

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
PAROLE DIVISION**



**POLICY AND
OPERATING PROCEDURE**

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DATE: 03/04/13

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SUPERSEDES: 10/01/05

SUBJECT: DEATH VERIFICATION

AUTHORITY: N/A

PURPOSE: To provide procedures for verification of an offender's death and close the case through coordination with the Bureau of Vital Statistics (BVS) and review of matching identification criteria.

I. RECEIPT OF DEATH INFORMATION

- A. Upon receipt of the BVS death notification report, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) Central Coordination Unit (CCU) designee will log onto the TDCJ mainframe, and schedule batch job PDKAUPON to run at an appointed time at the close of business. In the event the report is not received at least one time monthly, the CCU designee will notify BVS by the 10th working day of each month requesting the report.
- B. Deceased offenders will be identified based on specified matching criteria, which distinguishes between reliable and partial matches. Partial matches meet three of the four criteria, while reliable matches meet all of the following four:
 - 1. Last and first name;
 - 2. Gender;
 - 3. Date of birth; and
 - 4. Social Security number.

II. RELIABLE MATCHES

- A. If a reliable match appears on the BVS report, the CCU designee shall close out the case in the Offender Information Management System (OIMS), which automatically closes the case on the Parole Supervision System (PSS).

As the cases are closed out in the system, automatic electronic notification will be sent to the field, Victim Services, and the Classification and Records Office (CRO). The district case file shall be maintained for one (1) year after the case is closed.

- B. If the deceased offender has an active pre-revocation warrant, the CCU designee shall flag the case to be closed once the Warrants Section has withdrawn the warrant.
 - 1. The CCU shall pull the files for warrant withdrawal. All lists of files shall provide the file location to facilitate processing. The Program Supervisor I in CCU shall complete and submit the Warrant Cancellation in Parole Violation/Revocation Warrant Closure.
 - 2. The Warrants Section shall withdraw the warrant as indicated in Parole Division policy 4.2.2, *Warrant Closure/Return to Supervision*. Upon processing the warrant, CCU will tag the file for archiving and delivery to Review and Release Processing, which will process the file for archiving.
 - 3. Once the warrant has been withdrawn, the system will automatically close out the case in the OIMS and the PSS, and notifies the field, Victim Services, and the CRO.
- C. If a reliable match and no warrant appear, the CCU designee shall close out the case in the OIMS, which automatically closes the case on the PSS, and will forward a list to Review and Release Processing for files to be pulled and processed for archiving.

III. PARTIAL MATCHES

- A. All BVS data and TDCJ file information shall be analyzed by CCU-designated staff. CCU will receive an electronic report if a partial match appears on the BVS report. Files shall be pulled for investigation and analysis of possible death.
- B. If information from the BVS and TDCJ file is analyzed and no match exists, and additional information is not required from the parole officer, the case shall remain open and the file returned to its previous location.
- C. If no match exists and additional information is required from the parole officer, the CCU designee shall request that the parole officer attempt to determine if the death information is factual by conducting an investigation to verify death. A hard copy of the death certificate shall not be required for verification. Once the parole officer determines that the death notification is from a reliable source, the parole officer shall render the case inactive by indicating the status change, "Death Reported," in the OIMS (Status 04/Reason 03) and on the PSS.

- D. If a match is confirmed upon completion of the investigation and analysis, the CCU designee shall close out the case in the OIMS, which will automatically close the case in the PSS. Cases shall also be closed in the mainframe screen by the CCU designee. As the cases are closed out in the system, automatic electronic notification will be sent to the field, Victim Services, and the CRO. The district case file material shall be maintained for one (1) year after the case is closed.
1. CCU staff shall review the file for active pre-revocation warrants.
 - a. If the CCU designee determines that there is no active pre-revocation warrant, the file shall be tagged for archiving and delivered to Review and Release Processing, which will process the file for archiving.
 - b. If the CCU designee determines that there is an active warrant, the file shall be delivered to the Warrants Section, which shall withdraw the warrant using the procedures outlined in Section II.B. (1–3) above. CCU staff will receive a subsequent report confirming warrant withdrawal from the Warrant Section.
- E. CCU shall receive a report from Information Technology Division every thirty (30) calendar days identifying those cases that have been rendered inactive by the parole officer as “Death Reported” but that have not been verified and closed by the BVS match process.

IV. DEATH NOTIFICATION FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES

- A. If the parole officer has received information from a reliable source (e.g., death certificate, police report, obituary, news article, or by accessing the GenealogyBank Social Security Death Index website at www.genealogybank.com/gbnk/ssdi) that an offender is deceased, the parole officer shall render the case inactive by indicating the status change “Death Reported” on the OIMS. Upon receiving notification from the parole officer or BVS report and determining that the case is a reliable match, the CCU designee shall close out the case as outlined in Section II above.
- B. If the parole officer receives a death certificate from another state, the parole officer shall change the status to “Death Reported” in the OIMS and forward the death certificate to CCU. The CCU designee shall close out the case as outlined in Section II above and insert a hard copy of the death certificate in the offender’s file.
- C. If the field staff changes the status of a case to “Death Reported” but CCU does not receive validation from BVS, CCU shall request an investigation by the parole officer.
1. The parole officer shall conduct an investigation to determine if the offender is deceased.

2. The parole officer shall enter the death investigation in the OIMS. Automatic electronic notification will be sent to the CCU designee regarding the offender's death. If applicable, the parole officer shall also forward the death certificate to CCU.
 3. The CCU designee shall close out the case as outlined in Section II above if a reliable match is obtained.
 4. The CCU designee shall insert the partial match report generated by the system into the file. If applicable, the designee shall also insert a hard copy of the death certificate into the file.
- D. If CCU receives information from an external source (e.g., family member or law enforcement agency) that an offender is deceased and additional information is required to close the case, the CCU designee shall request that the parole officer determine if the death information is factual by conducting an investigation. Upon receipt of a confirmed match, CCU will close out the case in accordance with Section II above.

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