

## Message from the Bureau Chief

Another year has come and gone. Through the strength of partnerships, the services provided to Iowans continue to improve, and be more efficient and streamlined. The bureau and its stakeholders have made great strides to better the process of death registration in Iowa and it is working!

When our customers experience a tragic loss in their families, it is imperative that the bureau and all involved in death

*It is imperative that accurate death registration be a priority.*

registration make the process of completing an accurate death record a priority. Not only do our customers rely on us to finalize the legal death document in a timely manner, but also to capture accurate death data. This death data will be used to document the public health of Iowa and Iowans at a state and national level. If Iowa death data is not collected accurately, the picture is fuzzy and meaningful state comparisons cannot be made. We need to sharpen that image and continue to make proper death registration a priority.

2020 will be a busy and exciting year! IVES will be upgraded to the second generation platform called IVES-NX. This new upgrade will be device and web agnostic, meaning users will be able to use any device and more web browsers than just Windows and IE. In addition, the new front page will provide a snapshot of work ques, and a cleaner and more streamlined look to better the navigation of the system. Data entry error tracking will be captured in a more efficient manner for the user as well.

I am looking forward to this new chapter in electronic vital record registration and am excited to see how these changes will positively affect our stakeholders. With that, may you all have a blessed holiday season and a happy new year!

**Melissa Bird, Bureau Chief**  
Deputy State Registrar  
Bureau of Health Statistics  
Iowa Department of Public Health

## 2019 Statistics

The National Center for Health Statistics monitors several areas of health statistics. The Iowa Bureau of Health Statistics is required to report the length of time it takes to register death records. National guidelines suggest records be registered in 7 days or less. Improving timeliness of reporting is a key strategy at the national level.

Length of Time to Register Death Records

Month	Deaths Reg./ Month		Average Days Between DOD and Date Filed					
			Certifier		ME		Combined	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
January	3,200	3,052	8	8	19	18	10	10
February	2,532	2,359	8	8	17	17	9	9
March	2,670	2,648	9	8	17	17	10	9
April	2,500	2,603	8	8	18	18	9	9
May	2,472	2,474	8	8	19	19	9	9
June	2,301	2,335	8	8	21	19	10	10
July	2,369	2,631	9	8	21	20	11	10
August	2,473	2,358	8	8	22	19	10	10
September	2,109	2,399	8	7	18	26	9	11
October	2,733	2,689	8	8	18	18	10	9
November	2,499	2,417	9	8	33	22	13	11
December	2,386	-	9	-	22	-	11	-

Registered Users

Current # of registered Users as of 12/06/2019	
818	Registered Funeral Directors
285	Registered Funeral Staff
1,103	Total Funeral Home Users
6,954	Registered Certifiers (non-ME)
1,075	Registered Certifier Staff (non-ME)
8,029	Total Certifier/Staff Users (non-ME)
313	Registered ME
411	Registered MEI/ME Staff
724	Total ME/MEI/Staff Users
6,996	Registered Certifiers (combined)
1,349	Registered Certifier Staff (combined)
8,345	Total Certifier/Staff Users (combined)

*Improving timeliness of reporting is a key strategy for Iowa and at the national level.*





## Spotlight on Iowa Vital Events System (IVES)

### Launch Date is Set!

The next generation Iowa Vital Events System (IVES-NX) is scheduled to go live on **July 1, 2020**. The upgrade will use HTML technology, which eliminates the need to download special software/prerequisites.

#### Following are a few of the benefits:

- User friendly home page
- Browser agnostic - allows the use of most internet browsers (the current version is restricted to Internet Explorer)
- Better data entry and error tracking
- IVES-NX can be accessed using a variety of devices

Training demos will be offered prior to the launch of the new system and new user manuals will be available.

**July 1, 2020 is the launch date for the next generation IVES-NX.**

More to come! Watch for updates as the development progresses.



## Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS)

### What's New?

#### EDRS/MEI Interoperability

On October 1, 2019, the Iowa Vital Events System (IVES) electronic death registration was expanded to allow single-point data entry for medical examiner death cases. The upgrade provides interoperability between EDRS and the state medical examiner case management system, which eliminates the need to access two systems. This system enhancement will allow medical examiners, investigators and their staff to enter death scene investigation data into EDRS. This time-saving step supports the national quality improvement initiative to improve timeliness of death registration reporting.

**Creating duplicate records generates additional work for the user and the vital records staff.**

When a medical examiner starts an investigation, decedent demographic information is entered into IVES. This means, in cases where the death is investigated by a medical examiner or investigator, the electronic death record will be started (created) by the medical examiner/investigator. This is a change from the previous process (*i.e., funeral directors typically created the record*). With the implementation of this new process, it is imperative that funeral directors communicate with medical examiners to determine if a record has been started in EDRS. In addition, users should always utilize the **“Check for Duplicate”** feature when starting a death record. Creating duplicate records generates additional work for the user and vital records staff. Several notifications were sent to users to assist with the navigation of the new EDRS/MEI enhancement. One of the notices included easy to follow steps on **“Who Starts The Record.”**

In a nutshell, the launch went well. A few issues have been identified and these issues are being addressed by the development team. We are happy to report the new enhancement to the EDRS is functioning as expected.

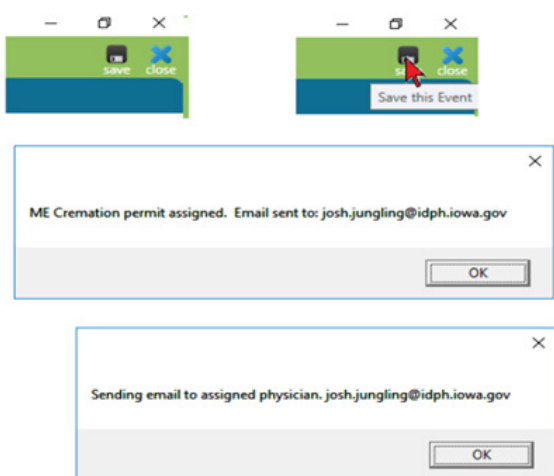


## Time for a Review

### Are Your Certifiers Missing Important Notifications?

The “Save Without Edits” is a useful function when you need to close the record because you are waiting on additional information. This function allows you to save your information and close the record without firing system edits. Users can close the record and avoid the need to “Skip” fields; however, it is important to know when to use this feature. Timing is the key so other features will still work properly. Notifications are one of those features that are affected by Save Without Edits.

To ensure the Certifier gets a notification, select the Certifier and click SAVE from the upper right hand corner.



## Training and Resources

### Just Released: New Handbook for Death Registration and Fetal Death Reporting (2019 Revision)

- This new resource was produced by the Centers for Disease Control, National Center of Health Statistics, and is available to print from the following website or reviewed from the Help menu located in IVEs: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/handbooks-and-guides.htm>.

## EDRS/MEI Interoperability Continued...

**Important Note:** Below are few of the issues the development team is working on, and some helpful hints to assist users as you navigate through the system. Contact the IVEs Helpdesk or the resource identified.

Issue	Temporary Work Around
Signature is not complete  <b>UPDATE: The Vital Records office has been notified that this issue has been resolved!</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go back to the signature tab</li> <li>Add “N” to the signature field– This will remove the rest of data.</li> <li>Enter “Y” – when you get the pop-up click OK and Close the record. <b>Important! Do not click “Save.”</b></li> </ol>
Duplicate Record	Contact the IVEs Help Desk or Death Registration to have the duplicate deactivated.
Funeral Home has not been assigned	Contact the IVEs Help Desk, Death Registration Specialist or Medical Examiner.
Pending Records: These records were entered into the EDRS prior to 10/1/2019. The Manner/Cause of Death has now been identified and the ME/Staff is ready to update the record.	The system will present errors advising there are MEI fields that have not been completed. This information would have been entered using the manual method pre-launch. To avoid duplicate case management reports – <b>Medical Examiner must contact the IOSME to coordinate completion of this record.</b> Certified copies can be ordered.
ME Contacted - Y	All fields in this section <b>must</b> be completed. Contact certifier or IVEs Help Desk.



## Contact Information

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IVES Help Desk	866-309-0831	IVESHelpDesk@idph.iowa.gov
Death Registration Portal		<a href="https://idph.iowa.gov/health-statistics/vital-records/drportal">https://idph.iowa.gov/health-statistics/vital-records/drportal</a>