

Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 2382 (Patterson) – As Amended April 23, 2026

Policy Committee: Health

Vote: 16 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the State Registrar to use updated technology, including computer and mobile telephone applications, to upgrade the electronic death registration system (EDRS).

The bill requires the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) make the EDRS accessible to a medical examiner; local registrar; and individuals authorized to complete and attest to the medical and health section data (physician, nurse practitioner, or, in specified circumstances, the physician assistant or coroner). The bill allows the individuals authorized to complete and attest to the medical and health section data to attest to a death within EDRS using electronic, voice, or facsimile methods, and requires CDPH to update EDRS to allow this.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Based on an estimate CDPH provided for a similar bill, AB 585 (Patterson), of the current legislative session, General Fund costs in the low millions of dollars. These costs include contracting to develop a new attestation method that allows easier physician access and certification, updating system resources and trainings, and providing notification to local registrars and stakeholders. Information technology requirements in this bill will also invoke the Project Approval Lifecycle (PAL) planning process.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** This bill is sponsored by California Funeral Directors Association. According to the author:

Families should not have to wait weeks to access critical services during their most vulnerable moments. [This bill] modernizes California's long-outdated Electronic Death Registration System by adding more applications to be used while expanding access to additional professionals. Under the current system, delays in establishing cause of death prevent families from completing funeral arrangements and accessing necessary benefits, creating unnecessary hardship during a difficult time. By cutting unnecessary delays, expanding access for authorized professionals, and updating technology, [This bill] clears backlogs, strengthens public-health reporting, and ensures families can get the timely, equitable services they deserve.

- 2) **Background.** According to CDPH, medical examiners, coroners, hospital staff (including physicians) and local registrar staff currently have the ability to work directly in EDRS. Medical examiners, coroners and physicians are able to enter causes of death directly in EDRS if they have one of three types of user accounts to input cause of death data: funeral home user; hospital user; or, medical examiner/coroner user. Physicians may request access to EDRS as a “hospital user.” A hospital user account allows the user to initiate a record to enter personal and health information about a decedent including establishing the facts of a death. The hospital user account does not allow for attestation. Physicians provide attestation via fax and voice methods, which is outside the EDRS. Physicians are not able to attest within EDRS electronically. CDPH notes that hospitals often leave it up to funeral homes to attest. Physicians currently go through funeral directors or hospital staff to provide causes of death. This bill requires CDPH enable the individuals authorized to complete the medical and health section data and time of death on a death certificate to access EDRS and further be authorized to attest within EDRS to a death using electronic, voice, and fax methods.

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