

## How to Get Your Birth Certificate

### Step 1: Identify Where You Were Born

- **NYC (all five boroughs):** <https://www.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/birth-death-records-birth.page> (managed by NYC Health Department – Department of Vital Records)
- **NYS outside NYC:** [https://www.health.ny.gov/vital\\_records/birth.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/vital_records/birth.htm) (managed by New York State Department of Health)
- **Puerto Rico:** <https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-01022>
- **Other State or Territory:** <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/index.htm>
- **Country outside of the U.S.:** <https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-01023>

\* If you were born in New York City, you can follow the instructions below.



### Step 2: Decide on the type of birth certificate you would like

There are two types of birth certificates (the application is the same for both):

- **Short Form:** The short form is the most requested certificate. It can be used for most domestic purposes.
- **Long Form:** The long form includes additional information and is generally used for international purposes, such as dual citizenship, international adoption, international marriage, time of birth, and apostille certificates (<https://www.usa.gov/authenticate-us-document>).

### Step 3: Gather Required Documents

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/birth-death-records-ordering.page#doc>

- **Within 120 days (about 4 months) from your prison release date,** you can apply for a birth certificate with your NYS DOCCS Released Offender Identification Card and release papers.
- Otherwise, it is best to refer to the NYC Health Department website for the necessary documents: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/birth-death-records-ordering.page#doc>
  - You need *EITHER* one document from Category 1 (copy is fine) *OR* two documents from Category 2 (originals). You do not need both.
  - If you do not have documents from either category, you can email [nycdohvr@health.nyc.gov](mailto:nycdohvr@health.nyc.gov) for assistance.
  - If you are a U.S. veteran seeking a free birth certificate, you will also need to provide proof of your veteran status.



## Step 4: Complete the Application

Each Birth Certificate costs \$15\*

	Process	Timing (approx.)	Fee	Form of Payment
<b>Online</b>	Complete the application through VitalChek: <a href="https://www.vitalchek.com/v/birth-certificates/new-york/ny-state-vital-records">https://www.vitalchek.com/v/birth-certificates/new-york/ny-state-vital-records</a>  <b>*Do NOT use any other website to order a birth certificate*</b>	4 weeks for short form (regular mail) 6 weeks for long form (regular mail) 2 weeks (UPS Express) for an extra \$21 shipping fee	Processing Fee: \$9.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal checking account</li> <li>• Credit card</li> <li>• Debit card</li> </ul>
<b>Mail</b>	1. Complete the application (in <b>black ink!</b> ): <a href="https://www.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/vr/birth1.pdf">https://www.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/vr/birth1.pdf</a> 2. Notarize the application 3. Mail the completed application and required documents to: <div style="margin-left: 40px;">             New York State Department of Health              Vital Records Certification Unit              P.O. Box 2602              Albany, NY 12220-2602           </div>	12 weeks	Processing Fee: free	Money order or personal check in the exact amount, made payable in U.S. dollars to the "NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene."  Cash in <u>not</u> accepted.
<b>In Person</b>	1. Schedule an appointment: <a href="https://wb-nycdohmh.qmatic.cloud/qmaticwebbooking/#/">https://wb-nycdohmh.qmatic.cloud/qmaticwebbooking/#/</a> 2. Bring required documents and completed application if you're able to fill it out beforehand.	12-14 weeks	Processing Fee: \$2.75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credit card</li> <li>• Debit card</li> <li>• Personal check</li> <li>• Money order in exact amount</li> </ul> Cash is <u>not</u> accepted
<b>Phone</b>	Call VitalChek (toll free) for more information: 877-854-4481 (24/7 in English & Spanish)	140-150 business days (about 5 months)	Processing Fee: \$8.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal checking account</li> <li>• Credit card</li> <li>• Debit card</li> </ul>

\*If you are a U.S. veteran, you may be entitled to receive a free birth certificate if your request is related to one of the following reasons:

1. Benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs
2. Enlistment or induction in the U.S. armed forces
3. An application for a veteran's bonus pursuant to any NYS law
4. Applications for allowances for dependents of U.S. armed forces personnel

You will need to provide any one of the following proofs of veteran status:

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/birth-death-records-ordering.page#doc>

## Step 5: Receive Your Birth Certificate

- You will receive a copy of your Birth Certificate in the mail.
- You cannot receive it at a c/o (care of) address.

### Need Additional Assistance?

For more help ordering a certificate for a NYC birth, you can chat online with an operator, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

<https://dohchat.dirad.com/chat/>