelines it is necessary that a responsible party is clearly identified. The goal of this recommendation is to determine who must take responsibility to ensure that death and birth records are completed and registered timely. Faster registration of the birth and death records results in faster access to birth and death certificates for families.</p>

4	Equitable revenue to improve the state and county vital records system
4.1	<p>Ask the legislature for funds to support digitizing older vital records.</p> <p>This recommendation would increase the number of vital records that would be available in electronic format within OVERS. This speeds up amendments to the records, issuance of them, and opens the possibility of more widespread issuance of older records by the county. It decreases risk and reliance on microfilm and paper copies of records.</p> <p>Digitizing all older vital records and adding them to OVERS is a large project that could take 1 to 2 years to complete. It estimated that \$200,000 per biennium would be needed to have a state contracted vendor complete the conversion. Cost estimate for a Project Manager is \$239,000 and Office Specialist is \$138,000 a biennium. These would be one-time costs.</p>
4.2	<p>Ask the legislature for funds to support vital records modernization projects as well as additional funding for future growth of the system.</p> <p>A modernized vital records system is interoperable with different systems to collect birth and death data using national standards. This increases efficiency and accuracy of collection and transmission of vital records and data. These systems include Electronic Health Records systems for birth and death, the State Medical Examiners system for death, and the Funeral home systems for death. Interoperability with each system is considered a separate project. Cost estimates for each project range from \$500,000 to \$1 million a biennium.</p>
5	Equitable revenue to maintain the state and county vital records system
5.1	<p>Establish fee sharing between the counties and the state.</p> <p>Financial support from County Vital Records offices to maintain and operate the state vital records and statistics system is needed for equitable funding. County Vital Records offices use the state system to issue vital records locally and get the entire fee for the certificates they issue, minus \$1 per birth certificate to ODHS (see 5.4 below). These offices also count on the state to provide technical support and training. Currently, counties do not financially support the system that they rely on. A funding formula for fee sharing would need to be determined in cooperation with OHA and CLHO.</p>

5.2	<p>Increase fees to ensure the viability of the vital records system through 2034.</p> <p>A vital records fee increase will be needed just to maintain the current work, much less improve and modernize. A fee increase was approved by the 2015 legislature and went into effect in 2016. The previous fee increase was in 2003. Unfortunately, basic projections show that even a \$10 fee increase (40%) from \$25 to \$35 will not provide enough revenue to remove projected deficits at the state. Incremental fee increases every biennium should be considered along with other funding options to ensure a viable vital records system at the state and county.</p>
5.3	<p>Increase the amount that other government agencies pay for services.</p> <p>Currently government agencies provide 30% of the revenue needed to maintain the state’s vital records and statistics system. This revenue often fills the funding gap that is occurring. The amount the government agencies pay for services should increase. However, it is not equitable to have all the burden on government agencies and citizens when other entities don’t contribute to funding the vital records and statistics system that they use.</p>
5.4	<p>Ask for general funds to cover the revenue that the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) Office of Children’s Advocates generates from the registration and issuance of birth records under ORS 417.825 that is a cost to the state and the counties.</p> <p>ODHS receives \$1 for each birth registered and \$1 for each birth certificate issued. This is a cost to the state and the counties. This is equivalent to approximately \$80,000 a biennium for the registration of the records and \$240,000 a biennium for certificates issued at the state for a total of \$320,000 a biennium. County Vital Records offices also pay \$1 for each birth certificate issued. This recommendation would result in additional \$320,000 revenue at the state and additional \$1 for every birth certificate issued at the counties.</p>
5.5	<p>Establish an annual prorated fee to be paid by the counties to maintain the vital records and statistics system that accounts for order volume and/or county size.</p> <p>To ensure equitable funding of the vital records system, it is recommended that counties support the system through an annual fee. Counties currently receive funding through their sale of certificates but do not financially support the systems that they rely on. This would allow counties to budget in advance for the expense and minimize billing expenses and complexity. It is suggested that this fee not be a flat fee, but rather be based on order volume and/or county size to account for large differences in the number of certificates that are issued by various counties.</p>

Appendix

Summary of Meetings by Month

November 28, 2023

For the inaugural meeting, the work group made introductions, discussed the coordination of monthly meetings, were oriented to the work group and the goals of HB 2420, and learned about Interest-Based Problem Solving.

For 2024, the group came to a consensus to hold a monthly recurring meeting on the third Tuesday of every month from 3:00 - 4:00pm Pacific Time.

December 12, 2023

The work group reviewed the Interest-Based Problem-Solving approach as a way to uncover the needs of all partners involved in the vital records system.

In order to uncover interests, identify questions, and start brainstorming topics, work group members were asked the following questions for discussion and reporting in a series of two breakout rooms:

- Breakout Round One: What is the heart of the matter? What is important to keep in mind during HB 2420 Work Group discussions?
- Breakout Round Two: What information do you want, what questions do you have about HB 2420 related topics?

A monthly calendar of topics was built from what was generated in this meeting.

January 30, 2024

The work group was presented with the calendar of monthly topics, which followed an interest-based problem-solving approach: The purpose of the first part of the year was an immersion in information, then moving into identifying options and opportunities, and then selecting preferred options in the fall.

The topic for this month was to learn more about the vital records and statistic system, to generate questions, and receive responses to these questions. Dr. Jennifer Woodward was asked to present an overview to the HB 2420 work group.

[Vital Records and Statistics System Overview](#), presented by Jennifer Woodward.

[Questions and Answers About the Vital Records and Statistics System Overview](#)

These documents were added to the Resource Library.

February 20, 2024

The topic for this month was to learn more about the state vital records system and the goals of OHA's Center for Health Statistics, to generate questions, and receive responses to these questions. Jennifer Woodward was asked to present an overview to the HB 2420 work group.

[Center for Health Statistics Overview](#), presented by Dr. Jennifer Woodward
[Questions and Answers about the Center for Health Statistics Overview](#)

These documents were added to the Resource Library.

March 19, 2024

The topic for this month was to understand the work of the Counties. For this purpose, the facilitator assembled a panel of County work group Representatives who were given the following questions in advance of the meeting:

Panel Discussion with County Work Group Representatives

Each member was given the following four questions in advance of the panel discussion:

1. What does a typical day look like in your vital records work?
2. What's going well with your vital records work?
3. What's challenging in your vital records work?
4. What's next for your County in terms of its vital records work?

[The Questions and Responses from the Panel Discussion with County Work Group Representatives](#) was added to the Resource Library.

April 16, 2024

The topic for this month was to understand the work of the Funeral Homes. For this purpose, the facilitator assembled a panel of Funeral Home work group Representatives, who were given the following questions in advance of the meeting:

Panel Discussion with Funeral Home Work Group Representatives

Each member was given the following five questions in advance of the panel discussion:

1. What does a typical day look like in your death records work? What percentage of your day is spent doing death records work?
2. What's going well with your death records work?
3. What's challenging in your death records work?
4. What do you hope is next for you related to death records?
5. What else could we have asked you about? Anything else to add?

[The Questions and Responses from the Panel Discussion with the Funeral Home Work Group Representatives](#) was added to the Resource Library.

May 21, 2024

The topic for this month was to understand the work of the work group Members who interact with the Vital Record system in various ways. For this purpose, the facilitator assembled a panel of Representatives, who were given the following questions in advance of the meeting:

Panel Discussion with Members who Interact with the Vital Record System in Various Ways Each member was given the following four questions in advance of the panel discussion:

1. What does a typical day look like in terms of your vital records work? What percentage of your day is spent doing vital records work? How does your work intersect with vital records work?
2. What's going well with your vital records work?
3. What's challenging in your vital records work?
4. What's next for you in terms of vital records work?

[The Questions and Responses to the Panel Discussion with Members who Interact with the Vital Record System in Various Ways](#) was added to the Resource Library.

June 18, 2024

The work group members reviewed the Interest-Based Problem-Solving approach, generated a list of needs of the vital records system, and started the process of brainstorming creative ways to meet these needs.

July 16, 2024

The work group continued to identify ways to address the needs of the vital records system and discuss options for how to meet the needs of the vital records system.

The work group was asked to complete a “homework” assignment before the August meeting. To ensure everyone’s voices were heard, the assignment asked the work group members to list all of their ideas for options to meet the needs of the vital records system. The results of this homework assignment were compiled and shared in advance of the August meeting.

This [Reporting of Options Generated by the HB 2420 Work Group](#) was published on the OHA HB 2420 Website.

August 20, 2024

The work group began to review the reporting of the options generated by the homework assignment and were asked to continue reviewing options.

The work group members were asked to complete another “homework” assignment in advance of the September meeting, which was to fill out a rating exercise of all the viable options using a Likert scale and an optional entry for comments.

Likert Scale 1-5

5 = strongly support

4 = support

3 = neutral

2 = oppose

1 = strongly oppose

The results of this survey were compiled and shared in advance of the September meeting.

September 17, 2024

The work group reviewed the results of the ratings survey, and then voted, with a show of hands, on the options that were in clear agreement in the survey results.

These results were recorded and shared, along with the first draft of this report, with the work group Members prior to the October meeting.

October 15, 2024

The work group members were sent a draft of the report prior to the meeting.

In the meeting, the work group members voted on the options still under discussion.

October 28, 2024

The work group members submitted final votes to approve or disapprove the report.

13 members voted and all approved this report.

The House Bill 2420 Work Group Report can be found at <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/DataStatistics/Pages/index.aspx>.

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer free of charge. Contact the Equity and Inclusion Division at oha.languageaccess@odhsoha.oregon.gov or 1-844-882-7889. We accept all relay calls.

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