



# TEXAS VITAL STATISTICS NEWS

Texas Vital Statistics, Texas Department of State Health Services

Fall 2006 Vol. 9, No. 4

## TER-Death Registration Update

Electronic death registration continues to expand across Texas. Texas Electronic Registrar (TER)-Death has successfully registered death certificates with various levels of participation since the beginning of the year, with more new users being added weekly. As of mid September, Texas Vital Statistics has 365 funeral homes, 246 medical certifiers (physicians, Justices of the Peace, and Medical Examiner offices), and 99 local registration offices signed up and using the TER-Death system for death registration. Texas Vital Statistics has registered 160 fully electronic death certificates, and issued 1,212 certified copies from those registrations. Certified copies are being mailed out within one (1) day from the local registrar's legal date of release.

TER-Death trainings are being conducted around the state. Check out the Vital Statistics (VS) website for training opportunities near you. In addition to the trainings, many users, certifiers in particular, have started utilizing the system on their own without formal training by accessing reference materials available on the website. Also, the upcoming Annual Vital Statistics Conference will include sessions on basic training of the TER-Death system and advanced features to help current users gain a deeper understanding of the system.

Currently, Texas Vital Statistics is hoping to increase the number of certifiers, especially physicians, utilizing the TER-Death system. (see page 4)

## New Texas Vital Statistics Unit Staff

The Texas Vital Statistics Unit (VSU) is pleased to introduce new staff to assist you with your vital registration and issuance needs.

**Roger Faske** returns to the VSU as the Team Lead of Field Services after six (6) years in the Chronic Disease Prevention Branch where he worked in the Arthritis, Asthma and Cardiovascular Health and Wellness programs. Previously, Roger worked in Request Processing and Field Services. Roger can be contacted at (512) 458-7111 extension 2530 or [roger.faske@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:roger.faske@dshs.state.tx.us)

**Wendi Flores** joins the VSU administrative staff to assist Steve Elkins, Deputy State Registrar, with handling vital registration questions and directing specific questions to appropriate VSU staff. For the past two (2) years, Wendi worked for the Brenham State (see page 2)

## 52nd Annual Vital Statistics Conference: Blueprint for the Future: Texas Plans for Vital Registration Best Practices, December 3-5

Mark your calendars and make plans now to attend the 52nd Annual Vital Statistics Conference co-sponsored by the Texas Vital Statistics and Texas Public Health Association. The conference is scheduled in Austin at the Renaissance Austin Hotel on December 3-5 (Sunday-Tuesday). The theme of the conference is **"Blueprint for the Future: Texas Plans for Vital Registration Best Practices"** and will focus on national trends and issues that impact vital registration and issuance in Texas.

The conference schedule will

include in-depth panel discussions, workshops, and seminars on a wide range of topics that include TER-birth and death registration, marriage, Acknowledgment of Paternity certification, passports, fraud prevention, among others. Tours of the Texas Vital Statistics State Office will also be available on Tuesday (December 5th). Once again, this year the Awards Luncheon is scheduled on Monday (December 4th). Continuing education accreditation has been requested for AHIMA members, midwives, funeral directors, county and district clerks and justices of the peace. (see page 4)

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## Master Registrar Certification News

Just a quick update to let you know that the Master Registrar Course (MRC) scheduled for October 16-20th has been rescheduled for February 6-9, 2007.

The MRC is FREE and provides local registrars/deputies with the opportunity gain a deeper understanding of vital registration. Participants comprise a small group that meets over five (5) days and learns about the statutory framework for vital registration, the processes at the State Office and local offices, how to work together collaboratively and best practices. The MRC also interfaces with related agencies including the Office of the Attorney General and the Texas Funeral Service Commission, and Texas Vital Statistics staff. Site visits to area local registration districts are also conducted to see how they operate.

To apply for the February MRC, download the application from [www.dshs.state.tx.us/vs/field/masteregistrar.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/vs/field/masteregistrar.shtm) and fax it in. Questions about the course? Contact [victor.farinelli@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:victor.farinelli@dshs.state.tx.us).

## TER-Death Physician Recruitment Incentive Program

Texas Vital Statistics has announced an incentive program for funeral homes to increase the number of physicians enrolled in the TER-Death system. Bearing Point, the Texas Online contractor, is offering a \$40 American Express gift certificate to a funeral home for each physician they successfully recruit to use the TER-Death system. The physician must be enrolled using the TER-Death Certifier Request form between now and December 31, 2006.

Funeral homes are asked to place the name of their funeral home and email contact at the bottom of the request form and will receive credit for recruiting the physician once they complete their first certification using TER-Death.

Although a physician does not have to complete their first certification prior to December 31, 2006, the fax request for TER access must be received by that date. Once the new physician completes their first certification, the funeral home will receive their \$40 incentive.

The funeral home that recruits the most physicians into the TER-Death system by November 30, 2006 will be recognized at the Vital Statistics Annual Conference on December 3-5, 2006 in Austin. All funeral homes participating in the incentive program will be recognized in the *Texas Vital Statistics News*.

## New Texas Vital Statistics Unit Staff

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School. Wendi can be contacted at (512) 458-7111 extension 2540 or [wendi.flores@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:wendi.flores@dshs.state.tx.us)

**Rebecca Ortega** is the new Team Lead for Texas Online in the VSU. Rebecca has spent the last 10 years in Request Processing. She can answer any questions about making requests for vital records via the Texas Online internet application. Rebecca can be contacted at 1(888) 963-7111 extension 7462 or [becky.ortega@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:becky.ortega@dshs.state.tx.us).

**Steve Preece** is the new Team Lead for the Requisition Area Lobby in the VSU Request Processing. Steve has spent almost eight (8) combined years in Request Processing and Records Receiving. Steve can answer any questions pertaining to walk-in requests for issuing vital records and filing supplemental records. Steve can be contacted at (512) 458-7111 extension 6708 or [stephen.preece@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:stephen.preece@dshs.state.tx.us).

**Linda Rodriguez** is the new Training Coordinator in the VSU. Previously, Linda was the subject matter expert in Amendments and has spent the last 23 years in Request Processing. Linda is responsible for coordinating staff trainings in the VSU, as well as conducting trainings for external partners at conferences. Linda can be contacted at (512) 458-7111 extension 7373 or [linda.rodriguez@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:linda.rodriguez@dshs.state.tx.us)

**Brenda White** is the new Team Lead for Adoptions in the VSU Request Processing. Previously, Brenda has been a team member of Adoptions and spent almost 18 combined years in the VSU. Brenda can answer any questions about filing adoptions and issuing certified copies. Brenda can be contacted at (512) 458-7111 extension 7483 or [brenda.white@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:brenda.white@dshs.state.tx.us)

## TER-Death Trainings

TER-Death trainings will continue in 2007 across the state. If you would like to schedule a training in your community, please contact [roger.faske@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:roger.faske@dshs.state.tx.us). Also, watch the website calendar for more trainings at the following address: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/vs/field/edeath/training.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/vs/field/edeath/training.shtm).

# Blueprint for the Future

## Texas Plans for Vital Registration Best Practices

### 52nd Annual Texas Vital Statistics Conference December 3 – 5, 2006 Renaissance Austin Hotel, Austin, TX

Make plans today to attend the Annual Conference co-sponsored by Texas Vital Statistics and the Texas Public Health Association. The conference will focus on national trends and issues that will impact vital registration and issuance in Texas. Join us for the latest information on best practices!

#### Vital Statistics Annual Conference Registration Form

Please print or type.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Office: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mark the category that describes your vital statistics role:

<input type="checkbox"/> Local registrar	<input type="checkbox"/> Hospital/birthing center staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Funeral director
<input type="checkbox"/> Local registrar staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Midwife	<input type="checkbox"/> Funeral home staff
<input type="checkbox"/> County clerk	<input type="checkbox"/> Justice of the Peace	<input type="checkbox"/> Health Dept. staff
<input type="checkbox"/> County clerk staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Justice of the Peace staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Physician
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Examiner	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Examiner staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Pre-registration for the annual conference: \$110. Pre-registration deadline: **November 17, 2006**.  
Registration after pre-registration deadline: \$125.

Enclosed is payment of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ number of registrations.

**Vital Statistics Unit Tours – Tuesday, December 5th:** Sign up for a tour now! Space is limited.

\_\_\_ 7:30 am (shuttle) \_\_\_ 10:00 am (shuttle) \_\_\_ 2:00 pm (participants must provide their own transportation – meet at the Vital Statistics office entrance at 1100 West 49th Street)

**To register:** Enclose the registration form along with check, purchase order or money order made out to the Texas Public Health Association (TPHA) and mail to TPHA/Vital Statistics Conference, P.O. Box 201540, Austin, TX 78720-1540. Registration fee is non-refundable. Pre-registration is \$110, and the deadline is 11/17/06. Late and on-site registration is \$125. Purchase orders are accepted. Please submit proper documentation with registration form when registering with a purchase order; TPHA Tax ID Number is 74-6058233. Credit card payment option is available online at [www.texaspha.org](http://www.texaspha.org); click on *co-sponsored events*. Returned check fee is \$20, payable by money order.

**Questions about conference registration?** Contact Terri Pali by phone at (512)336-2520, by fax at (512)336-0533 or by e-mail at [txpha@aol.com](mailto:txpha@aol.com).

**Questions about conference curriculum?** Check out [www.dshs.state.tx.us/vs/field](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/vs/field).

## 52nd Annual Vital Statistics Conference: Blueprint for the Future: Texas Plans for Vital Registration Best Practices, December 3-5

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To register for the conference, use the registration form and instructions found on page 3 of this newsletter. The pre-registration fee is \$110 and the deadline to register is November 17, 2006. Late and onsite registration is also available at \$125. Again, the location of the conference is the Renaissance Austin Hotel, 9721 Arboretum Blvd., Austin, TX 78759.

To make your room reservation,

contact the hotel at (800) 228-9290 or (512) 343-2626 and let them know that you are with the Texas Department of State Health Services Vital Statistics Conference to get the conference rate. Rates are as follows: Single: \$85/night; Double: \$130/night; Triple: \$150/night; Quad: \$150/night. The cut-off date for these special conference hotel rates is November 17, 2006. See you at the conference!

### TER-Death Registration Update

(continued from page 1)

VS Area Representatives will continue to dedicate substantial efforts to enroll more certifiers in the TER-Death system through trainings and the VS website. VS is also promoting a new incentive program for funeral homes to encourage their participation in helping to enroll physicians in the TER-Death system. (see page 2 for details)

### Remote Birth Access Contacts

Just a reminder that if you are an office utilizing the Remote Birth Access system and need assistance to reset your password, verify a record or address a technical problem, please contact Lisa Martinez at 512-458-7465 or [lisa.martinez@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:lisa.martinez@dshs.state.tx.us), or Dolores Demps at 512-458-7467 or [dolores.demps@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:dolores.demps@dshs.state.tx.us).

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