



## Important Documents to Have Before You Turn 18

### Important!

**Remember:** any time you send in applications or documents to anyone, always keep copies of the papers for yourself and write down the day you mailed them.

Your parent or guardian should have these documents. This fact sheet tells you how to get them on your own, but if you can, ask your parent or guardian about them.

### Getting a Certified Copy of Your Birth Certificate

**What you need:** Photo ID, \$26.00

**How long does it take?** 4-6 weeks by mail. Right away if you apply in person.



#### Step by Step Process:

**Note:** These instructions are for people born in Minnesota. If you were born in another state, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/index.htm> to find instructions for the state you were born in. If you were born in another country, contact an embassy or consulate of your country for information.

1. Find the [application online](#) to print out at [www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us).



→ Click on *Get a Birth Certificate*

→ All the information you need about where to go and what form you need to use is on that page.

You can also call [\(651\) 201-5980](tel:651-201-5980) to have an application mailed to you.

2. Fill out the application form. Don't sign it until you go to a notary. A notary verifies signatures. **Your application won't be processed unless it is signed in front of a notary.** You can find a notary at your local courthouse, the department of motor vehicles and many banks. Some schools have notaries too. You **MUST** bring along a photo ID when getting documents notarized. There may be a fee, but it should not be more than \$5.00.
3. Mail the completed form, with your \$26.00 payment. You can pay with a check or money order made payable to "Minnesota Department of Health" or fill out your credit card information on the form.

Mail it to: Minnesota Department of Health  
Central Cashiering- Vital Records  
P.O. Box 64499  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0499

**OR** fax the completed application form to (651) 201-5740. If you fax the form, you have to pay with a credit card.

**NOTE:** You can apply in person for a certified copy of your birth certificate if you want the process to be quicker. Go to your county's local registrar's office. You can find your local office at: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/vitalrecords/registrars.html>. They are listed by county.

If you apply in person, you can get the form there, fill it out and hand it in. Most registrar offices can notarize your application for you, and you can often get a certified copy of your birth certificate the same day.

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. *How old do I have to be to get a copy of my birth certificate?*

If you are 16 or older you can get a copy of your own birth certificate. If you are younger than 16, you can get a copy of your birth certificate if the record is not confidential. If you have questions about confidential birth certificates, call the Youth Law Project of Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid at [\(612\) 332-1441](tel:6123321441).



2. *What if I am adopted?*

You can get a copy of your adoption certificate. If you want a copy of your **original** birth certificate you must be at least 19 years old. Even then, your birth parents have the right to keep their names and other information confidential.

Contact the Department of Health at [www.health.state.mn.us/](http://www.health.state.mn.us/) or [\(651\) 201-5980](tel:6512015980) for more information.

3. *What if I'm homeless?*

If you are 24 or younger and don't have a permanent place to live, you can get a copy of your birth certificate for free. This copy expires 6 months after the issue date. To qualify for this, you must:

- Be away from your parent or guardian and not have shelter where you are cared for and supervised, OR
- Have a parent or guardian who can't or doesn't want to give you shelter, OR
- Be without a place to stay at night that is fixed, regular, and satisfactory.

You may need a homeless youth advocate to vouch for your identity or homeless status. There is a [different application](#) for homeless youth.

Contact the Department of Health at [www.health.state.mn.us/](http://www.health.state.mn.us/) or [\(651\) 201-5980](tel:6512015980) for more information.

## Getting a State Issued ID Card

**What you need:** One Primary ID, One Secondary ID, and \$21.50.

[Find a full list of identification documents online.](#)

### Example: Primary ID Documents

1. Certified Birth Certificate
2. Valid US Passport
3. Adoption Certificate

### Example: Secondary ID Documents

1. Social Security Card
2. Secondary School Transcript (grades 7-12)
3. Secondary School ID Card (grades 7-12) with name, photo, and date of birth or ID number

**How long does it take?** 2 Weeks

### **Step by Step Process:**

1. Apply in person at your local county Service Center or Minnesota Drivers and Vehicle Services Office. DVS Office locations are listed at:  
<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/dvs/locations/Pages/find-office-locations.aspx>
2. Make sure you have one primary and one secondary form of identification along with your payment. You can also show 2 primary forms of ID.

## **Can I get an ID Card if I'm a Youth Experiencing Homelessness?**

If you are 24 years old or younger and homeless, you can get a free standard Minnesota ID card. This is not a driver's license. Apply in person at Minnesota Drivers and Vehicle Services Office. Find yours at: <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/dvs/locations/Pages/find-office-locations.aspx>.

- Click on *Find an Office or Exam Station*
- Enter your zip code and choose Standard Driver's License/ID from the Services drop down

You don't need a parent to sign the application. You do need a birth certificate and an eligibility verification form signed by a human services agency employee, school staff, or school social worker. Find the [eligibility verification form](#) at <https://dps.mn.gov/>. Type 'Homeless verification form' in the search bar at the top right of the page, click 'Enter' and click on "ID cards for youth experiencing homelessness." That page has information and links to what you need.



## Getting a Replacement Social Security Card

**What you need:** You have to prove age and identity. The best proof is an ID that has a photo of you AND your date of birth. If you don't have that, you need 2 Forms of ID: one showing your date of birth and one with a photo or a physical description. The documents need to be originals or certified copies. **The social security card is free.**

**If you were not born in the U.S., but you are a U.S. citizen,** you need to show documents that prove identity and U.S. citizenship if your citizenship has not already been established with the Social Security Administration.

To prove citizenship status, you need:

1. U.S. Passport or Certificate of Citizenship
2. Birth Certificate, or
3. Consular Report of Birth Abroad

**AND**

To prove identity, you need one of these:

1. School ID Card with name and photo
2. Other school records kept by the school
3. Certified copy of medical records
4. Religious Records
5. Adoption Decree
6. State ID



**If you were not born in the U.S. and are not a U.S. citizen,** you need to show documents that prove your immigration status and identity.

To prove immigration status, you need:

1. Permanent Resident Card (green card)
2. Employment Authorization Document (Work Permit), or
3. I-94

**AND**

To prove identity, you need:

1. School ID Card with name and photo
2. Other school records kept by the school
3. Certified copy of medical records
4. Religious Records
5. Adoption Decree, or
6. State ID

**How long does it take?** 4-6 Weeks

**Step by Step Process:**

1. Go to [www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf) for the form. You can print it out and fill it in or fill it in online and print it out.

2. If you live in Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Ramsey, Scott, or Washington County take the signed application and your ID documents to:

Greater Twin Cities SSA Service Center (Open 9am -4pm)  
1811 Chicago Ave., Suite 2  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

If you live in the counties listed above, you can also mail your application in. BUT you have to mail in the original documents that you are giving for proof (ID etc). You can't mail photocopies.

If you live outside these counties, you have to apply at your local SSA office. These offices may be found at: <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>.

3. You don't need to be over 18 to ask for your own SS replacement card.



***Fact Sheets are legal information NOT legal advice. See a lawyer for advice.***

*Don't use this fact sheet if it is more than 1 year old. Ask us for updates, a fact sheet list, or alternate formats.*

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