

Guidelines for Reporting and Certifying COVID-19 Deaths

Documenting

IF TESTING OCCURRED, AND TEST RESULTS ARE AVAILABLE – THE RESULTS SHOULD BE DOCUMENTED ON THE RECORD.

How to Report UNCONFIRMED Cases

Laboratory test results are not typically reported on death certificates, however it is imperative that all information be documented for deaths when the Coronavirus Disease 2019, (COVID-19) is suspected. Clinical or epidemiological diagnosis of COVID-19 is an important component to determining the specific strain of the Coronavirus Disease.

The following terminology should be used to describe the status of the COVID-19 testing.

- COVID-19 testing is PENDING
- COVID-19 is Suspected - testing was REJECTED
- COVID-19 is Suspected - testing was NOT POSSIBLE
- COVID-19 NOT SUSPECTED

If you are a Medical Examiner (ME) or ME-Investigator, this information should be documented on the **ME Med. History** tab of the Electronic Medical Examiner Report (EMER).

Other medical certifiers will use the “Notes” feature to document information directly in the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS).

Instructions are on the next page.

Use the “Notes” feature to document in the EDRS.

Reporting

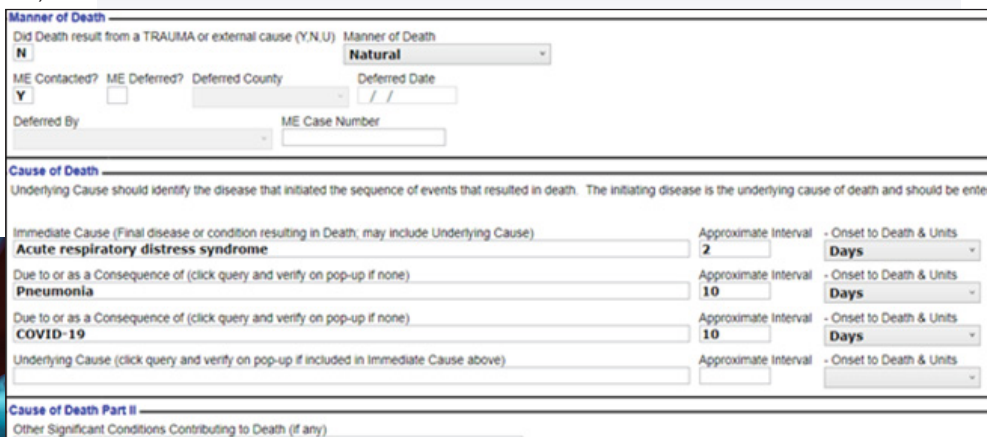
Coronavirus Disease 2019 or COVID-19 should be reported on the death certificate for all decedents where the disease caused or is assumed to have caused or contributed to death. We ask that all deaths use the standard terminology COVID-19.

Important Instructions: All deaths suspected or confirmed of COVID-19 must be reported to the medical examiner. Once details of the case are reviewed, the medical examiner will determine if an investigation will be started or jurisdiction declined. Additional details are available in the [Vital Update](#) released on March 12, 2020.

Completing the Cause of Death

ALL positive test results for COVID-19 must be documented on the COD

- Will COVID-19 be the underlying cause of death?
- The underlying cause depends upon what and where conditions are reported on the death certificate. However, the rules for coding and selection of the underlying cause of death are expected to result in COVID-19 being the underlying cause more often than not.
 - If COVID-19 is confirmed by a positive test, the underlying cause of death should be COVID-19.
 - If COVID-19 is diagnosed clinically but testing was not performed or results were not obtained, Probable or Presumed COVID-19 should be the underlying cause of death.



The screenshot shows a digital form for recording the cause of death. It includes sections for 'Manner of Death' (with 'Natural' selected), 'Cause of Death' (with 'Acute respiratory distress syndrome', 'Pneumonia', and 'COVID-19' listed), and 'Cause of Death Part II'.

Detailed guidance on how to complete the cause of death section on the death certificate is available on the National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) website [COVID-19 Alerts and information](#).



Tracking/Analyzing Data

New ICD Code for a Confirmed COVID-19 Death

A new ICD code that has been implemented to accurately capture mortality data for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on death certificates. COVID-19 should be reported on the death certificate for all decedents where the disease caused or is assumed to have caused or contributed to death.

The new ICD code for Coronavirus Disease 2019, (COVID-19), is U07.1; this code will be used for all **confirmed** deaths due to COVID-19.

A new ICD Code should be reported for COVID-19 deaths.



How to Add Notes to a Death Record

- Open the Death Record
- Click on Manner/Cause Tab
- Click on the Other Significant Conditions Contributing to Death field
- Right Click using the mouse
- Click Notes – on the dropdown list
- Notes window opens – Click “NEW”
- Type your notes in the lower field (sample verbiage)
- Save and Close

Helpful Hint: If you want to ensure the note was saved. Right click mouse – Select Notes – the Notes window will open to allow review of entry.

Contact Information

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