

Interim Process - Obtaining Birth Certificates for Vulnerable Populations During COVID-19 Operations

District of Columbia Vital Records Division

The purpose of this document is to assist vulnerable populations in obtaining their birth certificate during the COVID-19 modified operations period at DC Health. For the purpose of this document, “vulnerable populations” includes residents experiencing homelessness or returning citizens who have been issued a birth certificate fee waiver voucher by the Mayor’s Office on Returning Citizen Affairs or the DC Department of Human Services.

The District of Columbia Vital Records Division (DCVRD) has a 100% identity verification policy for all order types and all applicants. Walk-up and remote order applicants are subject to the same identity verification process. More information about our identity verification policies may be found here:

[Identity and Entitlement Video](#)
[Identity Verification Policy](#)
[Entitlement Verification Policy](#)

If constituents are unable to successfully have their identity verified using the required identity verification process, there are multiple options for others to assist the constituent in obtaining their birth certificate.

Birth certificate entitlement verification options

Constituents may:

1. Provide adequate documentation to have their own identity verified by DC Health Vital Records Division;
2. Execute a power of attorney and authorize the agent to obtain the certificate on their behalf;
 - Must provide notarized power of attorney requesting to receive a certified birth certificate
 - Must provide photocopy of a unexpired government issued photo ID
3. Request assistance from a licensed social worker to obtain the certificate on their behalf;
 - Must provide letter on firm’s letterhead authorizing retrieval of the record
 - Must provide photocopy of valid social workers license
 - Must provide photocopy of a unexpired government issued photo ID
4. Authorize a legal representative to obtain the certificate on their behalf; or
 - Must provide copy of retainer agreement
 - Must provide letter on firm’s letterhead authorizing retrieval of the record
 - Must provide a valid Bar card
5. Authorize an entitled family member to obtain the certificate on their behalf.

If options 2-5 are utilized, the constituent does not have to be present when the application for their birth certificate is submitted.

Steps for processing birth certificates for vulnerable populations during the COVID-19 modified operations period:

1. Constituent contacts advocate or social worker to assist with remote ordering process.
2. Advocate or social worker assists constituent in gathering as much documentation as available to increase likelihood of successful identity verification.

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3. Advocate or social worker assists constituent in obtaining fee waiver voucher using the process defined by DHS: <https://dhs.dc.gov/service/resources-dhs> or MORCA <https://orca.dc.gov/sites/default/files/u23/morca-informational-final.pdf>.
 - DHS vouchers must be approved by DHS and assigned to constituent's HMIS ID in ServicePoint.
 - MORCA vouchers must be issued directly by MORCA.
4. Advocate or social worker assists constituent in scanning or taking pictures of available documentation and fee waiver voucher.
5. Advocate or social worker sends documentation and voucher to the DC Health Vital Records Division (DCVRD) via email.
 - Send email to DC.Vitalrecords@dc.gov.
 - Subject Line should read: Voucher Certificate Request.
 - Attach voucher and all pertinent Identity and entitlement documents.
 - Include Advocate/Social workers name and contact number.
 - Include date and time of requested appointment.
 - Open for appointments Monday through Friday, 9am to 3pm.
6. DCVRD contacts Advocate or Social Worker within 1 business day to provide approved appointment time and appointment contact information.

Advocate or social worker assists constituent during appointment with DCVRD to place the remote order.

 - The shipping address for the birth certificate must be that of the Advocate or Social Worker to ensure a secure chain of custody for the legal record.
7. DCVRD employs the standard identity verification procedure, including knowledge-based authentication and document review, to process the application.
8. If the application is unable to be processed due to inadequate documentation, advocate or social worker explores options 2-5 from the above mentioned birth certificate entitlement verification options.
9. If the application is successfully processed, DCVRD staff ships birth certificate to the advocate or social worker to maintain a secure chain of custody for the legal record.
10. Advocate or social worker provides the certificate to their client.
 - Advocate or Social Worker should make note of the VitalChek order number on the included receipt.
11. Advocate or social worker notifies the DCVRD via email of the date the certificate was received and distributed to the client.
 - Send email to DC.Vitalrecords@dc.gov.
 - Subject Line should read: Voucher Certificate Request.
 - Include the VitalChek order number located on the receipt and the date provided to constituent.