



Arkansas Department of Health

4815 West Markham Street • Little Rock, Arkansas 72205-3867 • Telephone (501) 661-2000
Governor Asa Hutchinson
José R. Romero, MD, Interim Secretary of Health

July 31, 2020

To Medical Certifiers and Funeral Home Directors:

As the State Registrar, I would like to thank all of you for your diligence and compassion in addressing certification of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) related deaths that have occurred in our state. The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) has received many inquiries as to the criteria used to designate that a death is Covid-19-related. In April 2020, guidance was released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Vital Statistics System (NCHS) for certifying deaths due to Covid-19.

I have attached a copy that guidance for your reference. Since the medical certifier ultimately determines the specifics of the causes of death, please make sure that you follow the CDC guidance so that death data from Arkansas are consistent data from other states and can be used for comparison purposes. Certifiers should be sure to include as much detail as possible based on their knowledge of the case, medical records, and laboratory testing as well as chronic conditions such as COPD or asthma that may be contributing factors.

Again, thank you for your hard work and cooperation during this pandemic. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at 501-661-2833 or shirley.louie@arkansas.gov.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shirley Louie".

Shirley Louie, M.S., CIH,
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