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# West Virginia Birth Certificate Requirements for Newborns

By Emily Mitchell, eHow Contributor



West Virginia birth certificate requirements for newborns.

A birth certificate is the first official document parents obtain for a new baby. A person needs this record for school enrollment, employment, military service, and numerous other activities in life. State law requires a birth certificate to be filed within seven days of the birth of every newborn in West Virginia.

## How to Obtain a Birth Certificate

The birth of an infant in West Virginia will be recorded with the state's Vital Registration Office at no cost to parents. Filing the birth certificate records depends upon where the child was born.

### Hospital Birth

For an infant born in a hospital or other institution, a representative of the facility will gather the necessary information, obtain parents' signatures, and file the birth record with the Vital Registration Office. The physician who attended the birth will verify the information and sign the record before filing.

### Home Birth

For a home birth or a birth that takes places anywhere besides a medical facility, West Virginia law specifies four persons who may record, sign, and file a birth certificate. In order of the state's preference, they are the physician who attended the birth or saw other and baby immediately after birth, any other person who attended the birth or saw mother and baby immediately after, the father or mother, or, if none of the above are available, the person in charge of the "premises" where the birth occurred.

### Verifying Birth Information

No matter where a birth takes place, either the mother or father of the newborn should verify the birth information and sign the record before it is filed with the state.

### Paternity Information



Newborn baby in hospital bed.

If the newborn's mother was married "either at the time of conception or birth," the law requires her husband's name to be listed on the birth certificate as the baby's father. A exception can be granted if a court has determined other paternity.

If the mother was not married, a father will not be listed on the birth certificate "without the written consent of the mother and of the person to be named as the father." Again, if a court has established paternity, this rule does not apply.

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The state of West Virginia first issued birth certificates statewide in 1917, though some individual counties kept birth records before that time. Mandatory reporting of births began in 1921.



## References

West Virginia Vital Registration's Genealogy Information

See Title 16-5-12 of West Virginia State Law

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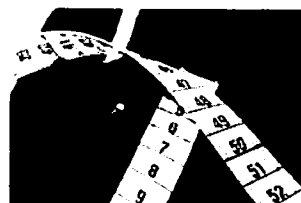
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