

# Chapter

# 2

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## Structure of the Civil Registration Agency

**Why it is important:** The organizational structure of the civil registration agency affects how its key activities — including notification, registration, and certification of vital events — are achieved. Countries with a poorly defined structure are less likely to achieve continuous, permanent, compulsory, and universal recording of the vital events in their populations.



## Introduction

There is significant diversity in how countries organize and structure civil registration systems. A country's system of government - centralized or decentralized - will impact the structure of its civil registration system. In centralized civil registration systems, there will be a lead civil registration agency at the central level, established by national law, which has local offices at the level of major and minor political sub-divisions. These local offices are directly responsible to the central agency or agencies. In a fully decentralized system, by contrast, there will be a lead civil registration agency at the level of each major political sub-division, established by legislation passed at that sub-national level, answerable to the local government rather than the central government. However, in many countries, the degree of centralization of the civil registration system may fall somewhere in the middle. For example, there may be national legislation that establishes a centralized agency responsible for collecting civil registration data from across the country; however, the national law may designate local government officials at civil registrars in their jurisdiction. These local officials may have a degree of autonomy over the implementation of civil registration; however, the national legislation establishes minimum uniform requirements.<sup>1</sup>

Countries can have efficient and effective CRVSID systems with a wide variety of institutional arrangements. There is no “one size fits all” or “best practice” for the structure of a civil registration system.<sup>2</sup> However, a strong legal framework should foster some key attributes of the civil registration system. These include: the National Registrar has sufficient authority to implement the system in way that is efficient and effective, including the ability to delegate authority and take part in rule making; there are generally uniform procedures across the country; local registrars have the ability to provide efficient services to the people, including issuance of certificates; registration offices are located so that they are accessible to the entire population; there are clear processes for sending information from the local to the national level; and there are clear administrative processes for hearing grievances and appeals.

### How to Use this Chapter:

The UN Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System defines “civil registrar” as follows: “A civil registrar is the official authorized by law with the responsibility for carrying out the civil registration of vital events in a well-defined area (an entire country, or a county, district, municipality, parish, etc.) and for recording and reporting information on those vital events for legal and statistical purposes.”<sup>3</sup> Different countries use different terminology when referring to civil registration officials. For example, the title of the head of the national-level civil registration agency might be “National Civil Registrar”, “Registrar General”, or “National Civil Registrar”, and the title of the official in charge of a primary civil registration area (e.g., a municipality, district, town, or village) might be “civil registrar”, “registrar”, “civil status officer”. For simplicity, we refer to head of the national civil registration agency as the National Registrar, and refer to the person in charge of the primary civil registration area as the “local civil registrar”. Any mid-level officials involved in civil registration are referred to as “mid-level registrars”.

This chapter is primarily designed for countries that have a national law on civil registration, with a national level civil registration agency responsible for maintaining a central civil registration database, containing information collected by local civil registrars. It can therefore be used by countries with fully centralized systems and countries with somewhat decentralized systems. However, it can also be used for analysis of a sub-national level laws in a fully decentralized system. If you are conducting a legal review for a sub-national jurisdiction in a fully decentralized system, you should answer the questions about the National Registrar and the national level civil registration agency as if they apply to the head of civil registration at the sub-national level and the corresponding agency.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, Guidelines on a Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics, and Identity Management Systems (UN GOLF), New York, 2019, Para 165 – 169.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations, Guidelines on a Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics, and Identity Management Systems, New York, 2019, Para 165-166.

<sup>3</sup> Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, at page 202.

This chapter covers the following topics:

1. Powers and Responsibilities of the National Civil Registration Agency and National Registrar
2. Uniform Processes
3. Delegation of Powers and Rule-Making Authority
4. Location of Primary Civil Registration Offices
5. Powers and Responsibilities of Local Civil Registrars
6. Location, Powers, and Responsibilities of Mid-level Registrars
7. Qualifications, Selection or Appointment, and Terms of Service of Civil Registrars
8. Process for hearing appeals
9. Oversight of Registration Offices
10. Stakeholder Coordination
11. Use of Technology

### 1. Powers and Responsibilities of the National Civil Registration Agency and National Registrar

**Best practice:** The location within government of the civil registration agency varies among countries. Depending on the country, the civil registration agency might fall under the Ministry of Interior or Home Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, or the Ministry or Department of Health, or it may be an autonomous agency.<sup>4</sup> Regardless of where the civil registration agency is located within government, the head of the civil registration agency should have sufficient power and authority to ensure that the civil registration system functions efficiently and effectively. These powers and responsibilities should include:

- oversight and implementation of the civil registration system;
- participation in drafting of rules, regulations and instructions to promote uniform practice;
- delegation of registration responsibilities and powers to other officials
- management and inspection of registration offices;
- conducting quality assurance monitoring and addressing areas of concern;
- assessing degree of coverage and establishing boundaries for local offices;
- hiring, management, and training of personnel;
- management of physical resources and technology;
- resolution of incidents and appeals; promoting the registration requirements to the public; receiving and compiling data;
- exchanging information with other agencies; and
- safekeeping records and archives.<sup>5</sup>

**Guidance:** Answer the questions below. In the comments section, analyze whether the National Registrar has sufficient powers to ensure the efficient and effective functioning of the civil registration system. Specifically note whether any of the powers listed above are assigned to sub-national level registrars, rather than the National Registrar.

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**a. State the agency at the national level responsible for civil registration**

Citations:

Comments:

**b. Describe the powers and responsibilities of national civil registration agency and the National**

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<sup>4</sup> UN GOLF, New York, 2019, Para 174.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations, Guidelines on a Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics, and Identity Management Systems, New York, 2019, Para 177.

## Registrar.

Citations:

Comments:

### 2. Uniform Processes

**Best practice:** Civil registration systems should aim to have generally uniform processes across the country.

Standardized processes help to ensure that quality services are available to every person in the country and that data collected at the central level from sub-national jurisdictions are comparable and of consistent quality. In centralized systems, uniform processes are mandated by national law and regulations. In some semi-decentralized systems, the national law may set minimum criteria and processes; however, local officials may have some degree of autonomy in implementing these requirements. Even in a fully decentralized system, there should be an agency at the national level to create minimum standards or to work cooperatively with decentralized offices to ensure generally uniform practices and procedures.<sup>6</sup> For example, a central agency may issue model laws, regulations, and standard operating procedures (SOPs) which aides each major civil division to promulgate its own laws, regulations and SOPs to closely conform to the recommended model.<sup>7</sup>

**Guidance:** Describe the legal framework regarding uniform national procedures and note any regional variations in procedures. In the comments section, describe any impact of regional variations, if known.

**a. Describe the legal framework that provide for uniform processes across the country.** Specify whether Uniform procedures are provided in binding legislation, regulations, and SOPs, or non-binding model laws.

Citation:

Comments:

**b. Are there regional variances across jurisdictions in civil registration procedures?**

Citation:

Comments:

### 3. Delegation of Powers and Rule-Making Authority

**Best practice:** The National Registrar should have the power to take part in rule-making and the power to delegate responsibilities with appropriate oversight. These are important powers to help ensure that the

<sup>6</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Para. 311.

<sup>7</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Paras. 49, 317-318.

system runs efficiently and effectively.<sup>8</sup>

The legal framework should empower the National Registrar to set standards for the implementation of various operations within the civil registration, systems including notification, registration, and certification of vital events.<sup>9</sup> The authority to promulgate regulations, rules and instructions enables the central authority to ensure that local officials are conducting duties in a uniform and consistent manner across the country. Uniform and consistent practice also enables coordination between agencies. For example, uniform collection of data at birth registration allows the statistic agency to generate comparable statistics for all regions of the country.<sup>10</sup> In some countries, the Minister of the ministry that houses the civil registration agency (rather than the National Registrar) will have the power to promulgate regulations. Where this is the case, the National Registrar should have the power and responsibility to provide input into the regulations. Regardless of whether the National Registrar has the power to issue regulations, the National Registrar should have the power to issue Rules and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that implement legislation and regulations.

The volume of work in most countries will require the National Registrar to delegate powers to others, such as a deputy national registrar or local registrars, to act on their behalf. Therefore, legislation should authorize the National Registrar to delegate some of his or her powers to other officials, and specify which powers are delegable. Delegation of powers should be in writing and subject to oversight.<sup>11</sup> Delegation power can be useful to increase access to civil registration. For example, if no registration office exists in an area, the National Registrar may delegate registrar powers to a local government official or the head of a health facility to make services accessible. Delegation can also enable more efficient services at the local level. For example, if legislation empowers only the National Registrar to approve corrections to registration records, delegation of this power to local registrars will enable a swifter correction process.

**Guidance:** Describe the rule-making powers and delegation powers of the National Registrar. In the comments section, describe whether the law aligns with best practice and note any recommendations for regulatory reform.

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- a. Does the National Registrar have the power to issue, or to take part in development of, regulations?** (Describe the extent of this power).

Citations:

Comments:

- b. Does the National Civil Registrar have the power to issue Rules or SOPs?** (Describe the extent of this power).

Citations:

Comments:

- c. Does the National Registrar have the power to delegate any powers and responsibilities and, if so, which powers and responsibilities?** (If known, state whether any powers have been delegated, and how they are overseen).

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<sup>8</sup> UN GOLF, paragraph 117- 182.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Para. 40(e).

<sup>10</sup> UN GOLF, paragraph 178-179.

<sup>11</sup> UN GOLF, paragraph 180.

Citation:

Comments:

#### 4. Location of Primary Civil Registration Offices

**Best Practice:** Each primary civil registration area should correspond with minor civil divisions of the country, adjusting boundaries, if necessary, based on population, resources, accessibility, literacy, and simplicity of registration. Each primary civil registration area should be managed by one local civil registrar, with an office that is easily accessible to the public.<sup>12</sup> Regular daily office hours should be kept.

In order to improve registration coverage, the local civil registrar (or National Registrar) should be empowered to set up additional civil registration offices (called secondary civil registration offices) within the primary civil registration area, at selected locations where the number of vital events is large enough to warrant an additional office, such as hospitals. The establishment of a secondary registration office should entail the appointment of a responsible registrar, who reports to the local civil registrar responsible for the primary civil registration area. The area of coverage of the secondary registration office should be clearly defined; when established at a hospital, the boundaries which may sometimes cover localities outside the hospital itself.<sup>13</sup>

The local civil registrar should also be empowered to use mobile registration units to reach areas within the primary registration area that are remote or difficult to access due to geography.<sup>14</sup> These mobile units should travel to predetermined places according to a fixed and well publicized schedule and stay long enough to capture vital events that have occurred since the last visit.<sup>15</sup>

**Guidance:** Answer the questions below. In the comments section, analyze whether the location of primary and secondary civil registration offices, and the use of mobile registration units, is sufficient to enable access to registration services by everyone who lives within the primary registration area.

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**a. Do primary civil registration areas correspond to minor civil divisions?**

Citation:

Comments:

**b. Does the local civil registrar or National Registrar have the power to establish secondary civil registration offices? If so, have any been established (e.g., in hospitals)?**

Citation:

Comments:

**c. Does the local civil registrar have the power to use mobile civil registration units? If so, are**

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<sup>12</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Paras. 340-346.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Para. 347.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Para. 348.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Para. 329.

they currently used?

Citation:

Comments:

- d. Do the office hours of registration offices, and schedule of any mobile units, permit easy access to registration?

Citation:

Comments:

## 5. Powers and Responsibilities of Local Civil Registrars

**Best practice:** The local civil registrar must be sufficiently empowered to enable efficient provisions of registration services. Some key duties and responsibilities of local civil registrars should include: verifying accuracy and completeness of information reported by the informant, recording legal and statistical information, officially registering vital events in the civil register, and issuing certified copies of vital event records.<sup>16</sup>

The local civil registrar should be authorized by law to register vital events. In order to do this, the local civil registrar must be empowered to review the information provided by the informant for accuracy and completeness, and to record the information in the civil register. Recording the information in the civil register constitutes official registration of the event.<sup>17</sup> In some countries, verification of the information and recording in the official register takes place at the national level, rather than the local level. This slows down the registration process. Therefore, local registrars should be empowered to verify information and officially register vital events.

The local civil registrar should be authorized by law to produce and issue certificates of vital events, after registration of a vital event. In some countries, the local registrar lacks the resources or capacity to issue the certificate. For example, the local registrar may not have a sufficient supply of security paper or the means to print certificates. In these instances, the central agency issues the birth certificate, which is then sent to the local registrar to be collected. However, this can cause substantial delays in certificate issuance. Therefore, local civil registrars should be empowered, and have sufficient resources, to produce and issue certificates at the local level.<sup>18</sup>

The local civil registrar should have authority to make minor corrections and add uncontested information to the civil registration record. Specifically, the local civil registrar should be empowered to correct errors, such as obvious spelling, date and typographical errors; add omitted information, such as uncontested paternity information; and to add or amend the name of a child on birth registration within a certain time period. This relieves the applicant of having to spend time and money applying to the central agency and/or to the courts, and relieves the central agency and/or the courts of additional workload.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, the local civil registrar should have the power to delegate powers and responsibilities to staff under their supervision. In some countries, only the local civil registrar (as head of the office) is authorized

<sup>16</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Paras. 328-334.

<sup>17</sup> UN GOLF, paragraph 15.

<sup>18</sup> UN GOLF, paragraph 287.

<sup>19</sup> U.N. Guidelines for the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management Systems, paras. 408-412.

to undertake certain tasks, such as verification of information or printing and signing of certificates. This can lead to delays in registration and certification. To foster efficient service provision, the local civil registrar must be able to delegate responsibilities to staff in primary and secondary registration offices and staff of mobile units.

**Guidance:** Answer the questions below regarding the powers and responsibilities of the local civil registrar. In the comments section, describe whether the law aligns with best practice and note any recommendations for regulatory reform.

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**a. Does the local civil registrar have the power to officially register vital events?**

Citation:

Comments:

**b. Does the local civil registrar have the power and resources to produce and issue certificates of vital events?**

Citation:

Comments:

**c. Does the local civil registrar have the power to make minor corrections and add uncontested information to the civil registration record?**

Citation:

Comments:

**d. Does the local civil registrar have the power to delegate responsibilities to staff under their supervision?**

Citation:

Comments:

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## **6. Location, Powers, and Responsibilities of Mid-level Registrars (if applicable)**

**Best Practice:** In some countries, a civil registration system may also include registration officers located at a major civil sub-division level of the country (e.g., province, region, state, or district) in addition to the local level. These mid-level registrar may have supervisory power over local civil registration offices, powers to hear appeals of decisions made by local civil registrars, or they may be responsible for collecting data from local offices and submitting it to the national level. They may also be empowered to register vital events and issue certificates, just like primary registration offices.<sup>20</sup> There is no best practice

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<sup>20</sup> UN GLOF, Paragraph 239.

regarding mid-level registrars and their powers. The decision to have mid-level registrars, and what powers to give them, should be based upon whether it enables the system to function more effectively and efficiently.

**Guidance:** Describe the legal framework for any mid-level civil registrars, including all levels that may exist between the national level and primary level offices. In the comments section, note any observations regarding the functioning of these mid-level registrars, including whether it improves or hinders the efficiency of the system.

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**a. Does your country have any mid-level registrars between the national level and local level?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Citation:

Comments:

**b. If you answered “yes” to question (a), describe the location of these mid-level registrars, and their powers and responsibilities.** (Specifically note whether these mid-level registrars have supervisory power, powers to hear appeals, powers to register and certify vital events, and/or are involved in the transmittal of data).

Citation:

Comments:

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## **7. Qualifications, Selection or Appointment, and Terms of Service of Civil Registrars**

**Best Practice:** Civil registrars hold significant power and their decisions can affect people’s lives. They are responsible for assigning legal identity at birth and closing legal identity upon death, issuing identity and civil status documents, and making decisions regarding correction of errors. They may also hold the power to conduct marriage ceremonies and to collect fees directly from registrants. Therefore, it is important that the law clearly sets out the required qualifications for civil registrars, the appointment or selection process, and terms of employment.<sup>21</sup>

Civil registrars should be full-time officials, who enjoy civil-service status, and should be adequately paid.<sup>22</sup> It is important that civil registrars be full-time officials, as this helps ensure that registration services are available to the public during regular business hours. If civil registrars are part-time employees, or hold other official duties simultaneously, this will hinder their ability to provide services to the public in a timely manner. Civil service status helps ensure that civil registrars are qualified and held to the same standards as other government civil servants. Finally, registrars should be adequately paid so that they are not tempted to resort to seeking informal fees for service.

The law should state how civil registrars are selected, appointed, or designated. As stated above, ideally, the law should require that civil registrars be civil servants, recruited and selected through civil service processes. However, in some countries, local elected officials hold the position of local registrar in their official capacity. Consequently, the law cannot require or guarantee the qualifications of the local registrar.

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<sup>21</sup> United Nations, Guidelines on Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics, and Identity Managements Systems, New York, 2019, Para 242.

<sup>22</sup> United Nations, Guidelines on Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics, and Identity Managements Systems, New York, 2019, Para 242.

In these circumstances, there is usually a civil servant employed to act as the assistant registrar who handles the civil registration functions. Where this is the case, the law should set forth the requirements and qualifications necessary to fill this position of assistant registrar.<sup>23</sup> It is important to note that, while systems with elected officials designated as registrar can function well, they may also result in an unclear chain of command or reporting structure because the elected official is not directly responsible to the national level civil registration agency.

Ideally, the National Registrar is also a civil servant. However, in many systems, the National Registrar is an appointed official. If that is the case, the law should specify the appointment process and any qualifications required to hold this position.

**Guidance:** Describe the legal framework related to matters of civil registrars' qualifications, selection or appointment, and terms of service. These requirements are often contained in civil servant laws, regulations or policies. In the comments section, describe whether the law aligns with best practice and note any recommendations for regulatory reform.

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- a. **Describe how the National Registrar is appointed or selected, any required qualifications, and terms of employment.** Specifically note whether the National Registrar is a fulltime official with civil servant status, and pay scale, if known.

Citations:

Comments:

- b. **Describe how local civil registrars are appointed, selected or designated; any required qualifications, and terms of employment.** Specifically note whether the local civil registrars are fulltime officials with civil servant status, and pay scale, if known. If local civil registrars are elected officials, state whether there is a civil servant employed as an assistant registrar.

Citations:

Comments:

- c. **If applicable, describe how mid-level registrars are appointed, selected or designated; any required qualifications; and terms of employment.** Specifically note whether mid-level civil registrars are fulltime officials with civil servant status, and pay scale, if known. If mid-level registrars are elected officials, state whether there is a civil servant employed as an assistant registrar.

Citation:

Comments:

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## 8. Process for hearing appeals

**Best Practice:** Decisions made by civil registrars can have legal consequences that may fundamentally

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<sup>23</sup> UN GOLF, paragraph 243.

impact a person's life. Reasonable minds may disagree about how to resolve certain difficult situations and therefore decisions made by civil registrars should be subject to administrative and judicial review. In many jurisdictions, before appealing to the courts, an individual must appeal a local civil registrar's decision to a higher administrative level, on up to the central level. This is referred to as "exhaustion of remedies" and serves two purposes. First, it allows the registration authorities the opportunity to correct the mistake without burdening the courts. Second, it creates a record of the administrative decision for the court to review. After appealing through administrative channels, up to the national level, an individual should be able to appeal to the courts if they feel they have not been able to obtain a satisfactory resolution of their issue. The legal framework should provide the right to appeal a registrar's decision, a clear process by which to appeal, and time frames in which to appeal.<sup>24</sup>

**Guidance:** Describe any right to appeal the decision of a civil registrar, including the process by which and the authority to which a person may appeal, and the timeframe for appeal. In the comments section, describe whether the law aligns with best practice and note any recommendations for regulatory reform.

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**a. Is there a right to appeal the decision of a civil registrar?**  Yes  No

Citation:

Comments:

**b. Must administrative remedies be exhausted before an appeal is filed in court?**

Yes  No

Citation:

Comments:

**c. Describe the appeal process and time frames:**

Citation:

Comments:

## 9. Oversight of Registration Offices

**Best Practice:** A performance-monitoring program is an integral part of civil registration systems. Routine monitoring and inspection of civil registrars' work is required in order to continue to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of the system.<sup>25</sup> The central level agency or a mid-level office with supervisory power should routinely monitor and inspect the work of primary level civil registration offices. If non-conformance to procedures is found, steps to improve performance should be taken, including additional training, warnings, and penalties for deliberate failure to carry out duties, as well as incentives to encourage local civil registrars to fulfill their duties.<sup>26</sup> There should be clear procedures and penalties

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<sup>24</sup> United Nations, Guidelines on the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management Systems, New York, 2019, Para. 528-530.

<sup>25</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Para. 335; United Nations Guidelines on the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics, and Identity Management Systems, New York, 2019, Paras 524-525.

<sup>26</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Paras. 338-339;

for instances of deliberate misconduct by civil registrars, including fraudulent registrations or inappropriate disclosures.<sup>27</sup>

**Guidance:** Describe procedures to monitor and inspect civil registration offices; procedures for correcting poor performance and/or penalizing misconduct by civil registrars, as well as any incentives to improve the performance of registrars. In the comments section, describe whether the law aligns with best practice and note any recommendations for regulatory reform.

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**a. Describe any routine monitoring and inspection procedures for civil registration offices.**

Citation:

Comments:

**b. Describe any procedures for correcting poor performance and/or penalizing misconduct by civil registrars.**

Citation:

Comments:

**c. Describe any other incentives to improve performance for civil registrars.**

Citation:

Comments:

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## 10. Stakeholder Coordination

**Best Practice:** Because multiple stakeholders are involved in civil registration - including the health sector, the civil registration agency and that national statistics agency, at a minimum - it is important to have a coordinating mechanism for their activities. Close coordination and collaboration across government agencies facilitates accurate, timely and updated information across databases; aids production of timely and accurate statistics; avoids duplication, errors, or omissions; ensures concepts, definitions, and classifications are consistent nationally, and helps align system processes.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, stakeholders should establish an interagency coordination committee, comprising staff members of the agencies involved in the CRVS system (and ID system, if appropriate), which meets regularly to discuss matters affecting the agencies.<sup>29</sup> A coordination committee should be established on a permanent basis, have clearly defined membership and terms-of-reference, and meet regularly.<sup>30</sup> Ideally, participation in the

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United Nations Guidelines for the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics, and Identity Management Systems, New York, 2019, Paras 524-525.

<sup>27</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Para. 326; United Nations Guidelines for the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics, and Identity Management Systems, New York, 2019, Paras 531.

<sup>28</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Paras. 41, 48

<sup>29</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Paras. 52, 319-22.

<sup>30</sup> United Nations, Handbook of Vital Statistics Systems & Methods, Volume 1: Legal, Organizational, and Technical Aspects, New

coordination committee should be required by the terms of the participants' employment contracts so that participation is assumed and required without additional remuneration.

Working groups established under the coordination committee can aid with coordination on specific topics. For example, a national mortality working group can play a key role in improving the completeness and quality of mortality data, which is critical to public health decision-making. Similarly, a verbal autopsy committee can play a key role in improving the completeness and quality of VA cause-of-death data. A working group on interoperability can help ensure that sharing of data between key stakeholders is effective and efficient by establishing standards for business processes, definitions and technology.

**Guidance:** Describe any CRVSID coordinating committees and working groups. In the comments section, note any observations and opportunities for improvement.

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**a. Describe any interagency coordinating committee or other coordination mechanism.**

Specifically address how often the committee meets, the membership of the committee, and the role of the committee.

Citation:

Comments:

**b. Describe any working groups established under the coordinating committee.** Specifically address the topic of the working group, how often the working group meets, the membership of the working group.

Citation:

Comments:

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## 11. Use of Technology

**Best Practice:** The use of computers, tablets, and other electronic devices should be permitted for on-line registration, and the collection, storage and transmission of data.<sup>31</sup> Electronic signatures (or unique identifiers in lieu of signatures) should be explicitly permitted to facilitate electronic collection of information, registration of vital events, and issuance of certificates.<sup>32</sup> A common problem with older CRVS laws is that they contain provisions that are specific to paper processes. For example, some laws require a person to sign a registration application in person in front of the registrar, or explicitly state how paper registers must be kept and closed each year, or require a registrar to physically sign certificates in person. These types of provisions should be updated to allow for electronic registration; electronic collection, storage and transmission of data, and electronic certificate issuance.

**Guidance:** Describe any provisions in the law that might prohibit or hinder computerization of the civil registration system. In comments section, describe any recommended actions.

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York, 1991. Para. 270.

<sup>31</sup> United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3, New York, 2014. Paras. 378, 381-382.

<sup>32</sup> Pacific Community, Legislation for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in the Pacific: Best Practice Guidelines and Examples, Noumea, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2016. P. 46.

- a. **Describe any provisions in the civil registration law that prohibit or hinder online registration and/or electronic collection, storage or transmission of data.** Specifically note whether electronic signatures are permitted.

Citation:

Comments: