How to Get a Certified Copy of Your Birth Certificate
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What is a certified birth certificate?
A certified birth certificate has features that show it is authentic, like an official stamp, embossed seal, or special paper. A regular copy of your birth certificate is often not acceptable for governmental purposes.

Do you have a certified copy of your birth certificate?
Some people know exactly where their important personal documents are. However, many young adults have trouble finding this paperwork. Teens and young adults might not have access to their documents, like a certified copy of their birth certificate, because they:

- No longer live with their parents who have the documents;
- Relocated and misplaced the documents in the move; or
- Lost the documents due to a fire or burglary.

Why do you need a certified copy of your birth certificate?
Some people do not realize how important these documents are until they need them. Most people are aware that a certified birth certificate helps verify your age and identification. A birth certificate is one document accepted for the government I-9 form which is required to legally work in the United States. There are a lot of other reasons why you might have to show your birth certificate. You might need to show your certified birth certificate when you:

- Start a new job;
- Get a driver license or photo identification card;
- Apply for a passport;
- Participate in federal Workforce Investment Act programs;
- Apply for welfare assistance;
- Enroll in school or sports; or
- Get a marriage license.

Applying for your birth certificate
The best time to get a certified copy of your birth certificate is when you don’t urgently need it. It can take weeks or months to get yours from the vital records department in the state where you were born.

If you were born in Nevada, you can submit an application packet to request a certified copy of your birth certificate by mail from the Office of Vital Records. Your application packet must have the following:

- Completed application form (see Appendix A for a sample);
- Copy of your picture identification card or driver license; and
- $13 check or money order made out to Section of Vital Statistics.
Mail your application packet to:

Office of Vital Records
4150 Technology Way, Suite 104
Carson City, NV 89706

If you were not born in Nevada, contact the Vital Records Office in the state where you were born. Offices in Nevada’s neighboring states are listed in Appendix B (Arizona Department of Human Services, 2009).

Ordering your birth certificate online can speed up the process for you. Nevada, along with other states, work with VitalChek to fill online requests for certified birth certificates. To order online, go to http://www.vitalchek.com/. You will need to gather the following information, if you don’t know it:

- City of birth;
- County of birth;
- Mother’s maiden name; and
- Father’s name.

You will also need a credit card to pay for the standard fee of $23, or up to $48 for faster service.

**Keeping it safe**

Some people like to carry a certified copy of their birth certificate with them. This is not recommended. You must always safeguard your certified copy of your birth certificate. If your wallet or purse gets stolen or lost, someone could use it to steal your identity or you would have to go through the hassle and cost of getting it replaced. Therefore, it is recommended that you carry a certified copy of your birth certificate with you only when you know you will need to show it to an employer or service provider.

A certified copy of your birth certificate is one document that you will want to keep for your whole life (Extension, 2007). Once you receive it, you want to be sure that you keep it in a safe place. Creating a filing system (Meier, 2009), which includes a folder for your important personal documents, is one way to keep your birth certificate safe.

**Resources & References**


Appendix A
Sample Birth Certificate Application

State of Nevada
Health Division
Bureau of Health Planning and Statistics
Office of Vital Records and Statistics
4150 Technology Way, Suite 104
Carson City, Nevada 89706
Telephone (775)684-4242

BIRTH CERTIFICATE APPLICATION

☐ $13.00 per certified copy ................................................................. No of copies .................
☐ $8.00 Search/Verification of a record .................................................................

____________________________________________________________________________________

****PHOTOCOPY OF APPLICANT’S ID /DRIVERS LICENSE****
**** IS REQUIRED TO OBTAIN CERTIFICATE****

Full name at birth ..........................................................................................................

Date of birth ........................................................................................................

Place of birth .........................................................................................................

Father’s name ........................................................................................................

Mother’s maiden name ..............................................................................................

NRS 440.650 and NAC 440.070 require that a relationship or a need to facilitate a legal process be established in order to receive a certified copy of a record. Please state your relationship and your legal need for this record:

........................................................................................................................................

Signature of applicant ................................................................................................

Your name and address (please print) ........................................................................

........................................................................................................................................

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Amount received ............................................... Receipt number ..........................................................

No. of copies issued ................................. Date ..........................................................
Appendix B
Vital Records Offices in States Neighboring Nevada
Available at: [http://www.azdhs.gov/vitalrcd/states.htm](http://www.azdhs.gov/vitalrcd/states.htm)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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| Arizona | Arizona Department of Health Services  
|         | Office of Vital Records  
|         | P.O. Box 3887  
|         | Phoenix, AZ 85030                                                                   |
| California | Office of Vital Records  
|           | Department of Health Services  
|           | P.O. Box 730241  
|           | Sacramento, CA 94244-0241                                                           |
| Idaho   | Vital Statistics Unit  
|         | Center for Vital Statistics and Health Policy  
|         | P.O. Box 83720  
|         | Boise, ID 83720-0036                                                                |
| Oregon  | Oregon Health Division  
|         | Vital Records  
|         | P.O. Box 14050  
|         | Portland, OR 97293-0050                                                             |
| Utah    | Bureau of Vital Records  
|         | Utah Department of Health  
|         | P.O. Box 141012  
|         | Salt Lake City, UT 84114-1012                                                       |