AFTER

WASHINGTON — STATE AND LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

Ordering a death certificate in Washington

Washington death certificates come from the state Department of Health and from local health departments. Here's how to order, with sections for King and Pierce counties.



BEFORE YOU START

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

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) takes orders online, by phone, and by mail. For in-person service, it partners with local health departments. Certificates come in a long form, with cause of death, and a short form without it.

COST
$25 per certificate

IN PERSON
Most orders ready the same day, at local offices

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

- ✓ A government photo ID that is current or expired less than 60 days
- ✓ Proof of your relationship, such as a birth certificate linking you
- ✓ Your loved one's first and last name
- ✓ The date of death, or at least the month and year
- ✓ The city or county where they died
- ✓ A card online or by phone, or a check or money order by mail

Good to know: fees are non-refundable. The long form includes cause of death and is used to close bank accounts or claim benefits such as life insurance. The short form is used for vehicle titles, real estate, and probate, and exists only for deaths registered since January 1, 2018.

HOW TO ORDER

Three ways **to apply**

Option A — **Online or by phone**

1. **Order through VitalChek**

   VitalChek is DOH's only contracted vendor. Order at VitalChek.com or call 1-866-687-1464.

   doh.wa.gov — Ordering a Death Record

2. **Pay by credit or debit card**

   Orders start at $40.50: the $25 certificate fee, an $8.50 VitalChek fee, and a $7 DOH processing fee.

3. **Wait for it to ship**

   Orders ship within 3 to 7 business days of DOH receiving them from VitalChek, depending on the shipping you choose.

Option B — **By mail, to the state**

1. **Complete the Death Certificate Order Form (DOH 422-184)**

   Sign it, and choose the long form or the short form.

2. **Add copies of your ID and proof, and your payment**

   Send a check or money order payable to DOH. Don't send original documents.

3. **Mail it to the Center for Health Statistics**

   DOH says mail orders ship within 6 to 8 weeks of receiving the order and processing payment.

   MAIL TO

   Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics
   PO Box 9709, Olympia, WA 98507-9709

Option C — **In person, at a local health department**

DOH doesn't offer in-person service itself. Local health departments do, and most customers receive their order the same day. Check that the office has your record type and year before you go.

COUNTY OFFICES

King and **Pierce counties**

KING COUNTY

- ✓ **In person:** King County Vital Statistics, 201 S. Jackson St., Suite 220, Seattle. Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Kiosk orders are $28.50 and are usually ready in 10 to 15 minutes.
- ✓ **Online:** $25 per certificate through VitalChek, plus a $6 agency fee and an $11.50 handling fee. Orders are processed in 4 to 5 business days.
- ✓ **Records held:** all Seattle deaths, King County deaths from 1944, and Washington deaths from 2015.

PIERCE COUNTY

- ✓ **In person:** Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, 3629 S. D St., Tacoma. Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., no appointment needed. $39 base fee, with an average wait of 20 to 30 minutes.
- ✓ **By mail:** $33 base fee, by check or money order, to Vital Records at the same address (ZIP 98418-6813). Ships within one to two weeks.
- ✓ **Online:** through VitalChek, with a $48.50 base fee. Ships within three business days.

ELIGIBILITY

Who can request **a certified copy**

Washington issues certified death certificates only to qualified applicants, including:

- ✓ A spouse or domestic partner
- ✓ A parent, stepparent, child, stepchild, or sibling
- ✓ A grandparent, grandchild, great-grandparent, or great-grandchild
- ✓ A legal guardian, legal representative, or authorized representative
- ✓ The funeral home or person arranging disposition, within 12 months of the death
- ✓ For the short form only: a title insurer, or someone who needs it to protect a personal or property right

PROOF OF RELATIONSHIP

- ✓ A spouse or parent named on the certificate needs no extra proof if the name on their ID matches
- ✓ A child, sibling, or grandchild sends birth certificates that link them to their loved one
- ✓ Anyone can order a non-certified informational copy, which can't be used for legal purposes

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.

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

Corrections go through the state's Center for Health Statistics. Reach out to your Care Specialist — we can help you get started.

Long form or short form?

The long form includes cause of death and the short form does not. Ask each organization which one it needs before you order.

What if the death didn't happen in Washington?

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 doh.wa.gov, kingcounty.gov and tpchd.org. Agencies change them, so confirm before you order. We provide cremation services only where we hold the required state licenses.