Update 2008-1: Common Place Handbook
Birth Certificates

**Background**

Recent clarification was received by the State Department Office of Vital Records and the County Recorder’s Office regarding birth certificates.

**Policy**

It is necessary to modify our Agency’s current practices to conform to clarifications received.

**State Department Office of Vital Records**

Recently, the Office of Vital Records with the State of California has ceased providing birth certificates for children under six months old. The basis for this is due to a decrease in staffing, and their inability to keep up with the increased workload. The State Department has modified their policy to update their database once newborns turn six months of age. Any requests sent to the State Department for newborns under six months of age will be returned indicating the request is “too recent.”

In order for Social Services Agency clerical staff to avoid holding on to the request until the newborn turns six months of age, effective immediately, the “Application for Verification, Birth, Death, Marriage or Divorce To Determine Eligibility for Public Assistance Programs” (SC 58) will no longer be sent to the State Department Office of Vital Records for children under six months of age born outside of Santa Clara County. Instead, the SC 58 will be forwarded to the County Recorder’s Office or County Health Department in the county where the child is born.

**Exception:**

If the child is born in Santa Clara County, the six month time limit does not apply since requests will be sent to our local County Health Department.
County Recorder’s Office  
Due to Senate Bill (SB) 247, it is a violation of State law to provide copies of birth certificates received for “government use only” to individual clients. Legislation went into effect July 1, 2003, requiring the County Recorder’s Office to issue two different types of certified copies to requestors.

In an attempt to make identity theft more difficult, SB 247 requires that persons requesting certified copies of birth and/or death certificates sign a statement under penalty of perjury, that they are authorized to receive an authorized certified copy. Providing clients with these certificates circumvents this process.

Government Agencies receive these documents for their use only. If Social Services no longer has a need for these certificates once they are scanned into the Integrated Document Management (IDM) system, they must be destroyed. **By no means are these certificates to be given to the clients.**

Implementation

These procedures are effective immediately upon receipt of this update.

Clerical

Office Management Coordinators (OMCs) must ensure these changes are reviewed with their respective staff at their next clerical meeting, but no later than 02/20/08.

Eligibility Work Supervisors

Eligibility Work Supervisors must ensure these changes are reviewed with their respective staff at their next unit meeting, but no later than 02/20/08.

Kudos

Many thanks to Marianne Smith, Betty Yang and Kristin Baker for clarifying these issues.

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