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Social Security Number Redaction on Death Certificates (10/15)

An amendment to ORC 3705.23 is effective beginning October 15, 2015. This amendment prohibits vital statistics offices in Ohio from disclosing a Social Security Number on a certified death record within the first 5 years after death unless the requestor falls into one of the following categories:

- Decedent's Spouse
- Lineal Descendent (grandchild, great grandchild, etc. Parents and siblings do NOT fit this category)
- The executor of the decedent's estate
- Power of attorney, agent of the estate, or someone who is authorized, in writing, to act on the behalf of the decedent
- County veterans service officer
- Private investigator with a class A or B license
- An official of the federal or state government charged with prosecuting a crime
- An individual engaged or employed by any newspaper or press association for the purpose of news reporting
- A licensed funeral director or agent

We are required to see a photo ID and documentation that you fit into one of these categories if you are requesting the Social Security Number to be shown on the death certificate and the death occurred less than 5 years.

Examples of documentation include:

- Decedent's certificate of death designating the name of the surviving spouse
- Birth Certificates to show lineage
- Will, legal documentation, or written authorization executed by the decedent before death
- Medical or life insurance policy showing the requestor is a spouse or lineal descendent

If the requestor works for one of the agencies listed above, the following may be used for documentation:

- Employee identification badge
- Written agency request on letterhead
- Legal documentation issued by a court

If the death occurred more than 5 years ago, or you are not asking for the Social Security Number to be shown, no documentation is required.

If you have any questions regarding Social Security Number redaction or acceptable documentation, please call our office at 419-523-5608.

