



Birth

Marriage

Death

Dissolution

VITAL NEWS IN THE SUNSHINE STATE

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DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN PUBLIC HEALTH

How a Florida Birth Record is Filed and its Importance

All births that occur in Florida must be filed within five days with the Department of Health's Bureau of Vital Statistics pursuant to section 382.013, Florida Statutes. Most Florida births are initiated by a birthing facility and filed electronically through the Bureau of Vital Statistics Electronic Birth Registration System (EBRS). Filing the birth certificate electronically improves timeliness and ensures accuracy and completeness. Birth registration specialists collect birth data from multiple sources such as prenatal records, medical records, clinicians and parents.

The birth certificate is used to establish identity, obtain benefits, gain employment and for other legal purposes. The statistical information from the birth record is used to monitor the general health of the population, and can identify health-related issues and measure progress toward quality improvement and public health goals. Examples of health indicators that are gathered from birth records and used extensively by the public health community are maternal and infant mortality statistics. Mortality rates influence policy development, funding of programs and research, and can measure the quality of health care received by the mother and infant.

For birth registration specialists that are responsible for entering the birth data, it is essential that they enter information that is accurate and in accordance with the guidelines prescribed by the Bureau of Vital Statistics. In the Help menu, Electronic Birth Registration System users can find the "[Guide to Completing the Facility Worksheets for the Certificate of Live Birth](#)," distributed by the National Center for Health Statistics, and a birth registration manual. Both explain the items collected on the birth record, their uses, where to obtain the information and helpful hints on what terminology to look for in medical records. The Bureau of Vital Statistics is focusing on birth data quality and will be reaching out to facilities in the near future to offer assistance and training.

2017 MOST POPULAR FIRST NAMES FOR FLORIDA BIRTHS

MALE			FEMALE		
RANK	NAME	FREQUENCY	RANK	NAME	FREQUENCY
1	LIAM	1358	1	ISABELLA	1312
2	NOAH	1281	2	EMMA	1244
3	LUCAS	1031	3	OLIVIA	1175
4	ELIJAH	938	4	SOPHIA	1061
5	MATTHEW	916	5	AVA	1021
6	LOGAN	868	6	MIA	1011
7	ALEXANDER	861	7	AMELIA	698
8	MICHAEL	860	8	EMILY	676
9	MASON	849	9	CHARLOTTE	657
10	DYLAN	827	10	ABIGAIL	656
11	DANIEL	821	11	VICTORIA	650
12	JACOB	820	12	SOFIA	616
13	SEBASTIAN	816	13	ELIZABETH	542
14	ETHAN	814	14	HARPER	510
15	JAYDEN	781	15	MADISON	505
16	AIDEN	778	16	ARIA	481
17	BENJAMIN	765	17	ELLA	463
18	JAMES	682	18	CAMILA	460
19	GABRIEL	672	19	MILA	443
20	DAVID	672	20	VALENTINA	430

Highlighting the Florida Putative Father Registry

The purpose of the Florida Putative Father Registry is to permit a man who alleges to be the biological father of a child and who is not married to the mother to assert his right to notice and consent for adoption.

If the biological father fails to register his notarized claim with the Florida Putative Father Registry before the court has petitioned for an adoption or for Termination of Parental Rights, his parental rights may be lost entirely.

There is a difference between the Florida Putative Father Registry and a father wishing to acknowledge paternity with the mother for placement of his name on a birth record. Paternity acknowledgement is voluntary and both parents must agree to add the father to the birth record.

The Florida Putative Father Registry is confidential. Eligible parties, as specified in section 63.0541, Florida Statutes — an adoption entity in connection with the planned adoption of the child, the registrant unmarried biological father, the birth mother or a court order — can search the registry.

If a father wishes to register or would like more information, he may contact the Bureau of Vital Statistics at (904) 359-6900 ext. 9001 or visit www.flhealth.gov.

Trending Now on FLHealthCHARTS

Infant mortality is an important measure of a community's health status. Florida's infant mortality rate for 2017 remained the same as 2016, at 6.1 infant deaths per 1,000 births. Black infants have historically experienced infant mortality rates more than twice that of white infants. Since 2008, this racial difference was highest in 2016, when black infant deaths were 2.7 times that of white infant deaths. This difference decreased to 2.5 in 2017.

Year	Total		White		Black		Black/White Rate Ratio
	Infant Deaths	Rate per 1000 Births	Infant Deaths	Rate per 1000 Births	Infant Deaths	Rate per 1000 Births	
2008	1667	7.2	914	5.5	661	12.9	2.3
2009	1525	6.9	780	4.9	667	13.2	2.7
2010	1400	6.5	750	4.9	580	11.8	2.4
2011	1372	6.4	698	4.6	584	12.0	2.6
2012	1285	6.0	687	4.6	523	10.7	2.3
2013	1318	6.1	707	4.6	517	10.6	2.3
2014	1327	6.0	988	4.4	538	11.0	2.5
2015	1400	6.2	911	4.4	558	11.4	2.6
2016	1380	6.1	694	4.3	575	11.6	2.7
2017	1355	6.1	696	4.4	536	10.8	2.5

An analytic report posted on FLHealthCHARTS shows infants born too early and underweight are at the greatest risk of infant death (<http://www.flhealthcharts.com/Charts/documents/AdHocReports/birth-outcomes-and-IM.pdf>). As a result, a new measure, Preterm with Low Birthweight, is now available on the website. The percent of black infants that were preterm with low birthweight declined slightly from 9.6% in 2016 to 9.5% in 2017. This measure remained the same among white infants at 5.0% of births.

Visit www.FLHealthCHARTS.com for more vital statistics and public health data.

“From the study of the birth and death rate of a state or community, the thoughtful student deduces the increase or decrease of the population, with the death rate at certain ages, of the sexes and races, and from these deductions ascertains the causes that operate to shorten life and how possibly to avoid them.”

Excerpt from the first Florida Health Notes, Official Bulletin of the State Board of Health, July 1892

Best Practices for Funeral Directors Filing Death Records and Obtaining a Physician's Signature

Once a funeral director takes possession of a deceased individual, it is their responsibility to get a death record signed by a physician. In most cases, the decedent's primary care physician is responsible for signing the death record, unless the death falls under the jurisdiction of the medical examiner. There are several factors funeral directors need to keep in mind when filing a death record:

Timeliness: The Burial Transit Permit must be filed within five days of the death, so the funeral director or funeral home staff should start completing the electronic record in the Electronic Death Registration System as soon as they receive the remains. The physician has 72 hours to complete the medical certification once they receive the fax attestation or the email that the death record is ready for their completion, regardless of when the funeral director sends the death record.

Follow-thru: The funeral homes' office staff may handle routine situations related to the death record. However, the funeral director in charge of the case should speak directly with a reluctant physician. Employing a few of the best practices below may help.

- Always listen to the physician's reason for not wanting to sign.
- Provide help and resources for the physician.
 - The physician may want to speak with the Vital Statistics staff for clarification.
 - The physician may need additional documentation like a police report, medical records or a waive jurisdiction report from the medical examiner.
- Always treat the physician professionally and with respect.

Willingness: The funeral director needs to identify the best physician to sign the death record and determine the physician's willingness to complete the medical portion.

- Obtain sufficient information to determine the best physician to certify the death certificate. Ensure the physician has examined, treated or provided a prescription to the patient within the 12 months preceding the date of death (Section 382.008(3), Florida Statutes).
- Ask if the physician is willing to sign. It's always best to speak directly to physician or to an office manager who has authority to speak for the doctor.
- Ask if the medical examiner needs to review any external causes or factors. Section 406.12, Florida Statutes requires the medical examiner to be notified if the death involves circumstances under the medical examiner's purview pursuant to section 406.11, Florida Statutes.
- Secure the physician's Florida medical license number and fax number if the physician is an off-line user.

Assurance: The funeral director is charged with the responsibility of obtaining the certifying physician's assurance that the death was from natural causes and there was no evidence of trauma or external cause. This assurance should be obtained directly from the physician and must be obtained *prior* to final disposition and/or ship out of state.

Funeral directors should always be prepared to speak with a physician regarding what current Florida Statutes require of the physician. The following information may help when the physician is reluctant to sign:

- Section 382.008(3), Florida Statutes sets the guidelines for time frame (72 hours).
- Section 382.008(3), Florida Statutes states that the physician's or medical examiner's signature signifies they are certifying the cause of death "to the best of their knowledge and belief."
- Section 382.008(3), Florida Statutes defines *primary and attending physician* as the physician who treated the decedent through examination, medical advice or medication during the 12 months preceding the date of death.
- Section 406.11, Florida Statutes defines causes of death that fall within the medical examiner's jurisdiction.
- If the death occurred at home, provide the physician with a police report and/or medical examiner report declining jurisdiction, if available.

If the funeral director is unable to resolve the issue with the physician, contact the Chief Deputy Registrar of the county where the death occurred for assistance. Notes should be entered in the Electronic Death Registration System record to include details on every conversation or attempt. If the county office has exhausted all efforts without resolution, the CDR may contact the Bureau of Vital Statistics Quality Assurance unit at 904-359-6900 ext. 9020 for assistance.

Tax Collectors' Update

The partnership between the Bureau of Vital Statistics, County Health Departments and the Tax Collectors is going very well. We now have 38 counties with 122 Tax Collectors offices issuing Florida birth certificates throughout the state. To ensure the Tax Collectors offices issue birth certificates in accordance with Florida Statutes and the guidelines set forth by the Bureau of Vital Statistics, each office involved in the birth certificate issuance program completes a self-assessment tool every year. The Tax Collector self-assessment tool is a checklist to ensure adherence to policies and procedures set forth in the Tax Collector Operations Manual (TOM). The TOM is revised yearly and was distributed in June 2018. The Chief Deputy Registrar reviews the self-assessment tool submissions and submits them to the Bureau of Vital Statistics for review.

How to Request a Florida Birth Certificate:

To order by mail, visit our website at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/certificates> and download an application for a Florida birth record.

To find a local vital statistics office in Florida, visit <http://www.floridahealth.gov/certificates/certificates/publications-page.html>.

For more information call the Bureau of Vital Statistics at (904) 359-6900 ext. 9000.

To order by phone or online through VitalChek, **our only approved vendor**, call 1-877-550-7330 or visit www.vitalchek.com.

VitalChek charges additional processing fees, and offers an expedited shipping option.

If the birth did not occur in the state of Florida, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/index.htm> for additional information on other states.

Did You Know?

FROM YOUR E-VITALS HOME SCREEN YOU CAN ACCESS A VARIETY OF RESOURCES UNDER THE "HELP" MENU.

The resources displayed are dependent on your role in Vital Record Registration.

Help
<u>C</u> ontents
<u>S</u> how Internal SQL Text
<u>A</u> bout
<u>N</u> etsmart Website
<u>T</u> ax Collector Operation Manual
<u>T</u> ax Collector CAS Manual

Tax Collector View

Help
<u>C</u> ontents
<u>S</u> how Internal SQL Text
<u>A</u> bout
<u>N</u> etsmart Website
<u>D</u> eath Registration Manual
<u>N</u> CHS Guidebook

Death User View

Help
<u>C</u> ontents
<u>S</u> how Internal SQL Text
<u>A</u> bout
<u>U</u> ser ID Helpdesk 866-295-5902
<u>N</u> etsmart Website
<u>N</u> CHS Guidebook
<u>R</u> eg Support 866-295-5902
<u>E</u> BR Troubleshooting
<u>B</u> irth Registration Manual

Birth User View



TO ADD YOUR NAME TO OUR MAILING LIST, PLEASE CLICK [HERE](#).

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

E-MAIL LORRAINE.KRATZ@FLHEALTH.GOV

OR CALL 904-359-6900 EXT. 1136