

## Questions and Responses about the Vital Records and Statistics System Overview

**Q: As a sovereign government, The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs have their own vital statistics offices. Is there a way that they can be recognized as a government?**

R: Yes, OHA can do an intergovernmental agreement.

**Q: Regarding the third slide, what are ITOPs?**

R: Those are abortions (Induced Termination of Pregnancy).

**Q: When there is a birth certificate issuance, it costs one dollar and then the County Vital Records Office gets a quarterly report that is then sent off. So with the funeral homes, is it a monthly or quarterly that they send to the Mortuary board? How does that work?**

R: The Mortuary Board bills it one month in arrears. Each month, the Board receives an electronic file from Vital Records showing how many death filing fees have been processed by each funeral home, and then the Mortuary Board sends an invoice to those funeral homes. Of the \$30.00 that is collected, \$16.00 goes to the IDP\* (Indigent Disposition Fund) and the Mortuary Board receives \$14.00 per payment for their agency operations, which is a significant amount of what they need in order to operate. It's important to note that funeral homes are mandated to pay the \$30.00 filing fee in statute each month, but all funeral homes do that as a pass through to the client. The \$30 fee is collected from the client and the Funeral Home is mandated to pay that monthly based on the number of death certificate filings.

\*The IDP provides \$550.00 in reimbursement to funeral homes who provide final disposition for those are indigent or unclaimed decedents. The fees have recently increased from \$20.00 to \$30.00. Prior to this increase, the IDP fund was underwater, so the Mortuary Board worked with the governor's office and passed legislation to get that increase to ensure that the fund will be sustainable.

***Q: If a record is purchased at the county, the county gets the revenue. So what happens when somebody orders through VitalChek? Does the county lose revenue to pay them or how does that piece of it work?***

R: VitalChek is contracted with the State Vital Records office, and so they do charge an additional fee. It's only the State that is using VitalChek for processing internet orders. There is an expedite fee that's in statute that is charged, and then VitalChek (as a contractor) charges an additional fee to the customer for all of the credit card processing. This does not affect the revenue that happens at the county at all. They are completely separate fees. The fees don't shift based on the vendor. In the current system, every fee that is collected at the state goes to the state; the entire fee that is collected at the county goes to the county. There are some counties that are ordering online via an internet vendor. These couple of counties get the full fee for the record, and the internet vendor is charging extra collection fees that go to the customer, as well as the expedite fee that is in statute. Again, the fees do not shift based on the vendor.

***Q: Since a couple of counties use an internet vendor, are these counties finding this is helpful as a whole in terms of funds and fees? Might it be something that other counties would eventually do as well?***

R: Two or three counties are using an internet vendor with a common and expressed interest (not VitalChek) that meets the requirements that are in statute and rule, and they have to use an authentication quiz (to make sure it's an out-of-pocket authentication quiz done as part of accessing through the internet). Clackamas and Deschutes Counties are up and running, Multnomah and Lane Counties have aspects for electronic orders, but it's just for funeral homes for death certificates, not for the general public. After a year getting the contract in place, Clackamas County just got started and so far the system seems faster and easier and it's working well so far. There is an additional fee to the \$7.00 expedite fee, and the idea is that the county should be getting the extra \$7.00 fee since there is a rule that any internet order has to be processed and out the door within three business days.

***Q: Will there be a point at which there won't be any more hybrid certificates? Will it be a requirement for everyone to be registered?***

R: Yes, the goal is to have a fully electronic system for all of the medical certifiers in the state who complete the medical portion of the death record. All of the medical examiners

are on the system and use OVERS, but as of right now, there is no law that requires it. It's a continual goal that is progressing. At the moment, 84-85% of the records are fully electronic.