



## New TER Post-It-Note Reminder

By Iris Rodriguez

Funeral Directors...are you tired of dealing with drop-to-paper death records? Need help communicating TER compliance?

Texas Health and Safety Code section 193.002 requires that death certificates be filed electronically. However, not all parties have complied with the law and may need some reminding.

VSU would like to announce the TER Post-It-Note reminders that can be placed on every drop-to-paper record that is a result of non-participation in the TER system.



These colorful reminders are available in six different types and can be useful in increasing awareness of TER compliance, as they remind parties that they are required to sign-up to use TER in order to certify records electronically.

Samples of the TER Post-It-Note reminders will be mailed to you soon. If additional post-it notes are required please email your request to [eli.puentes@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:eli.puentes@dshs.state.tx.us).

*Don't Forget the  
2010 Regional  
Conferences!!!*

*Coming in June and July. Keep an eye on our website for the dates and cities at [www.texasvsu.org](http://www.texasvsu.org)!*

# 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Vital Statistics Conference

By Catherine Roche

The 55th Annual Texas Vital Statistics Conference, “Reinventing Vital Statistics for Tomorrow’s Challenges”, was a huge success. There were 575 individuals from across Texas in attendance including local registrars, county and district clerks, justices of the peace, hospital and birthing center staff, midwives, funeral home directors and their staff, medical examiners and more.

This year’s conference received many favorable comments with regards to content, curriculum and preparations. The conference was kicked off with Suzie



L-R: Dr. Aliya Hussaini, State Registrar Geraldine Harris, and DSHS Commissioner Dr. David Lakey

Humphries, a renown motivational speaker presenting “I Can Do That”, an uplifting and positive method of dealing with stressful situations. The keynote speaker was Dr. Aliya Hussaini, Grant Officer and Health Portfolio for the Dell Foundation. Her presentation on Childhood Obesity was inspirational and powerful. Dr. David Lakey, the DSHS commissioner, welcomed our attendees at the opening address and gave an overview of the Departments of State Health Services programs and plans. Dr. Yvonne Howze, Director of Health Information and Vital Statistics, provided our awards

luncheon address which entertained and motivated everyone. At the Five Star Award luncheon, numerous special awards were given out by our State Registrar, Geraldine R. Harris, as well as awards from the Office of the Attorney General and ImmTrac. Many attendees received awards for their excellence and performance.

The conference consisted of twenty –nine break-out sessions that included topics such as statutes, TER registration, panels for birth, death, marriage and local registrars and AOP certification. This year the Louisiana State Registrar spoke on Continuity of Operations Planning: Experiences and Lessons Learned. Other session topics focused on issues such as customer feedback, disease prevention – ImmTrac, medical examiner issues – reporting COD, supplemental registration, passport fraud document and identity fraud, remote birth access, delayed records, website information and data quality and systems integration.

We wish to thank Texas Public Health Association, in cooperation with The Department of State Health Services for their assistance with the conference. Also, special thanks to our Platinum sponsors, Neubus and Vitalchek for their generous donations to the conference. And last but not least we would like to thank our many volunteers, staff, speakers, and exhibitors who made this year’s conference a success.

## 2009 Certified Master Registrars

Renee Clay	Mary Truesdale
Mary Collins	Cindy Walterscheid
Jeannette Compean	Greta Zamora
Dianne Florez	Iris Rodriguez
Stacey Kemp	Connie Seaman
Janetta Taylor	Linda Ward
Elizabeth Trevino	

## 2009 Texas Vital Statistics Five-Star Award Winners

### Funeral Home/Mortuary Service Registration Award Recipients

Calvillo Funeral Home  
- Georgetown  
Claybar Funeral Home  
- Orange  
Gabriel’s Funeral Chapel  
- Lubbock  
Garza Memorial Funeral Home  
- Brownsville  
Grimes Funeral Chapels  
- Kerrville  
Harrell Funeral Home

Joe Jackson Funeral Chapels  
- Laredo  
Kerrville Funeral Home  
- Kerrville  
Memorial Funeral Home  
- San Juan  
Nieto Dickey Funeral Home  
- Larado  
Porter Loring Funeral Home  
- San Antonio

Providence Funeral Home  
- Taylor  
Resthaven Funeral Home  
- Lubbock  
Restland Funeral Home  
- Dallas  
Schmidt Funeral Home  
- Katy  
Trevino Funeral Home  
- Brownsville  
Winscott Road Funeral Home

## *Hospital/Birth Center/ Midwife Registration Award Recipients*

### **Exemplary**

Abilene/Taylor County Public Health District  
Austin County Clerk  
Bell County Clerk  
Brazoria County Clerk  
Brown County Clerk  
City of Amarillo  
City of Arlington  
City of Austin - HHSD  
City of Baytown  
City of Beaumont  
Public Health Department  
City of Bedford  
City of Brownsville  
City of Bryan  
City of Carthage  
City of College Station  
City of Dallas  
City of Denison  
City of Grapevine  
City of Harlingen  
City of Laredo Health Department  
City of Lewisville  
City of Lubbock Health Department  
Vital Statistics  
City of McAllen  
City of North Richland Hills  
City of Pasadena

City of San Marcos  
City of Terrell  
City of Temple  
City of Texas City  
City of Weslaco  
City of Yoakum  
Collin County Clerk  
Comal County Clerk  
Cooke County Clerk  
Dawson County Clerk  
Deaf Smith County Clerk  
Denton County Clerk  
Ector County Clerk  
Fort Bend County Clerk  
Frio County Clerk  
Galveston County Health District  
Grayson County Clerk  
Gregg County Clerk  
Guadalupe County Clerk  
Hamilton County Clerk  
Hill County Clerk  
Hood County Clerk  
Houston County Clerk  
Jackson County Clerk  
Kaufman County Clerk  
Kerr County Clerk  
Llano County Clerk  
Limestone County Clerk

Madison County Clerk  
Mitchell County Clerk  
Midland County Clerk  
Nacogdoches County Clerk  
Navarro County Clerk  
Nolan County Clerk  
Northeast Texas Public Health District  
Parker County Clerk  
Polk County Clerk  
Rockwall County Clerk  
Rusk County Clerk  
San Antonio Metropolitan Health District  
Scurry County Clerk  
Tarrant County Clerk  
Taylor County Clerk  
Tom Green County  
Van Zandt County Clerk  
Waco-McLennan Public Health District  
Waller County Clerk  
Ward County Clerk  
Washington County Clerk  
Wichita Falls - Wichita County Public Health District  
Williamson County Clerk  
Wise County Clerk

### **Recognized**

Bosque County Clerk

City of Houston BVS  
Hunt County Clerk

Reeves County Clerk

## *Local Registrar Vital Registration Award Recipients*

Baptist St. Anthony's Health System Baptist Campus  
Baylor Medical Center At Frisco  
Baylor Regional Medical Center At Grapevine  
Brownsville Doctors Hospital  
Central Texas Medical Center  
Christus Santa Rosa Hospital - New Braunfels  
Christus St. Michael Health Systems  
Clear Lake Regional Medical Center  
Corpus Christi Medical Center - Bay Area  
DOCHS - Brackenridge  
DOCHS - Seton Medical Center  
DOCHS - Seton Northwest  
DOCHS - Seton Southwest

Del Sol Medical Center  
Doctors Hospital Parkway/Tidwell  
Graham Regional Medical Center  
Texas Health Harris Methodist  
Hurst-Euless-Bedford  
Hendrick Medical Center  
Hill Country Memorial Hospital  
Houston Northwest Medical Center  
Huguley Memorial Medical Center  
Las Colinas Medical Center  
Medical City Dallas Hospital  
Medina Regional Hospital  
Memorial Hermann - Katy  
Memorial Hermann Southeast  
Memorial Hermann Sugar Land  
Memorial Hermann The Woodlands  
Methodist Richardson Medical Center  
Methodist Willowbrook Hospital

Mission Regional Medical Center  
Moore County Hospital District  
Nacogdoches Memorial Hospital  
North Central Baptist Hospital  
Northeast Baptist Hospital  
Permian Regional Medical Center  
Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital of Denton  
Providence Memorial Hospital  
San Jacinto Methodist Hospital  
St David's Round Rock Hospital  
St Luke's Baptist Hospital  
St Luke's Community Medical Center-The Woodlands  
Titus Regional Medical Center  
Uvalde Memorial Hospital  
Valley Baptist Medical Center - Brownsville  
Valley Baptist Medical Center - Harlingen

## Veterans and Free Death Certificates

**Question:** If a decedent is a veteran of the armed forces, how does a funeral home receive a free death certificate for the family?

**Answer:** First, let us look at the particular statute in which this question refers to. According to Health and Safety Code §191.0046 (b) *The state registrar shall issue without fee a certified copy of a record not otherwise prohibited by law to a veteran or to the veteran's widow, orphan, or other dependent if the copy is for use in settling a claim against the government.*

When a decedent is a veteran of the armed forces, the surviving dependent or dependents do not automatically get a free certified copy of a death record. The death certificate has a specific purpose and that purpose is to settle a claim against the government

Texas Vital Statistics does issue a free certified copy for the statute listed above; however, all requests for death certificates without charge must be requested by an authorized agent of the Texas Veterans Commission [<http://www.tvc.state.tx.us>] or a Veterans County Service Officer. The TVC will make the determination on whether a certified copy is needed

to settle a claim against the government. If one is needed, the TVC will process the paperwork that then is forwarded to Texas Vital Statistics for a free certified copy of the record that is being requested.

In order for a local registrar's office to issue a certified copy without fee a TVC-14 form completed by a representative or agent from the Texas Veterans Commission or by a Veterans County Service Officer should be presented to the local registrar. The TVC-14 will be completed by the TVC authorized agent and contain information on where this document should be mailed to.

### Visit Our Website for More News and Information

[Texas Electronic Death Registration Training](http://www.texasvsu-ed.org)  
[www.texasvsu-ed.org](http://www.texasvsu-ed.org)

[TER Help Desk](http://www.help-ter.texasvsu.org)  
[www.help-ter.texasvsu.org](http://www.help-ter.texasvsu.org) or you can email them at [help-ter@texasvsu.org](mailto:help-ter@texasvsu.org)

[Texas Vital Statistics Handbooks](http://www.handbooks.texasvsu.org)  
[www.handbooks.texasvsu.org](http://www.handbooks.texasvsu.org)

[Purchase a Birth or Death Certificate Birth Record](http://www.getBC.texasvsu.org): [www.getBC.texasvsu.org](http://www.getBC.texasvsu.org)  
[Death Record](http://www.getDC.texasvsu.org): [www.getDC.texasvsu.org](http://www.getDC.texasvsu.org)

*Vital Statistics TODAY* (UPS 016-976) is published quarterly by Texas Vital Statistics, Department of State Health Services, 1100 West 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756-3191. Periodicals Postage paid at Austin, TX POSTMASTER. Send address changes to *Vital Statistics TODAY*, Texas Vital Statistics, Department of State Health Services, 1100 West 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756-3191. Publication Number 35-12604



David Lakey, M.D.  
Commissioner

### Editorial Board

Albert Rivera III, Managing Editor  
Catherine Roche, Assistant Editor  
Derek Johnson, Assistant Editor  
Doneshia Ates, Assistant Editor  
Iris Rodriguez, Assistant Editor  
Victor Farinelli, Designer

### Review Board:

Dr. Yvonne Howze, Section Director  
Health Information and Vital Statistics

Geraldine R. Harris, State Registrar  
VSU Unit Manager

### Contributors

Iris Rodriguez, VSU  
Catherine Roche, VSU

Phone: (512) 458-7111 (Austin);  
(888) 963-7111 (toll free)

Fax: (512) 458-7233

Email: [registrar@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:registrar@dshs.state.tx.us)

Website: [www.texasvsu.org](http://www.texasvsu.org)