



Office of the City Manager

PUBLIC HEARING
January 20, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager
 Submitted by: Scott Gilman, Director, Health, Housing, and Community Services
 Subject: Fees: Public Health Vital Statistics Vital Records

RECOMMENDATION

Conduct a public hearing and upon conclusion, adopt a Resolution establishing a new fee schedule for Vital Records with a \$2.00 increase in the fee for birth, death, and fetal death certificates to comply with Assembly Bill (AB) 64 and Health & Safety (H&S) Code 103625(f), effective February 1, 2026.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The fee increase is expected to generate an additional \$10,564 for the rest of the current fiscal year. Of this amount, \$5,810.20 (55%) is estimated to accrue to City revenue. State law requires that the revenue collected be split and sent to different county, state, and federal programs.

Additional revenue will be deposited in Fund 011.

Item	Current Fee	Proposed Fee
Birth Certificate Public	\$31.00	\$33.00
Birth Certificate County	\$24.00	\$26.00
Death Certificate Public/County	\$26.00	\$28.00
Fetal Death Certificate	\$23.00	\$25.00
Stillbirth Certificate	\$23.00	\$23.00
Disposition Permit	\$12.00	\$12.00
Transit Letter	\$4.00	\$4.00

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

As a local health jurisdiction, the City of Berkeley is required by state law to provide this service and collect/distribute these fees.

Vital Records fees are increasing by \$2.00 due to AB 64, which requires the use of diacritical marks—such as accents and tildes—on English letters in names listed on vital records (e.g., birth, marriage, and death certificates).

The fee increase is required to help fund the system and process changes necessary for the state and local governments to implement this law, starting on July 1, 2026.

This service is a priority for the City to ensure the community receives accurate, timely, and accessible birth, death, and other vital records.

BACKGROUND

The Public Health Vital Statistics Program is responsible for managing birth and death records for births and deaths occurring within the City of Berkeley. This includes filing, preserving, and issuing:

- Birth certificates
- Death certificates
- Fetal death and stillbirth certificates
- Permits and transport letters for the disposition of human remains

The program operates under the supervision of the City of Berkeley Health Officer and fulfills the following mandates:

- Establish permanent legal records recognized as prima facie evidence in court
- Prevent fraud by reporting birth and death data to other government agencies; and
- Support public health by analyzing statistical data for health evaluation and planning.

Certificates are available from the City of Berkeley for up to two years after the date of the event. After two years, records must be requested from Alameda County. Certificates can be obtained in person, online via VitalChek.com, or by mail.

Vital Statistics provides free certificates to individuals who can verify homeless status (H&S Code Section 103577) and to youth in foster care who can verify foster status (H&S Code Section 103578).

Since 2005, certain fees have also included a \$2 fee to support domestic violence programs. After this requirement was established by the State in Health and Safety Code § 103627.5, the Berkeley City Council adopted on December 13, 2005,

Resolution No. 63,165-N.S., which approved the fee increase and established Fund 231 for this revenue.

Pursuant to H&S Code Section 103625 (a) and (b), the City of Berkeley Vital Statistics fees are used to offset the cost of record generation and maintenance, including staff, facility, equipment, and general office costs. Fees for certificates and permits are mandated to be distributed to the following funds:

- County Children's Trust Fund
- Umbilical Cord Blood Collection Program
- Domestic Violence Prevention
- Peace Officers Training Fund
- County treasury for indigent burials
- Department of Justice Missing Persons DNA Database Fund

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identifiable environmental effects, climate impacts, or sustainability opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The services provided and fees collected are required by the California Health and Safety Code. Approving the \$2 increase per certificate will allow the City to continue offering these essential services locally and to meet its financial obligations to the State.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

No alternative actions were considered as staff have not identified another source of funds that could cover the fee increases mandated by AB 64.

CONTACT PERSON

Alexandra Deitch, Sr. Health Services Program Specialist, HHCS 510-981-5379

Attachments:

1: Resolution

Exhibit A: City of Berkeley Vital Records Fee Schedule and Allocation of Vital Records

2: Public Hearing Notice

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

ESTABLISHING AND INCREASING CURRENT VITAL RECORDS FEES

WHEREAS, City of Berkeley Vital Statistics Program manages vital records for birth and death events that occur within the City limits; and

WHEREAS, effective February 1, 2026, vital records fees will increase pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 64 and Health and Safety (H&S) Code § 103625(f); and

WHEREAS, vital records fees collected by the City of Berkeley Vital Statistics Program are set by statute and require periodic updates, with the associated revenue deposited into Fund 011 and Fund 152; and

WHEREAS, the proposed changes in fees will allow the City of Berkeley Vital Statistics Program to continue to meet all Federal, State, and County health, safety, and regulatory requirements, while providing continued community access to birth and death certificates and permits, and transport letters for the disposition of human remains.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the proposed Published Charges, detailed in Exhibit A, are hereby established, effective February 1, 2026, for vital records offered by the City's Vital Statistics Program of Health, Housing, and Community Services department.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Resolution No. 70,116-N.S. is rescinded effective February 1, 2026.

Exhibit:

A: City of Berkeley Vital Records Fee Schedule and Allocation of Vital Records

**CITY OF BERKELEY VITAL RECORDS FEE SCHEDULE AND ALLOCATION OF
VITAL RECORDS
Effective February 1, 2026**

I. CERTIFIED COPIES, SEARCHES, AND CERTIFICATION OF NO PUBLIC RECORD

(Search/No Record fees are the same as copy fees -- Health and Safety (H&S) Code, Section 103650)

Birth - General Public	Fee	Allocation
H&S Code, § 103625(b)(f)	\$19.05	Retained by City of Berkeley
H&S Code, 103525.5, 100425 and Welfare & Institutions (W&I) Code, § 18966	\$6.35	To State Registrar each month
W&I Code, § 18966 and H&S Code, § 103625(b)	\$3.60	To County Children's Trust Fund
H&S Code, § 103625(b)	\$2.00	To Umbilical Cord Blood Collection Program
H&S Code, § 103627	\$2.00	To Domestic Violence Prevention
Fee Total	\$33.00	

Birth - Government Agency	Fee	Allocation
H&S Code, § 103625(b)(f),	\$17.80	Retained by City of Berkeley
H&S Code, § 100425, and 103525.5	\$6.20	To State Registrar each month
H&S Code, § 103627	\$2.00	To Domestic Violence Prevention
Fee Total	\$26.00	

Death – Government Agency and General Public	Fee	Allocation
H&S Code, § 103625(a)(f), 100425 103525.5, and Penal Code, § 14251	\$17.90	Retained by City of Berkeley
H&S Code, § 103625(a)(f), 100425 103525.5, and Penal Code, § 14251	\$6.20	To State Registrar each month
Surcharge: Penal Code, § 14251	\$1.90	To Dept of Justice Missing Persons DNA Data Base Fund
H&S Code, § 103627	\$2.00	To Domestic Violence Prevention
Fee Total	\$28.00	

Vital Records Fee Schedule and Allocation of Vital Records

Death – Government Agency and General Public	Fee	Allocation
Fetal Death – Government Agency and General Public	Fee	Allocation
H&S Code, § 103625(a)(f), 100425 103525.5, and Penal Code, § 14251	\$17.45	Retained by City of Berkeley
H&S Code, § 103625(a)(f), 100425 103525.5, and Penal Code, § 14251	\$5.55	To State Registrar each month
H&S Code, § 103627	\$2.00	To Domestic Violence Prevention
Fee Total	\$25.00	

Stillbirth	Fee	Allocation
H&S Code, § 103040.1(f)	\$21.00	Retained by City of Berkeley
H&S Code, § 103627	\$2.00	To Domestic Violence Prevention
Fee Total	\$23.00	

II. PERMIT FOR DISPOSITION OF HUMAN REMAINS

Regular Permit	Fee	Allocation
H&S Code, § 103675	\$2.50	Retained by City of Berkeley
H&S Code, § 100430 and 103692	\$6.50	To State Registrar quarterly
Surcharge: H&S Code, § 103680	\$1.00	To Peace Officers Training Fund
Surcharge: H&S Code, § 103680	\$2.00	Retained by City of Berkeley for deposit into county treasury for indigent burials
Fee Total	\$12.00	

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
BERKELEY CITY COUNCIL**

VITAL RECORDS: ESTABLISH FEE SCHEDULE AND CURRENT FEE INCREASE

The public may participate in this hearing by remote video or in-person.

Notice is hereby given by the City Council of the City of Berkeley that a public hearing will be conducted by said city council of the City of Berkeley at which time and place all persons may attend and be heard upon the following:

The Department of Health, Housing, and Community Services is proposing to increase by \$2.00 the fees for the issuance of each birth, death, and fetal death certificates, effective February 1, 2026, pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 64 and Health and Safety (H&S) Code § 103625(f).

Item	Current Fee	Proposed Fee (Effective 02/01/2026)
Birth Certificate Public	\$31.00	\$33.00
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The hearing will be held on, January 20, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in the School District Board Room, located at 1231 Addison Street, Berkeley CA 94702.

For further information, please contact **Alexandra Deitch** at **510-981-5379**.

A copy of the agenda material for this hearing will be available on the City's website at <https://berkeleyca.gov/> as of January 8, 2026. **Once posted, the agenda for this meeting will include a link for public participation using Zoom video technology, as well as any health and safety requirements for in-person attendance.**

Written comments should be mailed or delivered directly to the City Clerk, 2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA 94704, or e-mailed to council@berkeleyca.gov in order to ensure delivery to all Councilmembers and inclusion in the agenda packet.

Communications to the Berkeley City Council are public record and will become part of the City's electronic records, which are accessible through the City's website. **Please note: e-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required, but if included in any communication to the City Council, will become part of the public record.** If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact

information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the City Clerk. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the City Clerk at (510) 981-6900 or clerk@berkeleyca.gov for further information.

If you challenge the above in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Berkeley at, or prior to, the public hearing. Background information concerning this proposal will be available at the City Clerk Department and posted on the City of Berkeley webpage at least 12 days prior to the public hearing.

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I hereby certify that the Notice for this Public Hearing of the Berkeley City Council was posted at the display case located near the walkway in front of the Maudelle Shirek Building, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, as well as on the City's website, on January 8, 2026.

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Mark Numainville, City Clerk