



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Public Health
Department No.: 041
For Agenda Of: 08-03-10
Placement: Set Hearing
Estimated Tme: 10 minutes on 08-10-10
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Takashi Wada, MD, MPH Director and Health Officer
Director(s) Public Health Department
Contact Info: Susan Klein-Rothschild, Assistant Deputy Director, Community Health Division (681-5345)
SUBJECT: Office of Vital Records – Fees Resolution

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form:

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

Set a Hearing for August 10, 2010 to consider recommendations regarding a fee for mailing certified copies of birth and death certificates as follows:

- a) Adopt a resolution implementing a postage and administrative fee of \$2.00 for the Office of Vital Records pursuant to the California Health & Safety Code §102275.
- b) Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, approve the Notice of Exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 for the fee resolution.
- c) Authorize the Public Health Department Office of Vital Records to adjust the mailing fee for copies of birth and death certificates when this fee is adjusted for the Clerk/Recorder's Office.

Summary Text:

The Office of Vital Records in the Public Health Department is responsible for registering certificates of birth, fetal death, and death events occurring within the local registration district in accordance with Health and Safety Code Sections 102275 and 102395. By law, the health officer of any approved health department is the local registrar.

The local Office of Vital Records prepares original certificates of birth or death, prepares or scans copies for the county recorder, and transmits the original certificates to the State Office of Vital Records. The California Health and Safety Code (Section 103526) permits that only specific individuals may receive

an authorized certified copy of birth or death records. These individuals may request a certified copy of birth or death certificate from either the Office of Vital Records or Clerk/Recorder's Office. The request may be in person or by mail.

Fees for certified copies of birth and death certificates are set by the State. In addition to the State fee, a mailing fee is charged by the Clerk-Recorder's Office for certified copies provided by mail. The Board of Supervisors approved the \$2 mailing fee in January 2009 in a fee resolution which adjusted fees for the Clerk-Recorder's Office but this fee adjustment does not apply to certified copies provided by mail by the Public Health Department's Vital Records Office. The fee proposal presented for consideration is to provide the same service from each office at the same cost to the community.

In preparation for the fee proposal, the Public Health Department has reviewed the fees and analysis by the County Clerk/Recorder's Office and conducted a similar analysis for the Office of Vital Records.

Background:

All original birth and death certificates are created in the local Office of Vital Records under the oversight of the Health Officer and in concert with guidance provided through the State of California Office of Vital Records. After an original certificate is created, it is scanned in to a secure automated system that may be accessed by Public Health Department Vital Records and Clerk-Recorder's offices.

Community members may come to either office to obtain a certified copy. There are advantages to customers to be able to use either office for this service. The offices are in different locations in the county so proximity is a consideration. Customers may also be doing other kinds of business at the same time and multiple locations are desirable.

With the current differential in fees, it is confusing to customers. Sometimes one office will receive a request with a check for the amount that is the fee for the other office. This requires mailing the request to the other office or sending it back to the customer with further instruction. This adds time delays for the customer.

To estimate the number of requests that might be impacted by adding a mailing fee to the Office of Vital Records, the office tracked the number of requests received by mail for a one week period of time. In that one week period, the office received 2 mail-in requests for death certificates and 6 mail-in requests for birth certificates. On an annual basis, this is estimated to be 416 mail-in requests. At a cost of \$2 per request, the estimated revenue is insignificant at \$832. The annual total of birth and death certificates provided through the Office of Vital Records is approximately 27,716. Mail-in requests are a small percentage of the total.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: No

Fiscal Analysis:

Adoption of the Vital Statistics mail fee of \$2 will create customer consistency and efficiency between county agencies for birth and death certificates. There is no increased cost if the fee is implemented. The estimated annual revenue, of less than \$1,000, was not included in PHD's adopted budget. The Vital Statistics program can be found in the Epidemiology Unit Cost Center on page D-220 in the FY 2010-11 Operating Plan.

Special Instructions:

1. Request the Clerk of the Board to publish notice of this hearing, per the attached Public Notice, in the Santa Barbara News Press 5 and 10 days prior to the hearing, in accordance with Government Code §6062a.
2. Request the Planning and Development Department to post the Notices of Exemption in the County Planning and Development Department at least six days prior to consideration of the activity by the Board of Supervisors to comply with the County CEQA guidelines.
3. Return one fully executed Resolution to the Public Health Department Contracts Unit, 300 N. San Antonio Road, Bldg. 8, Santa Barbara, CA 93110 and email an electronic copy of the Minute Order to PHD Contracts Unit at PHDcu@sbcphd.org.

Attachments:

CEQA Notice of Exemption
Public Notice
Resolution

Authored by: Susan Klein-Rothschild, 681-5345