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## IMPORTANT NOTICE

**Funeral Services in Washington state may be subject to significant delays because of changes the state made to the death reporting system.**

**The system is called WHALES.**

**After a Funeral Service Provider picks up a deceased person to assist the family with their funeral arrangements, the first thing they must do is prepare and file the information for the death certificate.**

**This important step is filed on-line electronically and we do so quickly.**

**The next step requires the attending doctor to certify the cause of death. In order to do so the doctor must be able to sign into the new reporting system. Unfortunately, many doctors are not yet signed up on the new system and they cannot certify the cause of death until they can do so on the new system. There is no alternative. Until the doctor certifies the cause of death, we and the families we serve cannot reliably move forward with planning a time for funeral services, burials, or cremation.**

**What can you do? Ask the health care organization and doctor if they are on the WHALES system. If they are not, encourage them to quickly sign up. We also contact the doctors and explain how to sign up but you may have more influence to encourage them to act quickly.**