AFTER

WISCONSIN — STATE AND COUNTY OFFICES

Ordering a death certificate in Wisconsin

Wisconsin death certificates come from the State Vital Records Office or a county Register of Deeds. Here's how to order from each, with sections for Milwaukee and Waukesha counties.



A guide from After

BEFORE YOU START

What you'll need, and **what to know first**

You can order from the Wisconsin Vital Records Office in Madison or from a county Register of Deeds. Any Register of Deeds can issue a certificate for a Wisconsin death from September 1, 2013 on. For earlier deaths, use the state or the county where the death happened.

COST

$20 first copy, $3 each additional

WHO CAN ORDER

Close family, or someone protecting a personal or property right

Have these ready before you begin — most of the process is just entering this.

- ✓ A current photo ID, such as a driver's license, state ID, or passport
- ✓ Your relationship to your loved one
- ✓ Their full name at the time of death
- ✓ The date of death, or a range of years to search
- ✓ The city or county where they died
- ✓ A credit card to order online, or a check or money order by mail

Good to know: the $20 is a search fee, so it isn't refunded if no record is found. Wisconsin issues a fact-of-death certificate without cause of death and an extended version with cause and manner of death. The state says insurance claims usually use the extended version.

HOW TO ORDER

Three ways **to apply**

Option A — **Online or by phone, through the state**

1. **Start your order with VitalChek**

   The state takes online and phone orders through VitalChek. Use the link on the state's page, or call 877-885-2981.

   dhs.wisconsin.gov/vitalrecords/record.htm

2. **Pay by credit card**

   $20 for the first copy and $3 for each additional copy of the same record, plus VitalChek's service fee, shown at checkout.

3. **Wait for it to arrive**

   The state says these requests are completed in about five business days, plus shipping. Faster service is available for another fee.

Option B — **By mail, to the state**

1. **Complete the death certificate application (form F-05280)**

   Sign it. Unsigned or incomplete forms are returned unprocessed.

2. **Add a copy of your ID and your payment**

   Send a check or money order payable to State of Wis. Vital Records.

3. **Mail it to the Vital Records Office**

   The state says mail requests take about 10 business days to complete, not counting mailing time.

   MAIL TO

   Wisconsin Vital Records Office
   PO Box 309, Madison, WI 53701

Option C — **At a county Register of Deeds**

County Register of Deeds offices issue certified copies in person, by mail, and online. Milwaukee and Waukesha both charge the state fee of $20 for the first copy and $3 for each additional. Find any county's office here:

wrdaonline.org

COUNTY OFFICES

Milwaukee and **Waukesha counties**

MILWAUKEE COUNTY REGISTER OF DEEDS

- ✓ **In person:** 901 N. 9th Street, Room G6, Milwaukee. Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Orders received by 2 p.m. are ready the same business day. A $3 service fee applies in person.
- ✓ **By mail:** send the application, a copy of your driver's license or state ID, and a check or money order payable to Register of Deeds to the same address (ZIP 53233).
- ✓ **Online or by phone:** through VitalChek at (888) 862-3736, with additional fees.

WAUKESHA COUNTY REGISTER OF DEEDS

- ✓ **In person:** 515 W. Moreland Blvd., Room AC110, Waukesha. Requests are processed from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- ✓ **By mail:** send the signed application, a photocopy of your ID, a check or money order payable to Register of Deeds, and a self-addressed stamped envelope to the same address (ZIP 53188).

ELIGIBILITY

Who can request **a certified copy**

Wisconsin limits certified copies of a death certificate to:

- ✓ A current spouse or domestic partner
- ✓ A parent, child, sibling, or grandparent
- ✓ Someone authorized in writing by one of these family members
- ✓ Someone who needs the record to protect a personal or property right

Good to know: anyone can order an uncertified copy, but it can't be used for legal purposes such as claiming insurance benefits.

IDENTIFICATION

What counts **as ID**

- ✓ One of these is enough: a state driver's license or ID card, a U.S. government photo ID, a passport, or a tribal or military ID
- ✓ Without one, send two of these: a bank or earnings statement, a current signed lease, a health insurance card, a utility bill, or a vehicle registration
- ✓ Expired documents aren't accepted. By mail, send copies and keep your originals

COMMON QUESTIONS

Any questions? **We've got answers**

I don't know the exact date or details of the death.

Reach out to your Care Specialist at After — we can look that up and provide it for you.

Which version should I order?

The state says most financial transactions only need the fact-of-death certificate, and insurance claims usually use the extended version. Ask each organization which one it needs.

What if there's an error on the certificate itself?

Reach out to your Care Specialist — we can help you work out the next step with the state.

What if the death didn't happen in Wisconsin?

Order from the vital records office in the state where the death took place.

We're here if **you need us**

Ordering paperwork while you're grieving is hard. You don't have to figure it out alone — call any time, day or night.

844-905-2639 care@after.com after.com

Fees and timing checked November 10, 2026 against dhs.wisconsin.gov, county.milwaukee.gov and waukeshacounty.gov. Agencies change them, so confirm before you order. We provide cremation services only where we hold the required state licenses.