

**Doran Funeral Homes, Inc. dba Acton Funeral Home
Acton, Massachusetts**

Certified Copies of the Death Certificate and Notifications

What is a certified copy of the death certificate?

A certified copy is a copy of the electronic death record printed on official stationery with a raised seal and signature of the official of the issuing office.

Why do I need a certified copy? Can't I just make one?

You need a certified copy as a proof of death for anything legal or financial. Regular copies of a certified copy are usually not be accepted as proof of death.

How do I get certified copies?

Every state has its own system for issuing certified copies of the death certificate. In Massachusetts, certified copies may be issued by either the Town/City Clerk's Office where the death occurred, or the Clerk's Office where the person is listed as a legal resident at the time of his/her death. You can order by mail or in person, and many offices also offer an on-line option or orders and payment.

Is there a fee for certified copies?

Yes, all the Clerks' Offices charge a fee for certified copies. This varies from place to place, and there may be either an additional charge to mail or to pick up the copies in-person. In our experience, the fees range from \$5.00 to \$25.00 per certified copy. The fee is payable at the time the order is placed.

The following entities should be notified concerning a death and will most likely require a certified copy of the death certificate:

1. Each life insurance company/companies
2. Each banking institution where there is/are an account/s
3. The Registry of Motor Vehicles if there is car/truck/trailer/RV ownership to transfer
4. Credit card companies
5. Mortgage company/update real estate ownership deed(s) on property
6. Financial Planner for investment companies
(IRAs, stocks, bonds, annuities, investment accounts)
7. Tax preparer for the income tax
8. Estate attorney for probate court/ filing the will
9. The Social Security Administration. In Massachusetts, Social Security is automatically notified when the electronic death record is filed. Acton Funeral Home staff also fax a 721 notification to the Social Security Office, hopefully so when you the death will already have been registered. If so, they may not require a death certificate

10. The Veterans Administration

- for retired servicemen/servicewomen,
- honorably discharge veterans currently receiving disability payments
- honorably discharged veterans who die in a VA facility

11. Employer or former employer for benefits, retirement or pension Issues

12. Trade or Professional Union(s)

The following should be notified concerning a death, may not require a death certificate- this will vary:

1. Health insurance company and supplemental health insurance provider
2. Primary care physician; any dental and health care providers
3. Utilities/Cable Company
5. Civic and fraternal organizations