

FILE IN FIVE

Parent Handout



1

Why is birth certificate information collected?

The birth certificate is the single most important document in establishing a person's identity, which is essential for accessing various benefits and services. It also provides vital health statistics that inform public health policies, funding, and research aimed at improving outcomes for mothers and infants. Accurate data collection is crucial as it supports research and healthcare improvements.

2

Who collects the birth certificate information?

The birth information is typically collected by a hospital birth clerk or licensed midwife. When the birth is registered, the information from the record goes to the local registrar for review and filing, then to the state vital records office.

3

How is the information from birth certificates used?

Birth certificate information is used to support research and improve health outcomes. It provides data on prenatal care, pregnancy outcomes, and disparities in outcomes due to factors such as race, geography, education levels, and insurance status. Public health professionals use this information to identify links between risk factors and outcomes, and to develop interventions to improve health. For example, research has shown that the optimal interval between pregnancies is 18 months to 5 years.

4

Is the birth certificate information confidential?

All medical information is considered confidential and not released to the public. Access to the confidential portion of the birth certificate is limited to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) - a division of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

De-identified data is shared with the CDC/NCHS and researchers to identify trends and indicators of health, to assist in policy development, funding, and research. The identifiable information is used to allow for Social Security number issuance, provide early intervention for newborns with hearing and metabolic disorders, ensure immunization status and auto-enrollment to Medicaid for infants born to mothers with Medicaid.

5

What if the parent does not want to provide information?

Michigan law (MCL 333.2867) requires anyone with essential information for a birth, death, marriage, or divorce record to provide that information. Parents must confirm the accuracy of personal data to allow for birth registration within five days of birth.



Video: How Birth Certificate Data is Used
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4G53LTsmDQE>