

1 OCTOBER INCIDENT IN NEVADA



NAPHSIS
Protecting Personal Identity
Promoting Public Health

MIAMI VITALS: THE HEAT IS ON
NAPHSIS ANNUAL MEETING | MIAMI | JUNE 4-7, 2018



NEVADA VITAL RECORDS PROCESS

- Two (2) counties (Clark County and Washoe County) handle the registration of birth, death and fetal death records and can issue certificates for their respective counties.
- The State Office of Vital Records handles all vital records aspects for 15 of the 17 counties, including amendments for the entire state.
- The Southern Nevada Health District, Clark County Vital Records Office handled the registration and issuance of death certificates for the 1 October Incident.

HOW DID THIS EFFECT VITAL RECORDS STAFF?

- The Clark County Vital Records Office had one person in management handling the registration and issuance of certificates. This was due to the high magnitude of the incident and the potential lawsuits. Clark County felt that a very thorough and detailed process was needed.
- The State Office of Vital Records had one person in management regularly communicating with that one person from the county for state level decisions and to ensure a consistency between the state and the county.

Electronic Death Registry System (EDRS)

- As death records were initiated, the State Office of Vital Records realized that there was no way to track or monitor these particular death records and differentiate them from other death records. For example, our EDRS search criteria allows for a search by date of death and county, however all deaths in the county for this date would be in the search results.
- Internally, the State Office of Vital Records added a check box called MCI Event (Mass Casualty Incident Event) by the Date of Death field in the death record.
- The check box allowed vital records to search by the event. By selecting the check box in the death record, it designated the death record as an MCI event. We also added this capability to the search function.

EDRS - CONTINUED

- Our current EDRS platform proved challenging for the Clark County Vital Records Office.
- To work from the Family Assistance Center, the Southern Nevada Health District had to install all the EDRS required prerequisites onto each computer. If the computer was not compatible with the prerequisites, additional install or configuration was required.

VITAL RECORDS ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES

- The State Office of Vital Records and the Clark County Vital Records Office jointly agreed to provide assistance to families by waiving the fee for five (5) death certificates issued by either the State Office of Vital Records or Clark County Vital Records Office.
- CHALLENGES - A decision to provide assistance was made a few days after the incident, but death certificate requests from funeral homes with payment were already coming in prior to the decision. The main complications were:
 - ✓ Refunds – Some payments were made by credit card.
 - ✓ How many are too many?

THE DEATH RECORD

- Burial permits started being issued within 5 days from the incident.
- The Clark County Medical Examiner / Coroner was actively involved in monitoring all aspects of the death record.

DATE OF DEATH AND DATE OF PRONOUNCEMENT

- With the incident happening in the late evening, victims passing away at the scene were not pronounced until early the next morning.
- This was of concern for the death record. The date of death would be October 1, but the date of pronouncement would be October 2 – even though the time difference would only be a few hours.
- Clark County was concerned about the impact on families. Families knew their loved one passed away on scene, but was not pronounced dead until the next day.
- The death record did reflect the actual dates.

DEATH CERTIFICATES

- Each informant for all 58 victims received at least the minimum set amount of death certificates.
- For example:
 - ✓ If death certificates were not initially requested, the Clark County Vital Records Office prepared five (5) death certificates.
 - ✓ If five (5) death certificates were requested, the Clark County Vital Records Office included five (5) additional death certificates.
- This initial batch of certificates were given to the FBI for hand delivery to each informant.

THE GUNMAN

- The Clark County Medical Examiner / Coroner wanted confidentiality regarding the gunman.
- The family for the gunman selected a funeral home.
- Reportedly, several funeral homes refused to work with the gunman's family. Some funeral homes had victims and others did not want to provide services overall.
- The funeral director created the death record, but nobody was initially aware of the death record being started.
- The State Office of Vital Records was monitoring these death records daily and found this death record in EDRS.
- The death record being created possibly affected the confidentiality that the Clark County Medical Examiner / Coroner was requesting. All the EDRS users at four (4) different locations, which include the funeral home, the Clark County Medical Examiner / Coroner's Office, the Clark County Vital Records Office and the State Office of Vital Records would have access to the death record.
- The State Office of Vital Records deactivated the death record until the Clark County Medical Examiner / Coroner was ready to release the gunman. The State Office of Vital Records re-activated the death record upon request from the Clark County Vital Records Office.

WHAT DID NEVADA LEARN?

- Nevada confirmed that our normal registration and certificate issuance process should remain the same with the exception of one person, who is fully aware of the situation, handling these duties.
- From a vital records standpoint, prepare for a mass casualty incident and coordinate with all users of EDRS. Please consider the following:
 - ✓ Will fees be waived for death certificates and for what type of event?
 - ✓ Are we able to track the data from this type of event?
 - ✓ Are funeral homes aware of the processes for a MCI event.



**A Moment
Of Silence
Please**