

Fetal Death Reporting Quick Reference Guide

A facility's guide to reporting requirements



Reporting a Fetal Death to the Center for Health Statistics:

1

First determine if there was a fetal death or live birth with subsequent death

A medical determination must be made whether a delivery is fetal death or a live birth.

Definitions for fetal death vs. live birth can be found on the Vital Records website at bit.ly/orvrBIS.

What is a fetal death?

- When a fetus dies unintentionally, **prior to** the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother.
- The death is indicated by the fact that the fetus does not breathe or show **any** other evidence of life. Evidence of life includes: beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of the voluntary muscles.

If a baby is born alive and dies shortly after birth:

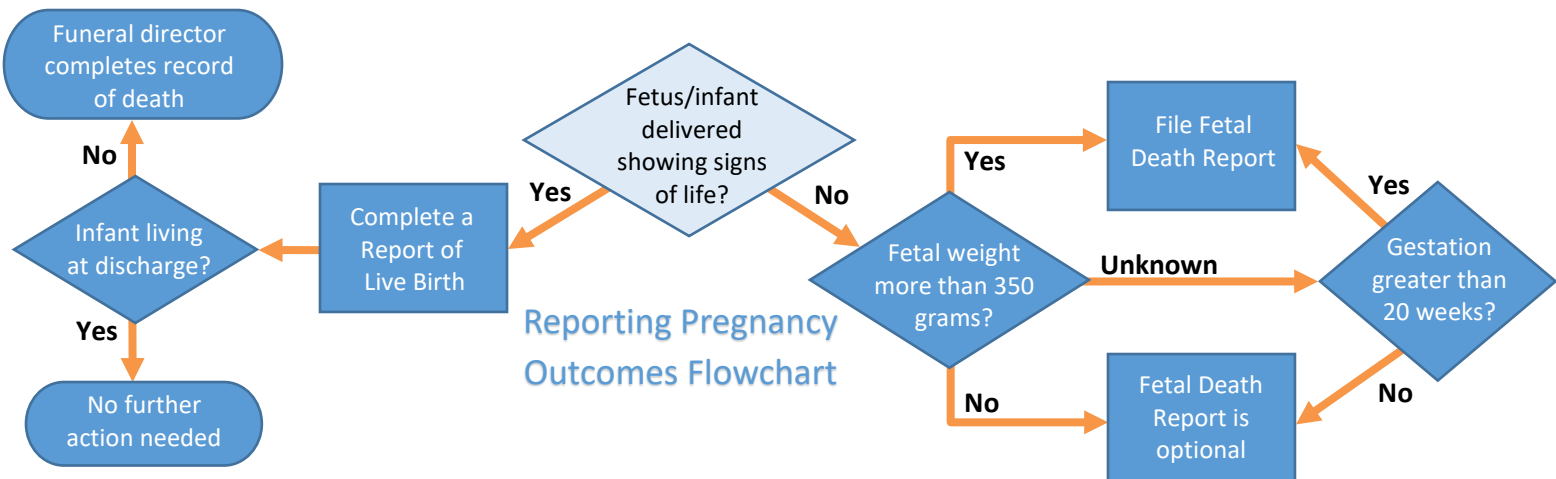
- **DO NOT** file a fetal death report.
- **DO NOT** give parents or funeral home a fetal disposition form (is not legally valid for a live birth).
- **DO** complete a report of live birth (funeral home will complete the report of death and will supply a Disposition and Transit Permit).
- **STOP HERE**

2

Determine if fetal death report is required to be filed

A fetal death is required to be reported to the Center for Health Statistics when:

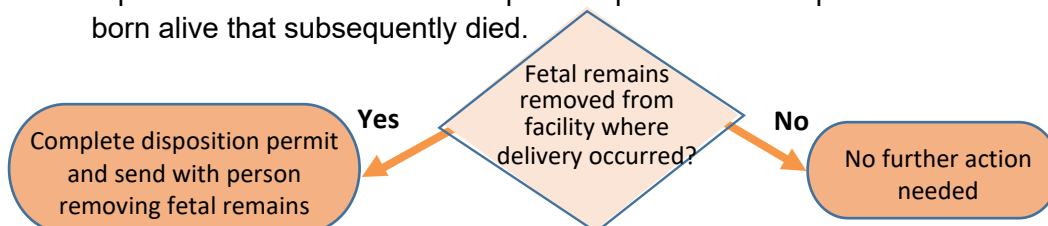
- The fetal weight is 350 grams or more.
- If weight is unknown, the gestation period is greater than 20 weeks.
- Facilities should ask parents if they want to order a commemorative certificate. A report must be filed in OVERS if parents want a certificate even if a fetal death report is not required.



3

Determine if a Fetal Death Disposition Permit must be completed

A fetal disposition permit is **always** required when **fetal** remains are removed from the facility where the delivery occurred, regardless of whether a fetal death report is filed. A Fetal Death Disposition permit is never printed for an infant born alive that subsequently died.



Fetal Death Disposition Permits can be found in OVERS, by clicking on 'Forms' → 'Print Forms' → 'Fetal Death Disposition and Transit Permit (45-3D)'

Additional information about fetal death, including current versions of the fetal death facility and parent worksheets, can be found in the Fetal Death section on the following pages: bit.ly/orvrBIS -or- bit.ly/orvrMEDEXAM