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BIRTH CERTIFICATES FOR THE STATE OF IOWA

AT THIS TIME, THE STATE OF IOWA DOES NOT ALLOW A THIRD PARTY TO APPLY FOR A BIRTH CERTIFICATE. PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE ON HOW YOU MAY APPLY DIRECTLY TO YOUR VITAL RECORDS OFFICE. YOU MAY ALSO APPLY FOR YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATE ONLINE THROUGH WWW.VITALCHEK.COM.

REVISED: 12-15-08 (JEN)

Specializing in Visas, Passports, Document Legalization and Translations

Bureau of Health Statistics

Jill France,
Bureau Chief
Lucas State Ofc. Bldg.
321 E. 12th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319
(515) 281-4944

Welcome to the Bureau of Health Statistics. Two essential functions of the department are performed within this bureau: [Vital Records](#) and [Health Statistics](#). This section will change periodically with new announcements and reminders.

Please check back regularly for the most recent happenings within the bureau.

Important Notice

Effective Monday, March 13, 2006, written requests for certified copies of birth, death, fetal death, and marriage records will not be accepted if they do not include:

1. The applicant's current government-issued photo identification; except if by mail, a clear photocopy of the I.D.; and
2. The applicant's signature signed in front of a notary public or in the presence of an Iowa Registrar of Vital Records.

Announcements:

- [Delays in getting 2007 newborn birth cards](#)
- [Fee increase effective January 1, 2005](#)
- Check out our **New** section of online vital statistics reports.

Vital Records

All vital events occurring in the state such as birth, death, and marriage, and the bureau has an interstate exchange agreement with all of the other states. The bureau registers approximately 100,000 events and issues about 85,000 certified copies annually.

In Iowa, official registration of births, deaths, and marriages began July 1, 1880. All original records that have been registered are on file with the Iowa Department of Public Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics.

Statewide record searches are available from the state registrar.

Local registrars are located in county recorder offices and maintain records of birth, death and marriages that have occurred in that county.

County registrars do not have code authority to have the following on record:

- Single-parent births prior to July 1, 1995;
- Adoptions;
- Any record ordered sealed by a court of law;
- Birth, death, and marriage records between the years 1921 to 1941.

All applications for certified copies of vital record events must be in writing and completely identify the record, as well as satisfactorily establish entitlement to the record being requested.

Entitled persons include the person named on the record or that person's spouse, children, legal parents, grandparents, grandchildren, siblings, or legal representative or guardian. Legal guardians, legal representatives, and siblings must also provide additional proof of entitlement.

Certified copies of birth, death, or marriage certificates may be obtained from the state office of vital records by telephone, in-person, or through a postal service.

Fees are payable by check or money order made out to the Iowa Department of Public Health. In-person requests may also be paid in cash. Checks must be drawn from the applicant's account; money orders must be in the name of the applicant. Fees must be paid at the time of the application.

Requests for the purpose of family history take at least 60 days, regardless of the method of request.

Effective January 1, 2005, state and county fees will increase to \$15 for searches and certified copies of vital records. This fee is for the search of the record and is non-refundable. Also, no refunds may be made for overpayments of less than \$15.

Fees must be paid in U.S. funds to the issuing registrar's office. In some instances, the local county registrar (County Recorder) may only accept cash or money orders for in-person requests and money orders for mail-in requests. All applications must be accompanied by a valid, current government-issued photo I.D. (legible photocopy if applying by mail) and all applicants must satisfactorily prove entitlement.

Administrative processing fees at the state level also will increase to \$15 as of January 1, 2005. This includes for amendments, delayed registrations, legal change of names, rescission of paternity affidavit, paternity registry searches by adoption attorneys, revelation of county of adoption, private paternity establishment judgments, court orders, and any other action requiring an administrative processing fee.

The application fee for the Mutual Consent Voluntary Adoption Registry remains unchanged at \$25.

To see information on how to obtain a copy of a certified record click on the appropriate link below:

- [How to request a certified record by phone](#)
- [How to request a certified record online](#)
- [How to request a certified record by mail](#)
- [How to request a certified record in person](#)
- [How to request a commemorative birth certificate](#)
- [How to request a commemorative marriage certificate](#)
- [Additional information about Vital Records](#)

Bureau of Health Statistics Information

How to request a certified record by phone

The public may call the state Health Statistics office at (515) 281-4944 from 7:00 a.m to 4:45 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for state-observed holidays.

A recording gives instructions for submitting a written application by mail, in person walk-in requests at the state health statistics office, or ordering with a credit card.

Credit cards currently being accepted include American Express, Discover, Mastercard, and Visa.

Should callers choose the credit card option, they will be connected to a health statistics operator, who will explain the charges, authorize the credit card, and take the person's required information.

The fee to screen the credit card and authenticate the caller is \$9.00 in addition to the \$15.00 record fee charged by the department. It may take 7-21 business days to process your request.

NOTE: Due to the volume of calls received daily, callers may expect to hold the line (possibly 20 minutes or more) while waiting for the next available operator. Also, credit cards may not be used to pay for family history requests.

The caller may also call a toll-free number 866-809-0290 from 7:00 am EST - 8:00 pm EST. If you choose the toll-free number an operator will take your information, screen the credit card, authenticate your identity and complete your order. The fee to screen the credit card, authenticate the caller, and the extended customer service hours is \$13.00 in addition to the \$15.00 record fee charged by the department. It may take 7-21 business days to process your request.

How to request a certified record online

You may also place an order on line at <http://www.vitalchek.com> your identity will be authenticated, the credit card screened and the fee will be \$13.00 in addition to the \$15.00 fee for the certified copy charged by the department. It may take 7-21 business days to process your request.

How to request a certified record by mail


The information on the the 'Application for Copy of a Vital Record' form (see below) must be completed in order to make an application for a certified copy of a vital record (birth, death,

marriage) registered with the Iowa Department of Public Health. In Iowa, registration of births, deaths and marriages began July 1, 1880. No records of events prior to July 1, 1880, are on file in this office.

A fee of \$15.00 is required for the record search and includes one copy. Each additional copy of the record is also \$15.00. If the record is not located, the applicant shall receive a notification of the record search. The \$15.00 fee shall be retained for the search.

Upon completion of the application form with a notarized signature, attach a check or money order payable to the 'Iowa Department of Public Health,' a clear photocopy of the applicant's current, government-issued photo identification, and submit to the address listed below.

**Iowa Department of Public Health
Bureau of Health Statistics
Lucas State Office Building, 1st Floor
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075**

Documents denoted by  are available in Portable Document Format (.pdf).

[Click here](#) to test whether you have the Adobe® Acrobat® Reader installed on your system. If not, [download](#) and install the Acrobat® Reader from Adobe® to view these documents.

- [Application for Copy of Vital Record Form](#) 

How to request a certified record in person

Walk-in service is available for in-person requests at the state vital records office between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 4:45 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for state-observed holidays. The office is located at the address listed below, just inside the main north entrance and to the right of the main lobby. The Lucas building is the first state office building east of the state Capitol building, on the south side of Grand Avenue. Written applications must be satisfactorily completed and signed. Applicants must also provide valid, current government-issued photo identification. Copies may either be picked up after two days or mailed to an [entitled person](#).

**Iowa Department of Public Health
Bureau of Health Statistics
Lucas State Office Building, 1st Floor
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075**

How to request a commemorative birth certificate

The Iowa Department of Public Health is pleased to offer Iowa-born citizens the opportunity to obtain commemorative certificates of their birth record. The commemorative birth certificate makes a memorable keepsake or gift.

This parchment certificate features a gold foil border, image of the state capital of Iowa, and calligraphy print of the individual's personal information. Each certificate is signed by both the Governor of Iowa and the State Registrar. Its 8-1/2" x 11" size is suitable for framing.

Certificates are delivered in protective envelopes within 30 days of application. All applicants must meet the same qualifying direct-and-tangible interest standards (i.e., immediate family) as for any certified birth certificate request. Submit each fully completed application form with \$35 (check or money order) to:


**Iowa Department of Public Health
Bureau of Vital Statistics
Lucas State Office Building, 1st Floor
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075**

Application

The information on the form must be completed in order to make application for the Iowa commemorative birth certificate. Registration of births in Iowa officially began July 1, 1880. The original records of all births registered in Iowa are maintained in the Bureau of Health Statistics, Iowa Department of Public Health.

The \$35 fee for the commemorative birth certificate includes the search for the record and one commemorative certificate. If the record is not located, the applicant will receive a notification of the record search results and a \$20 refund, with \$15 retained in this office to cover the cost of the search as required by statute. Effective March 13, 2006, commemorative requests require a clear photocopy of the applicant's current government-issued photo identification and signature signed in front of a Notary Public.

Each additional commemorative certificate for the same record is \$35 and can be ordered on the same application form.

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- [Commemorative Birth Certificate Application Form](#) 

How to request a commemorative marriage certificate

The Iowa Department of Public Health is pleased to offer Iowa-born citizens the opportunity to obtain commemorative certificates of marriage. The commemorative marriage certificate makes a memorable keepsake or gift.

This parchment certificate features a gold foil border, image of the state capital of Iowa, and calligraphy print of the individual's personal information. Each certificate is signed by both the Governor of Iowa and the State Registrar. Its 8-1/2" x 11" size is suitable for framing.

Certificates are delivered in protective envelopes within 30 days of application. All applicants must meet the same qualifying direct-and-tangible interest standards (i.e., immediate family) as for any certified birth certificate request. Submit each fully completed application form with \$35 (check or money order) to:


**Iowa Department of Public Health
Bureau of Health Statistics
Lucas State Office Building, 1st Floor
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075**

Application

The information on the form must be completed in order to make application for the Iowa commemorative birth certificate. Registration of births in Iowa officially began July 1, 1880. The original records of all births registered in Iowa are maintained in the Office of Health Statistics, Iowa Department of Public Health.

The \$35 fee for the commemorative birth certificate includes the search for the record and one commemorative certificate. If the record is not located, the applicant will receive a notification of the record search results and a \$20 refund, with \$15 retained in this office to cover the cost of the search as required by statute. Effective March 13, 2006, commemorative requests require a clear photocopy of the applicant's current government-issued photo identification and signature signed in front of a Notary Public.

Each additional commemorative certificate for the same record is \$35 and can be ordered on the same application form.

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- [Commemorative Marriage Certificate Application Form](#) 