

IMPORTANT NOTICE

On November 1, 2011, the Social Security Administration (SSA) implemented an important change in the Death Master File (DMF) data. NTIS, a cost-recovery government agency, disseminates the Limited Access DMF on behalf of SSA. The Limited Access Death Master File contains data on decedants who died less than 3 years ago.

Please see the Q and A below, provided by SSA (and edited by NTIS to change the tense once the change had been implemented) for an explanation of the change.

Should you have any questions, please email jhounsell@ntis.gov who will forward any questions not answered below to the Social Security Administration for reply.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Change in Public Death Master File Records

NTIS receives Death Master File (DMF) data from the Social Security Administration (SSA). SSA receives death reports from various sources, including family members, funeral homes, hospitals, and financial institutions.

Q: What change has SSA made to the Public DMF?

A: Effective November 1, 2011, the DMF data that NTIS receives from SSA no longer contains protected state death records. Section 205(r) of the [Social Security] Act prohibits SSA from disclosing the state death records SSA receives through its contracts with the states, except in limited circumstances. (Section 205r link - http://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title02/0205.htm)

Q: How did this change affect the size of the Public DMF?

A: The historical Public DMF contained 89 million records. SSA removed approximately 4.2 million records from this file and adds about 1 million fewer records annually.

**REMINDER:
DMF users should always investigate and verify the death listed before taking any adverse action against any individual."**