



# News Release

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## Adoption law change opens access to birth certificates

**OLYMPIA** — A new law will open access to original, pre-adoption birth certificates for all Washington-born adult adoptees beginning in July. Adoptees may start pre-ordering their original birth certificates now. However, it could take several weeks after July 1 to process a request because of the expected high volume and because each record must be located and retrieved from an off-site storage location.

Many adoptees have waited a long time for the opportunity to get information about their birth parents, and state health officials expect many requests. All adoptees 18 and older will be able to request a copy of their original birth certificate when the new law takes effect on July 1.

Adoptees are encouraged to get a head start on the process now by completing the [adoption certificate request form](#) that's on the [Department of Health website](#).

Birth parents are allowed to choose whether to release personal information or keep their identity confidential under the new law by filing a [contact preference form](#). Parents who file a contact preference form must provide [information about their family medical history](#), regardless of whether they choose to disclose their identity. If a birth parent doesn't file a contact preference form, the adoptee will be able to get a copy of their original birth certificate.

This change means some adoptees won't have to go through the court system to get information about a birth parent. However, that option remains available for birth parents and adoptees who prefer discreet contact.

[More information about the new adoption law](#) is available on the department's website.

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