

Vitals Information Partnership (VIP) Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS)

ePermit Opt-in and Opt-out Factsheet for Funeral Homes

Online funeral homes will be able to print the Disposition Permit (“burial permit”) from the EDRS. The concept of opting in or out affects when the permit is available for printing. For opt-in communities, you will be able to print an ePermit immediately after a death record is complete and released to the burial agent. For opt-out communities, you will be able to print a permit after the burial agent has reviewed the death record and assigned local permit information. You will still be responsible to pay all fees in the manner determined by each community. However, the EDRS allows for flexibility such that timing of fee payment can be independent of the timing of a Disposition Permit. For instance, the burial agent may issue a Disposition Permit, but continue to hold the death record until payment is received before releasing it to the clerk for registration.

Default EDRS Permit Printing = Opt-out

- Opt-out is the default operation of the system.
 - Each burial agent for a city or town is set to opt-out unless the primary burial agent notifies VIP in writing or by email.
1. Once a cause of death has been certified, the funeral director completes all other portions of the record and releases it to the burial agent for a permit. The record can no longer be edited by the funeral director; all required fields are present and edit checks have been performed by the system.
 - a. Go to Death > Print > Permits
 - b. Enter search criteria and click on the SEARCH button.
 - c. If an orange message is displayed stating that search results will contain only records with completed permit information, the community is opt-out. Contact the burial agent by telephone or email to discuss obtaining the permit, if timing is an issue.
 2. The burial agent will review the record **online** (may send it back for corrections if necessary) and enter the date issued, local permit number and select the burial agent for printing on the permit and death certificate.
 3. **Once the permit information on the record is saved, the funeral director is able to print the Disposition Permit from the system.**
 4. The burial agent will release the record to the clerk of occurrence for registration when ready.

Some Notes on Off-Hours Permitting if the Community is Opt-out:

- Each community will determine how to address outside of business hours issuance online.
- Contact the burial agent as soon as you know about a death that may require outside of business hours issuance of the permit to determine the process.

ePermit Printing = Opt-in

ePermits are an option provided by opt-in communities to facilitate the disposition permit process. The EDRS checks that all fields are complete and also checks most fields for validity. An opt-in community will rely on EDRS edit checks for initial examination of the record, and rapid

availability of an ePermit; however, the burial agent must still review the record prior to release to the occurrence community for registration, and still has the opportunity to return a record for corrections. If a community is Opt-in, printing disposition permits for deaths in that community will work as follows:

1. Once a cause of death has been certified, the funeral director completes the record. The system ensures that all required fields are present and performs edit checks and validations. The funeral director releases the record to the burial agent and the record can be no longer be edited by the funeral director.
2. **As soon as a record is released to a burial agent in an opt-in community, the funeral director (any funeral director who processes a death in that municipality) will be able to print the ePermit for the record and will be able to proceed with the disposition of the decedent, before the final review by the Burial Agent.**
3. Contact the burial agent by telephone or email to discuss fees and payment options for the permit, if applicable.
4. On the next available business day, the burial agent will review the record **online** (may send it back for corrections if necessary) and enter the date issued, local permit number and select the burial agent for printing on the permit and death certificate.
5. The burial agent will release the record to the clerk of occurrence for registration when ready.

Some Notes on Off-Hours Permitting if you OPT-IN:

- ePermitting eliminates the need for outside of business hours permit issuance for online funeral directors.
- Offline and out-of-state funeral homes can work through an online funeral home via a trade service call process; whereby online funeral homes will be able to process records for offline funeral homes.

Questions? Email the project team at vjp@state.ma.us