

## Why do I need a birth certificate?

A birth certificate is one of the most important legal documents used to establish identity. It shows who you are, when you were born, and where you were born. A birth certificate is required for many things during a person's life such as:

- enrolling a child in school,
- participating in youth sports,
- getting a Social Security card,
- a driver's license, or
- a passport.

You will need certified copies that are printed on special paper that cannot be easily duplicated.

## How do I order a birth certificate?

Certified copies of the certificate of birth may be purchased from county or state vital records offices, depending on how long ago the person was born. The fee for the first copy is \$20.00 and additional copies of the same record ordered at the same time are \$15.00 each.

If the birth occurred less than six months ago, contact the vital records office in the county where the birth occurred. Contact

information is available from the state vital records office at (503) 731-4108.

If the birth occurred more than six months ago, order the certificate from the state vital records office. You may order the birth certificate in person, by mail, the Internet, fax, or telephone. When ordering by the Internet, fax, or phone, a credit card is required and there is an extra fee for this service.

### In person:

Oregon Vital Records  
800 NE Oregon St., Suite 205  
Portland, Oregon 97232-2162

### Mail orders to:

Oregon Vital Records  
P.O. Box 14050  
Portland, Oregon 97293-0050

Internet: [www.vitalchek.com](http://www.vitalchek.com)

Fax orders: 503-234-8417

Phone orders: 503-731-4108

If you were born in another state, contact that state to find out how to order certificates. You can use [www.vitalchek.com](http://www.vitalchek.com) or call us for contact information.

## How are the fees used?

Fees for vital records support **all** the services provided by state and county vital records offices. These services include:

### *Filing and storing certificates...*

Each vital event - birth, marriage, divorce, and death - that occurs in Oregon is registered and filed with the state vital records office. Birth certificates have been filed with the state vital records office since 1903. We file over 45,000 birth certificates each year.

The vital records offices are responsible for making certain that the certificates have complete information, and are numbered and indexed so each certificate can be easily found. The certificates are stored securely for at least 100 years. Any changes that are made to the records at any time must be documented and tracked.

Currently, the state vital records office is responsible for maintaining over 5 million vital records.

*Screening and processing orders for certificates...*

The vital records office screens and processes more than 160,000 vital records orders each year. All orders are screened to make sure that persons ordering the records are eligible to receive them. Birth certificates are confidential and access is limited for 100 years to specific persons, such as immediate family or legal representatives. Screening is used to keep information confidential, and to prevent fraud and identity theft. After screening the request, the certificate is located in storage, and a certified copy is made and mailed.

*Analyzing data from vital records...*

Some of the most important information about the health of Oregonians comes from birth certificates. For example, information about low birth weight babies and access to prenatal care is gathered from birth certificates.

Information from each birth certificate is entered and maintained in a computer file. We can then analyze the combined data and publish the findings

without identifying individual names. This information is then used when deciding where to focus resources to improve the health of Oregon's children and mothers.

Please visit our web site at [www.healthoregon.org/chs](http://www.healthoregon.org/chs) for more information about the services provided by Oregon Vital Records.

**If you need this information in alternate format, please contact:  
Linda Reynolds, (503) 731-4027**

10/24/03

# The Certificate of Birth



**Oregon Vital Records  
Center for Health Statistics  
800 NE Oregon Street, Suite 205  
Portland, Oregon 97232  
503-731-4108  
503-731-4084 fax**