

Belmont County Health Department

Vital Statistics Policy



I. Purpose

This policy establishes clear, concise procedures for the issuance of vital records by the Belmont County Health Department (BCHD) Vital Statistics Department. The intent is to ensure compliance with Ohio law while providing efficient and transparent service to the public.

II. Certificates (General)

- BCHD only issues certified copies of birth and death records.
- Each certified copy costs \$25.00.
- Accepted forms of payment include:
 - Cash
 - Money order
 - Cashier's check
 - Credit or debit card (processed through Permitium; service and processing fees apply)
 - ** Business checks may be accepted at the discretion of BCHD

III. Birth Certificates

- Certified copies of birth certificates are issued in accordance with ORC Chapter 3705.
- Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 3705.29, it is unlawful to purposely obtain, possess, use, sell, furnish, or attempt to obtain, possess, use, sell or furnish to another for the purpose of deception any certificate, record or certified copy of it that relates to the birth of another person, whether living or dead.

IV. Death Certificates

- Certified copies of death certificates are issued in accordance with ORC Chapter 3705.
- For the first five (5) years following a decedent's death, the decedent's Social Security number will not be included on a certified copy unless it is specifically requested by an individual authorized under ORC 3705.23 who presents satisfactory proof of identity to the local registrar.
- If the cause of death is listed as *pending* at the time of purchase:
 - BCHD will exchange one (1) certified copy for a final copy at no charge, regardless of the number of copies originally purchased.
 - The original certified copy must be returned at the time of exchange.
 - The certificate must have been originally purchased through BCHD.

V. Ways to Obtain a Copy

Certified copies may be obtained by one of the following methods:

- In person at our office
- Online through Permitium (additional service and processing fees apply)

Certificates may be mailed upon request. BCHD is not responsible for certificates that are lost or damaged during mailing.

- At the discretion of BCHD, orders that are lost or damaged in the mail may be replaced within three (3) months of the original purchase date only if UPS shipping was selected.

VI. Exchanges and Refunds

A. Refunds

- No refunds will be issued after a certificate has been issued.
- If BCHD is unable to locate a record or is unable to issue a certificate for any reason:
 - The certificate fee (\$25.00) will be refunded
 - Third-party service and processing fees will **not** be refunded.

B. Corrections and Exchanges

BCHD will **not** exchange certificates due to corrections unless **all** of the following conditions are met:

- The certificate(s) were originally purchased from BCHD; **and**
- The correction is a minor error (e.g., typographical error); **and**
- The correction is made within five (5) days of receiving the certificate(s); **and**
- BCHD is notified of the correction and a request for exchange is submitted within five (5) days of receiving the certificate(s).

If all conditions are satisfied:

- BCHD will exchange up to three (3) certified copies at no charge, regardless of the number of copies originally purchased.
- Original certified copies must be returned at the time of exchange.

VII. Genealogy Records

- Requests for genealogy record searches are fulfilled as time and staffing allow.
- Processing time for genealogy requests may take up to ten (10) business days.

VIII. Compliance

All services provided by the Belmont County Health Department Vital Statistics Department are conducted in compliance with applicable sections of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and state-issued guidance governing vital records.