

NEW YORK STATE VITAL RECORDS INDEX INFORMATION & INSTRUCTIONS

WHAT IS IT?

The New York State Department of Health (DOH) provides microfiche copies of the *Indexes* to the Vital Records of New York State (excepting New York City for all years and births and deaths in Albany, Buffalo and Yonkers prior to 1914, or marriages in those cities prior to 1908). The actual New York State birth, marriage and death certificates are on file at the DOH in Albany and are also available from the appropriate municipal agency where the event took place. The Vital Records *Index* available at the Central Library will provide information for accessing the actual vital records.

WHAT IS IN IT?

Includes:

- Births 1880 to 75 years before present (Albany, Buffalo and Yonkers from 1914 to 75 years before present)
- Marriages 1880 to 50 years before present (Albany, Buffalo and Yonkers from 1908 to 50 years before present)
- Deaths 1880 to 50 years before present (Albany, Buffalo and Yonkers from 1914 to 50 years before present)

Arranged by:

- Year, then
- Last name, first name, OR
- SOUNDINDEX (alpha/numeric code for surname, 1930s – 40s)

Provides:

- Name (last, first)
- Date of event
- Local registration district (place of event)
- State certificate number (used only by the DOH)

HOW DO I USE IT?

- Request **one** microfiche at a time from the Distribution Desk.
- Provide positive identification (valid driver's license or library card) in exchange for fiche.
- View on microfiche readers provided for this purpose. No **printing or photocopying of fiche is permitted.**
- Return fiche to Distribution Desk for next fiche or return of identification if finished.

HOW DO I GET A COPY OF THE ACTUAL CERTIFICATE?

Uncertified copies are usually adequate for genealogical purpose. Mail an application form and appropriate fee to the New York State DOH. Forms are available in the Grosvenor Room at the Buffalo and Erie County Central Library and from the Vital Records Services section of the Department of Health's website at www.health.state.us/nysdoh/consumer/vr.htm.

HOW DO I GET A COPY/INFORMATION FROM THE ORIGINATING MUNICIPALITY?

Contact the appropriate County Clerk, City Hall or Town Clerk in community where the birth, marriage or death took place. See "GOVERNMENT SOURCES of VITAL RECORDS" guide.

NEW YORK STATE VITAL RECORDS

New York began statewide registration of births, marriages and deaths in 1880-81, under supervision of the State and local boards of health. Compliance with the law was incomplete until 1900 or even later; therefore certificates are lacking for many events. Several of the State's larger cities recorded vital events for varying periods of time prior to 1880. See below for more information. An 1847 law required the school districts in each town to collect vital statistics. They ceased doing so after a few years. (The State Archives and State Department of Health (DOH) hold **no** records created under the 1847 law.)

VITAL RECORDS INDEXES

The State DOH makes available for public use microfiche copies of older indexes to birth, marriage and death certificates. The indexes cover the **entire state outside of New York City** and start in June 1880 (deaths) or 1881 (marriages and births). Birth indexes are made available after 75 years, marriage and death indexes after 50 years. An index entry states only the name of the person, date and place of event and State certificate number. Indexes for certain years are arranged by SOUND EX codes.

Scope of Indexes: The DOH indexes do **not** include vital events in New York City and in the former city of Brooklyn for any period. The indexes **do** include vital events in the former towns of Kings County prior to their annexation by the City of Brooklyn in the 1880s and '90s; in portions of Westchester County prior to their annexation by New York City in 1895; and in Richmond County (Staten Island) and the western portion of Queens County prior to their incorporation into the City of New York on January 1, 1898. **The indexes do not include births and deaths in Albany, Buffalo and Yonkers prior to 1914, or marriages in those cities prior to 1908.** (Contact the local registrar of vital statistics in those cities for information about earlier records.) The birth indexes do **not** include original data for adopted infants. The birth and death indexes do include data on individuals who were born or died in a state facility (such as a prison or mental hospital).

Copies of the fiche **index** to vital records certificates held by the State DOH are **available at this library**.

Transcription, reproduction, loan or sale of the indexes is not permitted. The data in the indexes is not available in electronic format for on-line access.

SOURCES OF BIRTH, MARRIAGE AND DEATH CERTIFICATES

This library does **not** hold birth, marriage and death certificates, only indexes to them. The State DOH and local registrars of vital statistics are authorized to furnish uncertified copies of vital records for genealogical purposes. Data on living persons is restricted by law. Contact DOH or a local registrar for application forms and general information.

STATEWIDE (EXCEPT CITIES NOTED BELOW)

Birth, marriage, and death certificates for New York State (except New York City) are held by:

New York State Department of Health
Vital Records Section
Corning Tower Building/ESP
Albany, NY 12237-0023
(518) 474-3077
www.health.state.ny.us

Local registrars of vital statistics (town, village, city or consolidated county district) hold registers of births, marriages and deaths.

New York City: The New York City Municipal Archives holds vital records for the five boroughs:

Manhattan*

Births: July 1847-48, July 1853-1909
Deaths: 1795, 1802-04, 1808, 1812-1948
Marriages: June 1847-48, July 1853-1937

**Includes records for western Bronx, 1874-97, and eastern Bronx, 1895-97.*

Brooklyn*

Births: 1898-1909
Deaths: 1847-53, 1857-1948
Marriages: 1866-1937

**Pre-1898 records are for Brooklyn city only. Records for former towns in Kings County usually commence 1880-81; some of those towns have vital records for the later 1840s.*

Bronx, Queens, Staten Island*

Births: 1898-1909
Deaths: 1898-1948
Marriages: 1898-1937

**There are scattered earlier records for towns and villages prior to their incorporation into New York City in 1898. Long Island City records start in 1871.*

For further information, contact:

New York City Municipal Archives
31 Chambers Street (Room 103)
New York, NY 10007
(212) 788-8580
www.nyc.gov/html/records/

For more recent birth and death records, contact:

New York City Department of Health
Office of Vital Records
125 Worth Street, Box 4, Room 133
New York, NY 10013
(212) 788-4520
www.nyc.gov/html/doh/home.html

Post-1937 marriage records are held by the borough offices of the New York City Clerk. For addresses of borough offices, contact:

New York City Clerk's Office
Municipal Building (Room 252)
1 Centre Street
New York, NY 10007
(212) 669-8090

OTHER OFFICIAL VITAL RECORDS IN UPSTATE CITIES AND COUNTIES

Some upstate cities began recording some vital events a few years prior to 1880: Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, Elmira, Newburgh, Poughkeepsie, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica and Yonkers. For further information, contact the city clerk's office. Some county clerks hold marriage records for the period ca. 1908-35.