



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

Public Health Division



Office of Vital Records

1430 Freedom Blvd. Suite A, Watsonville, CA 95076

Phone: (831) 763 – 8430 | Email: phvitalstatistics@santacruzcountycalifornia.gov

Santa Cruz County Office of Vital Records- Emergency Burial Permit Filing Protocol

Effective October 1, 2025

Purpose

This protocol establishes a process for emergency burial permit requests through the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS). Emergency filing is available for urgent situations including:

- Religious burial requirements
- Natural disaster-related circumstances
- Expedited out-of-state transportation of deceased individuals

Emergency Filing Hours

Weekends and Holidays: 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Phone: (831) 706-8259

Important: This service is only available during the two-hour window listed above. We do not provide on-call service outside these hours.

Procedure

Before You Call

Authorized Personnel: Only licensed mortuary or funeral home staff may submit emergency filing requests.

Required Preparation:

1. Complete the death certificate (DC) in EDRS
2. Thoroughly proofread all information and attestations
3. Ensure the certifying physician is available to sign immediately
4. Confirm the medical certifier has completed the cause of death section
5. Submit the DC through EDRS

Requesting Emergency Filing

1. Call as close to 9:00 AM as possible after submitting the DC in EDRS



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2. Provide the following information:

- EDRS record number
- Clear reason for urgency (religious burial, disaster, out-of-state transport, etc.)

3. Fees: A non-refundable \$50 emergency filing fee applies per request

Review Process

This is a two-part review:

Part 1 – Initial Review:

- Vital Records staff will review the submitted DC
- If accepted, proceed to Part 2
- If rejected, staff will explain required corrections. You must make corrections, resubmit, and call back

Part 2 – Final Review:

- Contact the physician to sign the DC immediately after Part 1 acceptance
- Vital Records staff will conduct a final review
- If accepted, the burial permit will be issued
- If rejected, you must obtain a new physician signature, resubmit, and call back

Important Reminders

- Emergency filing is strictly limited to weekends and holidays from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM
- All documentation must be accurate and complete before calling
- Have the certifying physician available for immediate signature
- Allow adequate time within the two-hour window for the complete review process

Questions? For non-emergency inquiries, please contact our office during regular business hours.



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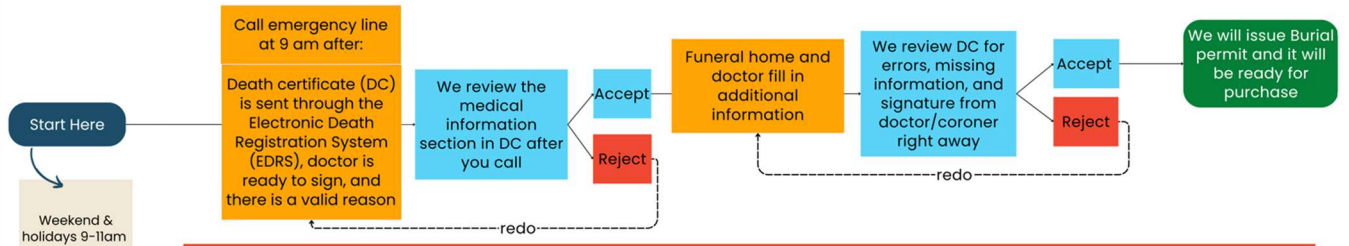


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Emergency Protocol



If there are delays or rejections during the process that require waiting outside our 2 hour window (9-11am) we will resume the following day.