

## HEIRLOOM BIRTH FAQ'S

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### **What is an heirloom birth record?**

Q: What is an heirloom birth record?

A: An heirloom birth record is a birth record document which contains the facts of birth intended as a keepsake. It is issued on decorative paper with your choice of designs, includes the governor's signature and is a beautiful souvenir of the birth suitable for display.

### **Why would I want an heirloom birth record?**

Q: Why would I want an heirloom birth record?

A: An heirloom birth record would be a beautiful keepsake or souvenir of a loved one's birth that could be displayed in your home or sent a gifts to grandparents or friends.

### **Cost of an heirloom birth record**

Q: What is the cost of an heirloom birth record?

A: The fee for an heirloom birth record is \$40 for each copy issued. \$20 of the proceeds will go to the Children's Trust Fund of Michigan. The Children's Trust Fund serves as a voice for Michigan's children and families and promotes their health, safety and welfare by funding effective local programs and services that prevent child abuse and neglect.

### **Additional copy of an heirloom certificate**

Q: I would like to order more than one heirloom certificate. How much is the additional copy of an heirloom certificate?

A: Each heirloom copy is \$40.

### **Can I request an heirloom certificate for anyone?**

Q: Can I request an heirloom certificate for anyone?

A: Since birth records are restricted in Michigan, you have to be eligible to request an heirloom birth certificate. You need to be the person named on the record, a parent listed on the birth record, or a legal representative or an heir to the person named on the record. When you order the record, you will need to provide a completed application, photo identification, and payment.

In addition, if the birth occurred over 100 years ago, anyone is eligible to request the record. No photo identification is needed.

If you are not eligible to receive an heirloom birth record and were planning on getting one as a gift to an eligible person (such as the parents), you can still buy a gift certificate to present to them that they can redeem.

### **Can I get an heirloom birth certificate from the county office?**

Q: Can I get an heirloom birth certificate from the county office?

A: Michigan heirloom birth certificates can only be obtained at the state vital records office in Lansing.

### **Order an heirloom birth record**

Q: How can I order an heirloom birth record and how long will it take?

A: Heirloom birth records can be obtained by downloading the heirloom birth application from our website at [www.michigan.gov/vitalrecords](http://www.michigan.gov/vitalrecords). If you are unable to download the file, you can call 517-335-8656 and request that the application be mailed to you. If you live in Michigan, you can also come into the Vital Records office in Lansing to submit an application, mail the application to the Vital Records office in Lansing or you can use VitalChek, our online service provider, to order. Valid photo id will be required when applying in person or by mail.

The processing time for an heirloom birth certificate takes three to five weeks, depending on the volume of requests received. Since the governor signs each of these certificates, we will be unable to provide same day service.

### **Can the heirloom certificates be used for official business?**

Q: Can the heirloom certificates be used for official business? (e.g., enroll in school, verify citizenship, obtain a passport)

A: Although only an eligible person can order these records, the certificate is still only a souvenir of the facts of birth. It will not be certified and cannot be presented as an official document.

### **Purchase heirloom certificate as a gift**

Q: I am a grandparent (uncle, friend, neighbor) and I want to get the heirloom certificate as a gift for the parents of a newborn. Can I order the certificate for the parents?

A: Since birth records are restricted in Michigan, you are not eligible to order an heirloom birth record. However, you can buy a gift certificate for an eligible person, such as a parent, who can then request the record.

### **Gift certificate, do I have to specify which record it is for?**

Q: When I purchase a gift certificate, do I have to specify which record it is for?

A: That is not necessary. However, we would advise that you, at the minimum, designate a recipient for the gift certificate to assure that it cannot be used by someone else.

### **How/Where to Purchase**

Q: Can I purchase a gift certificate online? In person? By mail?

A: Yes, you can order gift certificates by any of these avenues. Heirloom birth records can be obtained by downloading the heirloom birth application from our website at [www.michigan.gov/vitalrecords](http://www.michigan.gov/vitalrecords). If you are unable to download the file, you can call 517-335-8656 and request that the application be mailed to you. If you live in Michigan, you can also come into the Vital Records office in Lansing to submit an application, mail the application to the Vital Records office in Lansing or you can use VitalChek at [www.VitalChek.com](http://www.VitalChek.com), our online service provider, to order. Valid photo id will be required when applying in person or by mail.

### **Heirloom certificate for a stillborn**

Q: My baby was stillborn (or died as an infant). Can I get an heirloom certificate for my baby?

A: It is possible to issue an heirloom certificate for a person who was stillborn or died in infancy. For information on issuing for a stillbirth, please call our Eligibility Unit at 517-335-8666.

### **Unregistered record**

Q: I was informed that my child's birth record is unregistered, can I still order this kind of record?

A: A birth record must be properly registered in order for this office to issue any kind of certificate. If the child is still under one year old, you should contact the Registration Unit at 517-335-8685 to find out what you will need to do. If the child is over one year old, please contact the Changes Unit at 517-335-8660 and they can advise you on how to register a birth record that is over one year old.

### **Adopted children - Heirloom birth certificate with original name**

Q: I adopted my son when he was very young, but he still knows who his biological parents are. I would like to give him an heirloom birth certificate with his original name and parents on it. Can I do that?

A: Only active birth records can be issued as an heirloom certificate. Information from birth records that have been sealed cannot be issued.

### **Genealogy heirloom birth certificate**

Q: I would like to order a birth certificate for an individual that was born over 100 years ago for genealogy. Am I able to get that record?

A: Yes, anyone can order an active birth record for anyone if the birth record was filed more than 100 years ago.

### **Heirloom certificate – do they contain a “deceased” watermark?**

Q: I ordered a birth certificate for my great-grandfather for genealogy purposes. On that copy, there was a watermark that stated he is deceased. If I order an heirloom certificate for him, will it still have the deceased marker on it?

A: Since an heirloom birth certificate is not to be used for official purposes, there is no requirement to have an indicator that the person on the record is deceased.

### **Birth record changes – can heirloom be replaced?**

Q: I am getting my child's birth record changed. Can I send in the heirloom certificate I already have and exchange it for one with the changed information?

A: Since the heirloom birth certificate is not used as an official, certified copy of the facts of birth, the record will not be replaced.

### **Central Adoption Registry - can I get an heirloom certificate with my original birth information?**

Q: I was adopted when I was a baby and just received a form from the Central Adoption Registry which allows me to obtain a copy of my original birth record. I just want this certificate for personal records. Can I get an heirloom certificate with my original birth information that does not say “sealed” on it?

A: Only active birth records can be issued as an heirloom certificate. Birth records that have been sealed cannot be issued.

### **Redeeming a gift certificate for an heirloom birth record**

Q: I was given a gift certificate to get an heirloom birth record, how do I redeem it?

A: You can redeem your heirloom birth gift certificate by downloading the heirloom birth application from our website at [www.michigan.gov/vitalrecords](http://www.michigan.gov/vitalrecords). If you are unable to download the file, you can call 517-335-8656 and request that the application be mailed to you. If you live in Michigan, you can come into the Vital Records office in Lansing to submit the application and gift certificate or mail the application and gift certificate to the Vital Records office in Lansing (address on application). Valid photo id will be required for both processes.

### **Gift certificate for an heirloom birth record – can it be used for a certified copy?**

Q: I received a gift certificate for an heirloom birth record, but need a certified copy, so I want to use that gift certificate. How do I do that?

A: You received a gift certificate for an heirloom birth record to keep as a souvenir. The gift certificate cannot be used to request a certified birth record, so you will need to place a separate order and pay the fee to receive a certified copy.

### **Lost gift certificate replacement**

Q: I was given a gift certificate to get an heirloom birth record but I lost it. Can I get a replacement?

A: If your name was indicated as the recipient of the gift certificate, this office can replace it. If the recipient is not named on the original certificate, the individual that purchased the gift certificate

will need to request the replacement. However, if the original gift certificate is located and the replacement has already been redeemed, the original gift certificate is not redeemable.

#### **Gift certificate for an heirloom record - can I get a cash refund for it?**

Q: I received a gift certificate for an heirloom record but I don't want it. Can I get a cash refund for it?

A: The only person that can request a refund is the person who bought the gift certificate. A check will be issued in that individual's name three weeks after the refund is approved. The refund would be limited to \$20 since the balance would have already been transferred to the Children's Trust Fund.

#### **Can heirloom gift certificates be signed over to another person?**

Q: My sister (brother, friend, etc.) received a gift certificate but isn't going to use it. Can s/he sign it over to me?

A: If this individual is named as the recipient on the gift certificate, s/he can write a statement that s/he is giving the certificate to you, sign the statement and provide a legible copy of their picture identification. We will then accept that as a transfer and you can use the gift certificate. If there is no recipient named on the gift certificate, s/he can just give it to you to use.

#### **Can I use a gift certificate to pay the fee for a change or correction?**

Q: Can I use a gift certificate to pay the fee for a change or correction?

A: No, the gift certificate can only be used to request an heirloom birth certificate. Any fees for a change or correction to a birth record must be a separate request. However, if you request a change to be made to the birth record, with submission of the full change fee of \$40, and would like to use a gift certificate to purchase an heirloom copy of that changed record, you can indicate that on your application and a record will be printed after the change is made and sent to you.

#### **Can I get an heirloom marriage, divorce or death certificate?**

Q: Can I get an heirloom marriage, divorce or death certificate?

A: No, at the present time, only birth records are available as an heirloom certificate.

#### **Heirloom certificate style - can it be exchanged for one of the other artwork styles?**

Q: I ordered an heirloom certificate and chose a style, but I don't like it. Can I exchange it for one of the other artwork styles?

A: We are unable to exchange one style of artwork for another. Once we process a request for an heirloom copy in one style, in order to receive another design, the fee must be paid again.

#### **Ordered an heirloom birth certificate by mistake - can I trade it for a regular certified copy?**

Q: I ordered an heirloom birth certificate by mistake and cannot use it. Can I trade it for a regular certified copy of my birth record?

A: Unfortunately, we cannot exchange an heirloom birth certificate for a certified copy.

#### **Heirloom certificate never received in the mail**

Q: I never received the heirloom certificate in the mail and it has been several weeks since it was mailed by the vital records office. How do I get the record I paid for?

A: In the majority of cases, returned mail reaches the Vital Records office within three weeks. Reprints will not be done until a minimum of three weeks from the mailing date has elapsed. We will verify your address before mailing the certificate again.

**Certificate damaged in transit**

Q: When I received the certificate in the mail, the envelope and certificate were damaged. How do I get a replacement?

A: Return the certificate and envelope to this office with a slip from the post office specifying that there was damage during mailing. This office will replace the document.

**Record errors - when I correct a birth record, will the correction fee be higher for an heirloom?**

Q: When I ordered the heirloom certificate, I discovered there is an error on the record. When I correct something on the birth record, will the correction fee be higher for an heirloom record?

A: No, the fee is the same. The fee for a correction is \$40.00 in the State of Michigan and must be paid before the correction can be done to the record. Once the correction is performed, if the original heirloom birth certificate is returned to the office, a replacement copy will be issued with the corrected information.