

2. First Steps

Updated 11/4/04

Obtaining a Birth Certificate

General ¹

- You need your birth certificate in order to obtain other forms of identification (such as a non-driver's ID or a driver's license) and to obtain your social security card or social security number (SSN), so you should do this first.
- It often takes several months to obtain a copy of your birth certificate.
- Always ask for a copy of the original or the long form birth certificate, rather than the small computer copy which has far less information.
- You must also ask for a certified copy of the birth certificate or it will not be accepted for identification purposes.

1. Obtaining Copies of Birth Certificate copy for someone born in New York City.² Obtain a Birth Certificate application form from:

NYC Office of Vital Records
125 Worth St. Room 133
New York, NY 10013
Phone (212) 788 4500

¹ "Starting Out, Starting Over, Staying Out, A Guide for District of Columbia Ex-Offenders: Housing, Food, Employment and Other Resources," produced by DC CURE, Washington, DC.

² NYC Vital Records website: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/vr/vrbappl-3.html>

Or, download an application form from:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/pdf/vr/birth1.pdf>

Identification Requirements: Send a completed Birth Certificate Application Form. Along with the letter, please include:

- Check or money order payable to the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; the cost is **\$15** per certificate.
- Stamped, self-addressed envelope.
- A copy of a signed, valid photo ID of the person named on the certificate. If photo ID is unavailable, submit two proofs of name and address, such as a utility bill or an entitlement award letter from a government agency. These identification requirements may change, so check a current application form.

2. Obtaining a Birth Certificate copy for someone born in New York State outside of New York City?³ Obtain an application form from:

NYS Vital Records

PO Box 2602
Albany, NY 12220-2602

Or, download a copy of the application from:

<http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/vr/applications/wdh296b.pdf>

Identification Requirements: These may change. Check a current application. For example, an application might be submitted with copies of either A **or** B

A. One (1) of the following forms of valid photo-ID:

- Driver license
- Non-driver license
- Passport
- Employment ID

B. Two (2) of the following showing the applicant's name and address:

- Utility or telephone bills
- Letter from a government agency dated within the last six (6) months

³ NYS Vital Records website:

<http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/vr/forms/birth.htm>

Fees: The fee is \$30.00 per birth certificate copy. Payment of mail order copies may be made by check or money order payable to the New York State Department of Health - **Do not send cash**

How do I place an order for a birth certificate copy? Regular handling is given to requests sent to the Vital Records Section by first class, registered mail, certified mail or two-day priority mail. Requests submitted in this manner will be processed within twelve (12) to fourteen (14) weeks from the day they are received.

Requests sent for regular handling must be sent to:

**Certification Unit
Vital Records Section**
New York State Department of Health
P.O. Box 2602
Albany, NY 12220-2602

85 Harrison Street New Rochelle, NY 10801 (914) 636-6915	Eastchester, Harrison, Larchmont, Mamaroneck, New Rochelle, Pelham, Port Chester, Purchase, Rye
1 Park Place, 3 rd floor Peekskill, NY 10566 (914) 739-0830	Northern Westchester
297 Knollwood Rd Ste A (SP) White Plains, NY 10607 (914) 682-6205	Central Westchester
20 South Broadway, 10 th Fl (SP) Yonkers, NY 10701 (800) 772-1213	Ardsley, Bronxville, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings, Yonkers

Requirements may change, but you can probably prove your identity with either a:

- Drivers license
- Employee ID card
- Passport
- School ID card
- Marriage or divorce record
- Health insurance card (not Medicare)
- Military ID card
- Adoption record or
- Life insurance policy.
-

Obtaining a Social Security Card ⁴

To obtain a Social Security Card, call the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Social Security Administration at:
(800) 772 1213

Find a sample application form at the end of this chapter. Or, you can find an application at www.socialsecurity.gov/online/ss-5.html or visit a local office. See also www.ssa.gov

Local Social Security Offices

Address	Serves
5 Stevens Avenue Mt. Vernon, NY 10550 (914) 663-9306	Mount Vernon, Tuckahoe

⁴ Westchester Social Security website
<http://www.mhwestchester.org/benefits/socialsecurity.asp>

Veterans, Obtain A Copy Of Your DD214

- If you are a veteran, you should have a copy of your DD214, "Report of Separation". This can be used as a form of identification and may assist you in receiving benefits from the Veteran's Administration.
- To obtain a copy of your DD214, you must use Standard Form 180, "Request Pertaining to Military Records". Call 1 800 827-4833⁵
- Send the completed form to:

⁵ <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms1.htm>

National Personnel Records Center
(Military Personnel Records)
9700 Page Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

- There is no fee for this service.

Obtaining a New York State Driver's License ⁶

To obtain, renew, or replace a driver's license or a Non-Driver Photo ID Card, you must complete an MV-44 form. Get this form at www.nysdmv.com or at any Motor Vehicle office. Find a sample form at the end of this chapter.

If your driver license or your learner permit is expired for two years or more, you cannot renew your driver license. You must apply for an original license. You must pass the vision test, the written test, and the road test, and complete a pre-licensing course

1. Driver License. The process to apply for a non-commercial driver license in NYS normally includes the following steps:

- Apply for a learner permit. Pay the application fee and the driver license fee. Pass the vision test and the written test. Receive your learner permit.
- Practice for your road test.
- Take a driver education course or a DMV-approved pre-licensing course.
- Use your driver education certificate or pre-licensing course certificate to make [an appointment for your road test](#) by phone or on-line.
- Pass your road test and receive your NYS driver license

2. Non-Driver Photo ID Cards. A person of any age who does not have a driver license can apply to the DMV for a non-driver photo ID card. You can

apply for a non-driver photo ID card if your NYS driver license is suspended or revoked. A non-driver photo ID card contains the same personal information, photo, signature and special protection against alteration and fraud as a photo driver license

Identification. To obtain a Driver License or a Non-Driver ID Card , you must appear at a Motor Vehicle office with proof of name and date of birth. Complete information on these identity requirements can be found at <http://www.nysdmv.com/idlicense.htm> and these requirements can change. As an example, only, for proof of name, a signed social security card, certificate of citizenship or naturalization, or passport may be acceptable. For proof of date of birth, a legal document that is not expired may be acceptable (i.e. birth certificate, naturalization papers, foreign passport, resident card, etc.) An eye test is required, which can be done at the Motor Vehicle office. There is a fee to obtain a Driver License or a Non-Driver ID (see <http://www.nysdmv.com/licefee.htm>).

Westchester Motor Vehicle Offices:

Westchester Peekskill Office	1045 Park Street Peekskill, NY 10566	M, T, W & F 8:30-4:00 Thursday 10:00-6:00	1-800-DIAL-DMV
Westchester White Plains Office	200 Hamilton Ave. White Plains, NY 10601 <i>No written license testing, apply at Yonkers or Peekskill.</i>	M, T, W & F 8:30-4:00 Thursday 10:00-6:00	1-800-DIAL-DMV
Westchester Yonkers Office	1 Larkin Plaza Yonkers, NY 10701	M, T, W & F 8:30-4:00 Thursday 10:00-6:00	1-800-DIAL-DMV

⁶ NYS Motor Vehicles website <http://www.nysdmv.com>

Sample Application Forms

On Internet:

Birth Certificate when born in NY City at

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/pdf/vr/birth1.pdf>

Birth Certificate when born in NY State (but not in NYC) at

<http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/vr/applications/wdh296b.pdf>

Social Security at

www.socialsecurity.gov/online/ss-5.html

Driver's License at

www.nysdmv.com