

# Top Trends in Vital Records for 2026

## What's shaping the future of identity, public health data, and vital records ecosystem this year

The Vital Records landscape is experiencing one of its most significant periods of change in decades. Agencies are modernizing systems, strengthening security, and reimagining how they serve the public — all while balancing compliance, staffing realities, and rapidly evolving expectations from leadership and communities. Below are the key trends state and local Vital Records offices are prioritizing in 2026.

### 1. Digital First Service Delivery Becomes the New Standard

Vital Records offices are accelerating shifts toward digital, user friendly services for both the public and partners.



**Key drivers:** customer demand, agency efficiency, equity, and resiliency.

#### What this looks like in practice:

- ✓ Online ordering and application portals with document upload
- ✓ Status tracking and automated notifications
- ✓ Exploration or advancement of digital issuance of vital records
- ✓ Digital payments replacing cash-heavy local office workflows
- ✓ Mobile-friendly experiences that reduce barriers

### 2. Heightened Identity Verification & Fraud Prevention

With identity theft and synthetic identities on the rise, agencies are prioritizing stronger, multi-layered verification.

#### Emerging approaches:

- ✓ Cross-checking data with other state and federal sources (where authorized)
- ✓ Automated alerts for unusual issuance patterns
- ✓ Stronger auditing and reporting tools within registration systems
- ✓ Targeted anti fraud training for frontline staff

### 3. Interoperability Across Health & Government Systems

Vital Records data is becoming increasingly intertwined with broader public health and government functions.



**The result:** better data quality, fewer manual errors, and faster public health insights.

#### Beyond 2026: 1-3 year priorities

- ✓ Tighter connections to EHRs and hospital birth/funeral home and medical examiner systems
- ✓ Faster electronic death certification
- ✓ Privacy-preserving data sharing (e.g., tokenization) to enable approved linkage and analytics without exposing sensitive vital records
- ✓ Integrations with courts, DMV, corrections, and Medicaid programs

#### 4. Data as a Strategic Asset — Not Just Records

Agencies are elevating the role of vital statistics as leadership seeks more timely, granular insights.



Vital Records data is increasingly treated as a critical component of statewide analytics, not an afterthought.

#### Growing use cases:

- ✓ Maternal & infant health initiatives
- ✓ Opioid and overdose monitoring
- ✓ Emergency response and disaster planning
- ✓ Population trends to inform resource allocation

#### 5. Modernization of Core Registration Systems

Many states are in the midst of major upgrades — or preparing to start them.



Modernization is increasingly framed as a **resiliency** and **risk reduction** investment, not just a technical upgrade.

#### Modernization themes for 2026:

- ✓ Cloud-enabled or hybrid system designs
- ✓ Improved configurability without requiring custom code
- ✓ Paperless workflows and digital attachments
- ✓ Better dashboards, analytics, and self-service admin tools
- ✓ Phased implementation plans to minimize disruption

#### 6. Stronger Continuity of Operations (COOP) & Cyber Resilience

The last several years highlighted the need for robust contingency planning.



COOP has become a core part of modernization, not a separate initiative.

#### What agencies are focusing on now:

- ✓ Clear downtime procedures for births, deaths, and amendments
- ✓ Remote access capabilities for key staff
- ✓ Regular cybersecurity tabletop exercises
- ✓ Backup and recovery strategies that align with agency IT standards
- ✓ Communication playbooks for system outages

#### 7. Workforce Transformation & Training Innovation

Staffing pressures and retirements are putting new emphasis on training, cross training, and process standardization.



Teams are building capacity not just to maintain operations, but to support modernization efforts.

#### Trends to watch:

- ✓ Micro-learning modules for hospital and funeral home partners
- ✓ Virtual training and onboarding
- ✓ Documentation refreshes to preserve institutional knowledge
- ✓ Expanded quality assurance and mentoring

In 2026, the vital records industry is becoming more digital, more connected, and more secure, while still demanding strong continuity planning and a modernization-ready workforce.

**VitalChek®**, a **LexisNexis® Risk Solutions Company** offers a range of solutions to help agencies address these priorities, from secure online ordering and identity verification to payments, operational support, and scalable service models. As states plan for the year ahead, the right combination of technology, process, and partnership can help Vital Records offices meet rising expectations with confidence.



**For more information, please  
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