



# THE VITAL RECORD

*A monthly electronic bulletin from the Registry of Vital Records and Statistics (RVRS).*

*The Vital Record* highlights updates from the Massachusetts Registry of Vital Records and Statistics (RVRS) on modernization efforts and other timely information of interest to our registration and data partners.

**December 2022**

## RVRS Happenings

### Pronouncement Enhancements

This year, RVRS has focused on the 21st-Century Project to update our systems. A crucial part is launching the **Massachusetts Vital Records Information Collaborative (MAVRIC)**. The MAVRIC system enables the end-to-end processes for birth, death, marriage, divorce, fetal death, and other vital records and statistics.

MAVRIC furthers our transition from paper to electronic records. This improves information timeliness and quality. One process that continues to be paper-based in the current system is the RN/NP/PA Pronouncement form, a form that accompanies 48% of all death records. Proposed, for MAVRIC integration, is the ability to start a death record with the pronouncement process and enter fact-of-death information online.

Highlights of the proposed electronic pronouncement process:

1. An RN/NP/PA pronouncer can log in to MAVRIC using any **internet-enabled device**, such as laptop, tablet, or mobile phone.
2. Once **logged in**, the pronouncer can start a new record or look up an established record to update.
3. The pronouncer information will be **pre-populated in the record**, eliminating the need to repeat this information on each form (This includes name, employer, license, and address information.)
4. Once the pronouncement is completed, the pronouncer may choose to send an **electronic notification** to the medical certifier and funeral homes through the system. Certifier and funeral home information is already available in **picklists**, so the messaging and assignment process is quick and easy. Recipients are notified instantly within the system and through e-mail that the record needs their attention.
5. It may not be necessary to print the pronouncement for the funeral home; however, the option does still exist in the system.
6. A funeral home and/or electronic medical certifier can find the record through the message or by **search**, and then complete the rest of the record.
7. All users will be able to **easily create reports** based on the data captured in the system.

RVRS is seeking feedback on the proposed system enhancements. The functionality needs to work well for our vital records partners, so your suggestions and participation in design and testing is very necessary. Email [RVRSCommunications@mass.gov](mailto:RVRSCommunications@mass.gov) to provide input. We would like to hear from you!

## Policy and Procedures

### Printing — Bond Paper or Security Paper

City and town clerks should be aware of two specific types of paper when creating **archival vital records** and **issuing certified copies of vital records**: bond paper and security paper. Please be sure to adhere to the required standards when choosing paper to produce/print vital records information.

#### When to use bond paper:

For printing archival records such as birth, marriage, and death certificates, as well as evidence documents, all clerk offices across the Commonwealth are [mandated](#) to use archival quality, permanent paper. Bond paper is a common type of archival quality paper that is durable, acid free paper made with a portion of cotton stock to help ensure the long-term survival of these vital documents. Clerks can order bond paper from RVRs at no cost by emailing [vital.forms@mass.gov](mailto:vital.forms@mass.gov).

#### When to use security paper:

We strongly encourage clerks to use security paper when issuing certified copies of birth, marriage, and death certificates. Security paper contains specialized printed features to deter alteration and duplication, as well as authentication features embedded in the paper to help mitigate fraud and document abuse.

Massachusetts has developed and uses security paper that is exclusive to the state. The security paper developed for use by cities and towns is nearly identical to that used by RVRs and recognizable by most state and federal agencies as authentic. Designed to work with laser and inkjet printers, the issuance security paper is 8.5" x 11" and 24 lb. It includes:

- **Unique form numbering**
- **Watermark** to deter photocopying and scanning
- **Security fibers** that show under ultraviolet light
- **Micro-print** that appears as a blurred line when photocopied
- **"Void" background** that appears if photocopied or scanned

City and town clerks can purchase the Massachusetts-approved security paper directly from RR Donnelley, the state's authorized printer, by contacting RR Donnelley representatives [rena.a.welty@rrd.com](mailto:rena.a.welty@rrd.com) or [susan.sheridan@rrd.com](mailto:susan.sheridan@rrd.com).

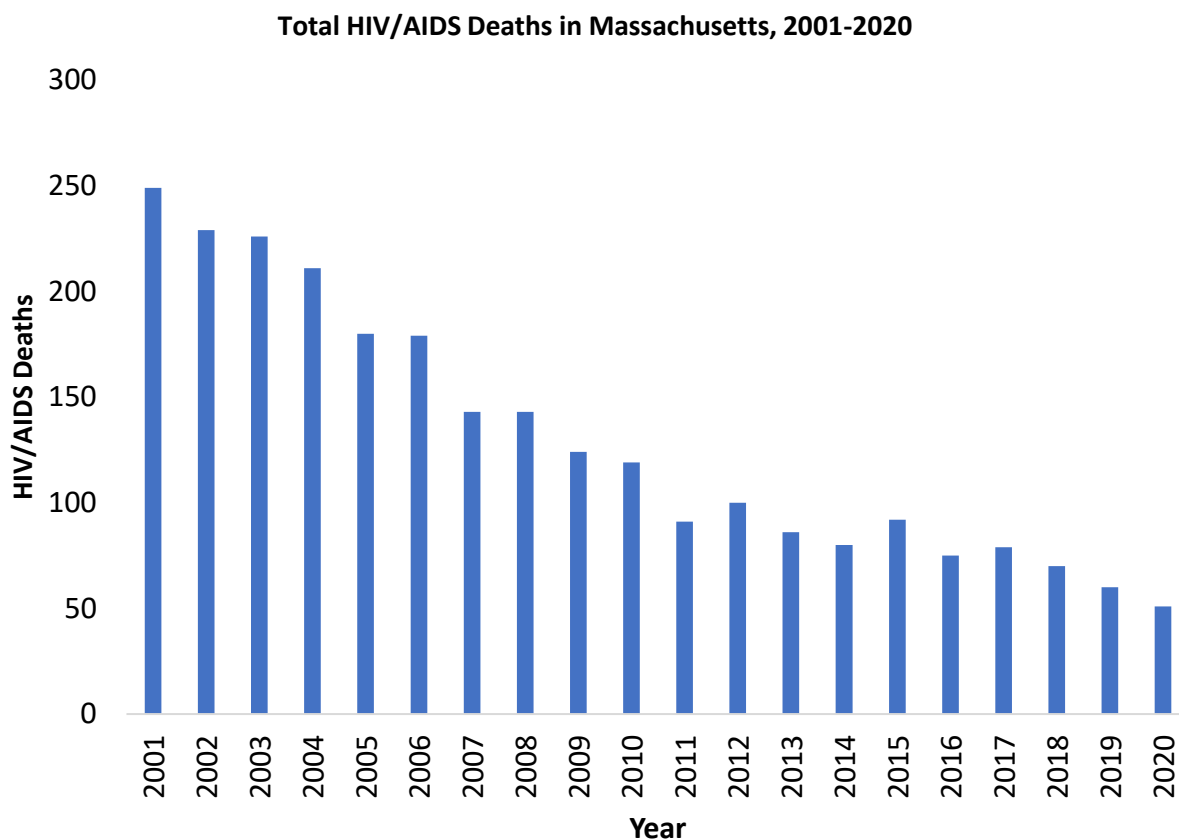
## National Health Observances

### World AIDS Day

We recognized World AIDS Day on December 1. Some positive related news: HIV related deaths are declining. RVRs data shows that there were 249 HIV infected deaths in 2001 compared to 51 HIV infected deaths in 2020. This is a decrease of 79.1%. The CDC attributes the declining

number of deaths to improvements in patient care and treatment that extend the lifespans of people living with HIV infection. Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/statistics/deaths/index.html>

The Massachusetts HIV/AIDS Surveillance Program reports that new HIV diagnoses have declined steadily over the last ten years, dropping from 679 cases in 2011 to 435 cases in 2020.



**Source:** Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Registry of Vital Records and Statistics. 2022. Death Files, 2001-2020.

## Key Contacts

Topic	Contact
Amendments	<a href="mailto:vip-amend@mass.gov">vip-amend@mass.gov</a>
Bond paper request	<a href="mailto:vital.forms@mass.gov">vital.forms@mass.gov</a>
Data and publications	<a href="mailto:vital.datarequest@mass.gov">vital.datarequest@mass.gov</a>
Delayed records	<a href="mailto:vital.regulation@mass.gov">vital.regulation@mass.gov</a>
General inquiries	<a href="mailto:RVRSCommunications@mass.gov">RVRSCommunications@mass.gov</a>
RVRS customer service	<a href="mailto:vital.recordsrequest@mass.gov">vital.recordsrequest@mass.gov</a>
Vital forms	<a href="mailto:vital.forms@mass.gov">vital.forms@mass.gov</a>
Vitals Information Partnership (VIP) accounts	<a href="mailto:vip-accounts@mass.gov">vip-accounts@mass.gov</a>
Vitals Information Partnership (VIP) registration	<a href="mailto:vip@mass.gov">vip@mass.gov</a>

## Key Resources

- [RVRS](#) administers and issues copies of vital records that occurred in Massachusetts from 1931 to the present. RVRS also provides statistics on births, deaths, fetal deaths, divorces, and marriages.
- The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) is the nation's leading science-based, data-driven, service organization that protects the public's health.
- The [Federal Emergency Management Administration \(FEMA\) COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Program](#) may be able to offer financial assistance to your constituents who have already paid for funeral expenditures linked to COVID-19.
- To order Massachusetts-approved security paper, please email RR Donnelley representatives [rena.a.welty@rrd.com](mailto:rena.a.welty@rrd.com) or [susan.sheridan@rrd.com](mailto:susan.sheridan@rrd.com).

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