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LC003951/SUB A
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- VITAL RECORDS

Introduced By: Senators DiPalma, Ciccone, Britto, Zurier, Acosta, and F. Lombardi

Date Introduced: February 12, 2024

Referred To: Senate Commerce

(Secretary of State)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 23-3-5.1 and 23-3-24 of the General Laws in Chapter 23-3 entitled
2 "Vital Records" are hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **23-3-5.1. Transfer of public historical documents.**

4 (a) At the end of each calendar year, [original](#) records of births and marriages which have
5 occurred one hundred (100) years or more from the date of transfer and deaths which have occurred
6 fifty (50) years or more from the date of transfer, shall be permanently transferred by the state
7 registrar of vital records to the custody of the state archives under control of the secretary of state
8 who may promulgate rules and regulations pertaining to these public historical documents. [Prior to](#)
9 [transferring the records to the state archives, the division of vital records shall ensure that an](#)
10 [electronic copy of the records is provided to all local registrars for the purpose of issuance of](#)
11 [accurate copies, or certified copies, to the public as authorized by law.](#)

12 **(b) Amendments to records on file with the local registrar, which are not available in**
13 [electronic format, shall be forwarded upon amendment to the local registrar for the purpose of](#)
14 [issuance of accurate copies, or certified copies, to the public as authorized by law.](#)

15 **23-3-24. Copies of data from vital records.**

16 In accordance with § 23-3-23 and the regulations adopted pursuant to that section:

17 (1) The state registrar of vital records shall upon request issue a certified copy of any
18 certificate or record in his or her custody or a part thereof. Each copy issued shall show the date of
19 registration; and copies issued from records marked "delayed," "amended," or "court order" shall

1 be similarly marked and show the effective date. Any copies issued of a “certificate of foreign
2 birth” shall indicate this fact and show the actual place of birth.

3 (2) The ~~custodian of permanent local records~~ local registrars shall upon request issue a
4 certified copy of any certificate or record in his or her custody or to which the registrar has access,
5 only in a form that shall be prescribed by the state director of health or the state archives under the
6 control of the secretary of state, following transfer per § 23-3-5.1.

7 (3) A certified copy of a certificate or any part thereof, issued in accordance with
8 subdivision (1) or (2) of this section, shall be considered for all purposes the same as the original,
9 and shall be prima facie evidence of the facts stated in the certificate, provided that the evidentiary
10 value of a certificate or record filed more than one year after the event, or a record which has been
11 amended, or a “certificate of foreign birth,” shall be determined by the judicial or administrative
12 body or official before whom the certificate is offered as evidence.

13 (4) The National Office of Vital Statistics may be furnished copies or data that it may
14 require for national statistics; provided, that the state shall be reimbursed for the cost of furnishing
15 the data; and provided further, that the data shall not be used for other than statistical purposes by
16 the National Office of Vital Records unless so authorized by the state registrar of vital records.

17 (5) Federal, state, local, and other public or private agencies may, upon request, be
18 furnished copies or data for statistical purposes upon terms or conditions that may be prescribed by
19 the state director of health.

20 (6) No person shall prepare or issue any certificate which purports to be an original certified
21 copy, or copy of a certificate of birth, death, or fetal death, except as authorized in this chapter or
22 regulations adopted under this chapter.

23 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T
RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- VITAL RECORDS

- 1 This act would require the division of vital records to ensure that the records are accessible
- 2 to the local registrars and grant local registrars the authority to issue certified copies of certificates
- 3 and records.
- 4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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