



Senate

General Assembly

February Session, 2016

File No. 121

Senate Bill No. 128

Senate, March 22, 2016

The Committee on Public Health reported through SEN. GERRATANA of the 6th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON FEES FOR VITAL RECORDS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 7-74 of the 2016 supplement to the general statutes
2 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
3 *1, 2016*):

4 (a) [The fee for a certification of birth registration, short form, shall
5 be fifteen dollars. The fee for a certified copy of a certificate of birth,
6 long form, shall be twenty dollars, except that the fee for such
7 certifications and copies when issued] Except as otherwise provided in
8 this section, the fee for a search for a vital record shall be twenty
9 dollars, except the fee for a search for a birth record by the department
10 shall be thirty dollars. Such fee shall include (1) the search, and (2) a
11 certified copy of the vital record, a certification of birth registration or a
12 certified letter stating that the results of the search indicate that there is
13 no record on file.

14 [(b) (1) The fee for a certified copy of a certificate of marriage or
15 death shall be twenty dollars. Such fees shall not be required of the
16 department.]

17 [(2)] (b) Any fee received by the [Department of Public Health]
18 department for a certificate of death shall be deposited in the neglected
19 cemetery account, established in accordance with section 19a-308b.

20 (c) The fee for a search for a vital record and one certified copy of a
21 certificate of death for any deceased person who was a veteran, as
22 defined in subsection (a) of section 27-103, shall be waived when such
23 copy is requested by a spouse, child or parent of such deceased
24 veteran.

25 (d) The fee for a search for a vital record and an uncertified copy of
26 an original certificate of birth issued pursuant to section 7-53 shall be
27 sixty-five dollars.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2016</i>	7-74

PH *Joint Favorable*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 17 \$	FY 18 \$
Public Health, Dept.	GF - Revenue Gain	less than 40,500 - 60,750	less than 40,500 - 60,750

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 17 \$	FY 18 \$
Various Municipalities	Revenue Gain	Less than \$3,000	Less than \$3,000

Explanation

The bill allows municipalities and the Department of Public Health (DPH) to charge fees (called “search fees”) of \$20 for marriage and death certificate searches that result in no records found. It also allows DPH to charge a \$30 search fee and municipalities to charge a \$20 search fee for birth certificates.

The bill results in a General Fund revenue gain of less than \$40,500 - \$60,750 annually. DPH’s State Vital Record Office estimates that it receives 13,500 requests for vital records annually, of which approximately 15%, or 2,025, go unfilled. It is unknown how many of the unfilled requests are for birth certificates and how many are for marriage or death certificates. For example, if all 2,025 unfilled searches are for marriage or death certificates, the General Fund revenue gain will be \$40,500.¹ If all 2,025 unfilled searches are for birth certificates, the revenue gain to the General Fund will be \$60,750.

¹ Please note that it is unknown how many death certificate searches are on behalf of a spouse, child, or parent of a deceased veteran. There is no fee for a copy of a death certificate for a deceased veteran under existing law, and, under the bill, no fee for the search for one. Hence, the General Fund revenue gain is reflected as “less than” 40,500 to \$60,750 annually.

The bill increases, from \$15 to \$20, the fee municipalities must charge for short form birth certificates regardless of whether a birth certificate is found. This would result in a revenue gain to municipalities of less than \$2,000 annually. For example, it is estimated that the City of Bridgeport performs about 400 searches, annually, for short form birth certificates.

There is an additional revenue gain to municipalities, estimated to be less than \$1,000, associated with search fees charged when no vital records are found. Generally, it is rare for a municipality to perform a vital records search that results in no records found. For example, each year the City of Hartford conducts 15-20 searches resulting in no records found; while the City of Fairfield has less than six per year.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of vital records searches that result in no vital records found.

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 128*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON FEES FOR VITAL RECORDS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill authorizes the Department of Public Health (DPH) and town clerks to charge a \$20 “search fee” for vital records, except that DPH may charge a \$30 search fee for birth records. Under the bill, the search fee includes (1) the search and (2) a certified copy of the vital record or a certified letter stating that there is no record on file. Under current law, DPH and town clerks can charge a fee only if the record is located.

Current law allows town clerks to charge (1) \$15 for each certified copy of a short-form birth registration and (2) \$20 for each certified copy of a marriage, death, or long-form birth certificate. DPH may charge \$30 for each certified copy of a birth record and \$20 for each certified copy of a marriage or death certificate.

The bill also waives the search fee for a vital record of a deceased veteran if the search is requested by the veteran’s spouse, child, or parent. Existing law already waives the fee for a copy of the death certificate.

Under current law, DPH charges a \$65 fee for providing uncertified copies of certain adoptee’s original birth certificates. The bill specifies that the fee includes the search for the record. It applies to requests made by adopted individuals age 18 or older whose adoptions were finalized on or after October 1, 1983, or their adult children or grandchildren.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2016

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 16 Nay 10 (03/07/2016)