

SESSION 9. DESIGNATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE LOCAL REGISTRAR AND CIVIL REGISTRATION PROCESS

UNITED NATIONS STATISTICS DIVISION

Workshop on the Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics
System, Revision 3 for Arabic-speaking countries

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❑ **Designation of responsibilities for local registrar**

a) *Principles and Recommendations, para 325-339*

b) *Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System: Preparation of a Legal Framework, para 360-361 and 403, Model Law articles 28-36*

❑ **Local registration units**

a) *Principles and Recommendations, para 340-348*

b) *Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System: Preparation of a Legal Framework, para 403 and Model Law articles 67, 68, 83, 84, 101-102 and 107-108*



- An official authorized by law to**
 - Register the occurrence of vital events
 - Represent the legal authority if the government
 - Responsible for maintaining relationship with the community

- Conditions**
 - Employed full-time
 - Civil service status and benefits
 - Appropriate remuneration

- Special consideration**
 - Enjoy recognition and standing in the communities they serve
 - Remain informed on the community's concerns and developments
 - Establish continuous relationship with personnel in hospitals, clinics, health centers, funeral institutions, religious establishments, court clerks ...



Local registrar's responsibilities



- Recording specific information regarding vital events
- Ensuring compliance with registration laws and regulations
- Ensuring the accuracy and completeness of each record
- Ensuring the confidentiality of each record
- Taking custody of the records
- Ensuring the completion of statistical report
- Issuing certificates or copies of vital records
- Providing customer service
- In the case of death registration, ensuring that the certification of the cause of death is part of the documentation
- Informing the public of the importance of civil registration and vital statistics



Local registrar's responsibilities - continued



- Depending on the geographical features and size of the area covered, making regular rounds within the jurisdiction
- Publicity
- Knowledge of local customs and languages
- Active role
- Understanding of the process of producing vital statistics
- Ability to explain the registration process and its importance and consequence in a colloquial manner
- Maintaining easily accessible office and regular working hours



- Within the provision of the law, the registrar is subjected to penalties if he/she**
 - Fails to register a vital event or its characteristics, as reported by the informant
 - Loses, damages or alters any registered records or permits such loss, damage or alteration to occur
 - Fails to provide registrants with adequate protection of privacy and confidentiality
 - Has been found guilty of violating the provisions of the civil registration law or its rules and regulations
 - Fails to fill out and submit statistical documentation



- ❑ **Primary registration unit is a well-delineated part of territory of a country that is entrusted to a local civil registrar for the recording of vital events occurring therein**
 - ❑ Jurisdictional territory of one registrar
 - ❑ Adequate size
 - ❑ Managed by one registrar
 - ❑ Boundaries should coincide with those of a minor civil division
 - ❑ Adjustment might be needed
 - ❑ Easily accessible and well-marked
 - ❑ Open during regular working hours



Local registration unit - continued



- ❑ **Therefore, determination on the number and location of local registration unit needs to take into account**
 - ❑ Population size
 - ❑ Staff resources
 - ❑ Material resources
 - ❑ Accessibility, including transportation facilities, climate
 - ❑ Literacy of the population
 - ❑ Complexity of the registration procedure



- ❑ **Secondary registration unit**
 - ❑ At selected locations with frequent vital events within the primary registration unit
 - ❑ Hospitals, health centers
 - ❑ Clear delineation of boundaries



Mobile registration unit

- In areas where the population density is too low to establish a permanent unit
- Or not accessible year –round
- Mobile unit
- Publicized and regular schedules
- Staying long enough



Concluding remarks on local registrars and units



- ❑ Local registrar – a building block of the whole system
- ❑ Civil servant
- ❑ Well versed in registration law and procedures
- ❑ Trained and equipped
- ❑ High standards of responsibility
- ❑ Well versed in local circumstances, customs and language
- ❑ Registration unit – must be easily recognizable and efficient



Civil Registration Process. Recommended reading



❑ **Place, time, cost, late registration and registration proofs**

a) *Principles and Recommendations, para 356-373*

b) *Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System: Preparation of a Legal Framework, paras. 44, 111-135 and 403*

c) *Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System: Management, Operations and Maintenance, para. 292-318 and 333-336*



Place of registration



- Place of occurrence**
 - Usually straight-forward
- Place of usual residence**
 - In certain circumstances more complicated
- Law has to specify which one applies for which specific event**
 - The two options are not mutually exclusive
 - In many cases the law requires both
- International guidelines**
 - Live births Place of usual residence of the mother
 - Foetal deaths Place of usual residence of the mother
 - Infant deaths Place of usual residence of the mother or the infant (if different)
 - Death Place of usual residence of the deceased
 - Marriage Place of occurrence – previous place of residence not relevant



Time allowed for registration



- ❑ **The period of time within which the informant must report the occurrence of vital event and its characteristics to the registrar**
 - ❑ This time should be clearly specified in the Registration Law for each vital event
 - ❑ Shorter period is preferable to longer period – passage of time may lead to miss-reporting, underreporting and factual errors in reporting
 - ❑ The shorter period is also necessary for public health reason – in cases of deaths
 - ❑ The time period has to be identical throughout the country
 - ❑ In some cases, such as for deaths, for example, there may be more than one deadline for registration – one for the death itself and another for the cause of death, given the time needed for certification of the cause of death in certain circumstances
 - ❑ Grace period – usually up to one year
- ❑ **Examples**

❑ Live births	Up to one month
❑ Deaths/foetal deaths	Three days
❑ Marriage	Same day
❑ Divorce	Seven days from the date the court granted the divorce



Late and delayed registration



- ❑ **Late registration is a registration of the vital event after the legally specified period but within the grace period**
- ❑ **Delayed registration is a registration of the vital event after the grace period has expired**
 - ❑ The Registration Law has to contain specific provisions
 - ❑ Additional documentation and proof
 - ❑ Fees, but not penalties
- ❑ **Causes for late and delayed registration**
 - ❑ Within the registration system
 - ❑ Proceedings too demanding in terms of time and complexity
 - ❑ Cost of registration high
 - ❑ Registration offices not easily accessible
 - ❑ Within the community
 - ❑ Lack of awareness
 - ❑ Lack of interest



Proofs for registration



- ❑ **The registration process starts when the registrar is presented with a proof of the occurrence of the vital event by the informant**
 - ❑ Legal document
 - ❑ Medical certificate
 - ❑ Personal declaration
 - ❑ Witness

- ❑ **Documentary proofs, in general, more reliable**
 - ❑ Not always available
 - ❑ In some cases irreplaceable
 - ❑ Divorce
 - ❑ Annulments of marriage
 - ❑ Judicial separation
 - ❑ Recognitions
 - ❑ Legitimations
 - ❑ Adoptions
 - ❑ Marriage



- ❑ **Documentary evidence presented to the registrar originates in many different institutions**
 - ❑ Registrar needs to be familiar with these forms and formats
 - ❑ Registration system has to be consulted when forms change
 - ❑ Regular updates and training
 - ❑ Particular importance in terms of content of the documentation related to statistical requirements



Concluding remarks



- Place of registration
 - Place of occurrence
 - Place of usual residence
- Time of registration
 - Different deadlines
 - Short period of time
 - Grace period
- Late and delayed registration
 - Fees, not penalties
 - Additional documentation
 - Causes and remedies
- Proofs
 - Preferably documents
 - Content