

Texas Foster Youth Justice Project

www.texasfosteryouth.org

(877) 313-3688

Getting a Copy of a Birth Certificate

How can I get a certified copy of my birth certificate?

If you are requesting a copy of your own birth certificate, you must send Texas Vital Statistics:

1. A completed "Mail Application for Birth or Death Record."
2. A check or money order for \$22.
3. A photocopy of your ID.

Mail Application for Birth or Death Record

Fill out the Mail Application for Birth or Death Record. In question 10, when it asks for your relationship to the person named in question 1, write "self." You can get a copy of the Application form from: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/vs/regproc/forms/vs142.3.pdf>

Photocopy of Valid Photo ID

You must send a photocopy of current photo ID, which includes a driver's license or state-issued identification card. If you do not have a driver's license or state-issued identification card, you can send a photocopy of a state or city ID card, student ID, military, or prison ID. Government-issued photo ID is preferred.

If you do not have valid government-issued photo ID, you may send two alternative documents that identify you by name. At least one of these documents **MUST** also have your signature. Texas Vital Statistics's examples of alternative documents are "a utility bill, a recent paycheck stub, an employment or organizational ID, or a Social Security card."

How long will it take to get a certified copy of a birth certificate?

It will take six to eight weeks.

Is there any way to get a certified copy of a birth certificate sooner?

Yes, there are three ways to get a certified copy more quickly:

1. In Austin, go to the Texas Vital Statistics office at 1100 West 49th Street in person between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Complete the form, bring your ID, and bring \$22. If you go to the office in person, the \$22 can be in the form of a check, money order, or cash.
2. If you have a credit card, you can order a certified copy of your birth certificate online by visiting <http://www.texasonline.state.tx.us/tolapp/ovra/> . It will take three to four weeks for your certified copy to arrive if you order it online.

3. If you want your birth certificate processed within 7-10 business days, follow the instructions for the normal process of ordering a birth certificate by mail, EXCEPT:
- Instead of the “Mail Application for Birth or Death Record,” fill out the “Overnight Application for Birth or Death Record.”
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/vs/regproc/forms/vs142.2.pdf>
 - Instead of sending your application to the P.O. Box, send it to:
Texas Vital Records
Department of State Health Services
1100 W. 49th Street
Austin, TX 78756-3191
 - Make sure your check or money order is for enough money to cover the extra fees.
 - There is a \$5 fee for processing your request overnight.
 - There is a fee for sending your certified copy back through an express delivery service. This fee varies depending on which service you choose.

What if I Need a Certified Copy of Another Person’s Birth Certificate?

If you are an “immediate family member” of the person whose birth certificate you’re requesting, the process is exactly the same as requesting your own birth certificate, except that instead of writing “self” in question 10, you write in your relationship with the person in question. For example, if you were requesting a certified copy of your mother’s birth certificate, you would write either “son” or “daughter” as your answer to question 10.

What is an “Immediate Family Member?”

An immediate family member is your spouse or your parent, child, sibling, or grandparent by either blood or marriage.

What if I am not an “immediate family member,” but still need a certified copy of another person’s birth certificate?

If you request a birth certificate for someone who is not yourself or your “immediate family member,” you must send in additional documentation proving your legitimate interest in that person’s birth certificate.

- You may send a written, notarized statement from an immediate family member giving you permission to receive a copy of the birth certificate. This statement MUST include your full name. It should also include their full name, and their relationship to the person whose birth certificate is being requested. If you do this, you MUST include a photocopy of your valid government-issued photo ID.
- You may send documentation of your special legal relationship with the person in question. This might include a court order giving you guardianship or other papers documenting the fact that you are their legal representative.