

## Quick Guide to West Virginia Birth Records

- Prior to 1853:** births not recorded.
- 1853–1916:** births recorded at the county level only. No statewide index exists. Originals are in the county courthouses, with a few original records located in the West Virginia University West Virginia and Regional History Collection. County records microfilmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU) are available in the West Virginia Archives and History Library and elsewhere.
- 1853–1860:** some duplicate county records are preserved on Library of Virginia microfilm, available in the Archives and History Library and elsewhere.
- 1853–1920\*:** as of 2021, digitized images from the microfilm of county birth records from 1853 (or inception of county) through the currently eligible year (present year minus 101 years) are available through West Virginia Vital Research Records (WVRR), [http://archive.wvculture.org/vrr/va\\_select.aspx](http://archive.wvculture.org/vrr/va_select.aspx). (Note that each January another year of birth records will be added.) County records are available on GSU microfilm in the West Virginia Archives and History Library and elsewhere. Original county records are available in the county courthouses. \*Calhoun, Gilmer, Hardy, Harrison, Mineral, and Pendleton counties, the first six counties added to WVRR, include additional births since a 75 year cutoff was in use when the database was initially created.
- 1920–1930:** state certificates are available as uncertified copies from the Archives and History Library with a \$2.50 statutory fee, or as certified copies from the Vital Registration office with a \$12.00 fee. County records available on GSU microfilm in the West Virginia Archives and History Library and elsewhere. Original county records are available in the county courthouses. A microfilmed statewide annual index is available in the Archives and History Library. As noted above, the first six counties added to the WVRR searchable database include additional births, some up to 1938.
- 1931 to present:** all state birth certificates for these years are available only as certified copies from the Vital Registration office with a \$12.00 fee. A microfilmed statewide annual index is available in the Archives and History Library only up through 1992. The county records are available in the county courthouses and are available on GSU microfilm up to the year each county's records were filmed, usually 1968–1971. (For a listing of county records available on microfilm in the Archives and History Library, go to <http://archive.wvculture.org/history/countrec.html> and click on the county name.)
- Delayed Birth Records:** recorded at the state and county level, but generally state certificates are the easiest to locate. The West Virginia Archives and History Library has the microfilmed index for Delayed Birth records for births pre-1900, 1900–1916, and 1917 through 1991 (with additions and corrections for 1900-1916). Uncertified copies of state birth records and delayed birth records up through 1930 may be obtained through the Archives and History Library after payment of the statutory fee of \$2.50 each. *Copies of state delayed birth records from 1931 through the present and all certified copies of state delayed birth records must be obtained from the Vital Registration office with a \$12.00 fee.* Delayed birth records may be available in county courthouses, and some are available on GSU microfilm. Those on microfilm are also in WVRR.

*Revised October 2021.*

See *West Virginia Archives and History News*, Vol. VIII, No. 8 (October 2007) for full article.  
Available at <http://archive.wvculture.org/history/ahnews/ahnews.html>.