

New California Law Effective July 1, 2003

In an attempt to stop the illegal use of birth and death certificates, and as part of the effort to reduce identity theft, there has been a change in law and the way that certified copies of birth and death certificates can be obtained.

Effective July 1, 2003, there will be two types of certified copies of birth and death records. The first type is a regular certified copy identical to those issued prior to July 1, 2003. These will be issued only to authorized individuals as defined by California Health and Safety Code Section 103526. The second is also a regular certified copy; however, it will have a legend across the face with the statement "*INFORMATIONAL, NOT A VALID DOCUMENT TO ESTABLISH IDENTITY.*" Both of these documents are certified copies of the original document on file with our office.

The law describes an authorized person as:

- The registrant or a parent or legal guardian of the registrant.
- A party entitled to receive the record as a result of a court order, or an attorney or a licensed adoption agency seeking the birth record in order to comply with the requirements of Section 3140 or 7603 of the Family Code.
- A member of a law enforcement agency or a representative of another governmental agency, as provided by law, who is conducting official business.
- A child, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or domestic partner of the registrant.
- An attorney representing the registrant or the registrant's estate, or any person or agency empowered by statute or appointed by a court to act on behalf of the registrant or the registrant's estate.
- A funeral director ordering certified copies of a death certificate on behalf of an individual specified in paragraphs (1) to (5), inclusive, of subdivision (a) of Section 7100 of the Health and Safety Code.

In order to obtain a certified copy on or after July 1, 2003, you **MUST** complete the sworn statement included with the birth or death certificate application form and sign the statement under penalty of perjury. If you mail your request, your sworn statement must be notarized. If your mailed request indicates that you want a Certified Copy but does not include a notarized statement sworn under penalty of perjury, the request will be rejected as incomplete and returned to you without being processed.

Certified copies for persons born in California may be obtained from the county recorder where the birth occurred or the Center for Health Statistics, Office of Vital Records, P.O. Box 730241, Sacramento, CA 94244-0241.