



1. I need my Pennsylvania birth certificate to obtain a REAL ID. Do I need to do or request anything special to make sure the certificate meets my needs?

The standard birth certificate format issued by the Department of Health (DOH) satisfies the Proof of Identity requirements to obtain a REAL ID. All birth certificates issued by DOH are certified copies and include the raised/embossed seal required by PennDOT. PennDOT does not require parent names to be listed, so if you have a “short form” certificate, that is still valid for use for REAL ID.

You may apply for a birth certificate [online](#), through the [mail](#), or in-person at a Vital Records [public office](#). Eligible applicants must be 16 years or older (18+ for online orders), complete an application, present valid photo ID, and pay the application fee of \$20 per certificate.

Note that [VitalChek \(https://mycertificates.health.pa.gov\)](https://mycertificates.health.pa.gov) is PA’s only authorized vendor for online orders. *Using any other online birth certificate fulfillment website could delay receipt of your document and/or cost you additional money.*

2. How long does it take to get a birth certificate?

Processing times vary based on application method. Online and mail applications are [processed within about 3 weeks](#) and certificates will be mailed to you for no additional charge. In-person applications may be available same-day at a Vital Records [public office](#).

3. My last name changed due to marriage. Do I need to change my birth certificate?

No, birth certificates are not amended to reflect name changes due to marriage. You may wish to reference this page for guidance on supporting your married name for your REAL ID application: [Name Changes \(REAL ID\) | Driver and Vehicle Services | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)

4. I received my birth certificate, but my middle name is missing. How do I fix this?

If your birth certificate does not list your middle name or middle initial, that means it is not part of the birth record on file. Adding a middle name or middle initial is considered a change of name, and not a spelling correction. A Request to Modify form must be submitted and the documentation to make this modification must meet or exceed PA’s judicial name change process.

Presenting a driver’s license, passport, or Social Security card that shows your desired name is not sufficient documentary evidence to add a middle name or middle initial to



the birth record. You must supply documentary evidence as specified in Part 7 of the Request to Modify form. See [Amending Birth Record | Department of Health | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#) for more information and links to the forms.

5. I want to make changes to information on my birth certificate. How do I do this?

If you wish to make changes to your birth certificate, you will need to submit a Request to Modify with documentary evidence to support the change. Please [visit this page for application forms](#) and more information. There are separate forms based on the age of the subject whose record is to be amended.

To reduce processing time, please ensure you fully complete your Request to Modify form, provide the requisite documentation as outlined in Part 7: Documentary Evidence, and mail your application to the address listed on the Request to Modify form. In-person and same-day services are not available for modifications. Incomplete applications (not signed, not notarized, insufficient documentary evidence) will be suspended and must be corrected before processing.

6. Do I have to modify my birth certificate to get my REAL ID?

If you have obtained a court-ordered name change that is not already reflected on your birth certificate, you may choose to present that court order as part of your documentation to PennDOT along with your existing birth certificate. It is not a requirement to update your birth certificate first. Gender designations can be accomplished with PennDOT through the DL-32 form as an alternative to amending the birth record.