



PUBLIC HEALTH

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HEALTHIER WASHINGTON**

Access to Confidential Birth Certificate Information WAC 246-491-039

Washington State Board of Health
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Certificate of live birth – Overview

Washington's birth certificate has two sections:

- **Public section** used for certification
 - Child's name, sex, date of birth, facility, place of birth, and time of birth
 - Mother's name, date of birth, place of birth
 - Father's name, date of birth, place of birth
- **Confidential section** with detailed information used for statistical study

Confidential section of birth record

- Sample of information collected:
 - Marital status, education, and other parent demographics
 - Maternal pregnancy history and prenatal care history
 - Prenatal risk factors: tobacco, infections (e.g. HIV), diabetes, etc.
 - Characteristics of labor and delivery
 - Abnormal conditions and congenital anomalies of newborn
- Used by public health and researchers for analysis of maternal and child health

Law prior to 2009 legislative action

- Birth certificate must include items recommended on the U.S. Standard Certificate of Live Birth
- State Board of Health may require additional information “...necessary for statistical study”
- Information in the confidential section of the record may not be viewed by the public except by court order

RCW 70.58.055

Substitute House Bill 1510

- An individual may request confidential information from his/her own birth certificate without a court order.
- Information is limited to the child named on the certificate and shall not include information on the mother or father.
- Identity of requestor must be verified in a manner approved by the Board.

Rules change needed to implement SHB 1510

- Chapter 246-491 WAC currently:
 - Specifies information collected on the confidential and public sections of the birth certificate
 - Prohibits public inspection of confidential information except with a court order
 - Defines fees for copies of vital records
- State Board of Health's authority: *RCW 70.58.055*

Proposed items to make available

- Newborn medical record number
- Birth weight
- Infant head circumference
- Obstetric estimate of gestation
- Apgar scores
- Infant transferred within 24 hours of delivery
- Abnormal conditions of the newborn
- Congenital anomalies of the newborn

Proposed process to verify identity

- In person request:
 - Government-issued photo identification
 - Legal record of name change (if applicable)
- Written request:
 - Signed and notarized request form with proof of identity
- Requests must be made to DOH

Status of rule development

- CR-101 filed (August)
- Stakeholder notification (September)
- Meeting with Perinatal Advisory Committee (September)
- Anticipated proposed rule (Spring 2010)

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