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# **Vital Statistics Data Request Guide**

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## **Introduction**

One of CHSI's major responsibilities is coordinating and overseeing the collection, management, and dissemination of public health and vital statistics data in conjunction with other State agencies, local government agencies, researchers, and other customers.

Vital Statistics Branch (VSB), Health Information and Research Section (HIRS) compiles data for birth, death, and fetal death vital events, develops data products related to vital events, and supports public health programs by creating and delivering custom data files to end users of these data.

Birth data and death data are obtained through the Electronic Birth Registration System (EBRS) and the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS). Birth certificates are generated from data collected at the birth hospital or office of the local registrar and entered into EBRS. Death certificates are generated from data entered into the EDRS at funeral homes, hospitals, coroners, or office of the local registrar.

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) codes all causes of death according to the International Classification of Diseases, version 10 for Mortality (ICD-10) using the literal text from the death certificate.

Vital Statistics data is derived from the registration process and includes confidential and non-confidential identifiers, demographic information, and medical/health data contained within the certificate. These data are provided by informants and clinicians; the data quality, accuracy, and completeness is dependent on the reporting parties. Vital Statistics data, prepared pursuant to Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 102230 or 102231, may not be accurate or complete due to a variety of circumstances, including amendments to the legal records that may have been filed after the production of the data files. Data files are not legal records and should not be used as substitutes for the legal records from which they were derived.

## **Applying for Vital Records Data**

The Health Information and Research Section is currently in the process of developing software that will allow electronic submissions of data applications.

Data applications are reviewed in the order they are received once the application package is complete. The time to receive data files vary based on multiple factors. Custom data files requiring the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) and Vital Statistics Advisory Committee (VSAC) approval can take on average from 2-4 months to process after receiving a complete application package. This includes all research applications, Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) applications, and some California Department of Public Health (CDPH) applications.

All other requests take approximately 1-2 months from receipt of a completed application.

Data files are subject to cost recovery pursuant to HSC Section 102230. Data files are provided in the form that they were created. Data elements and file formats differ depending on the year(s) requested.

### **Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects**

The CPHS serves as the institutional review board (IRB) for the California Health and Human Services Agency. The role of the CPHS and other IRBs is to assure that research involving human subjects is conducted ethically and with minimum risk to participants.

CPHS meetings are held on the first Friday of even-numbered months (February, April, June, August, October, and December) from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Meetings are held in Sacramento at 2020 West El Camino Avenue, Room 300, Sacramento, CA. The schedule and location of upcoming meetings and the agendas for those meetings are available on [OSHPD's Public Meeting page](#). Researchers are encouraged to appear in person, but may attend by telephone if arrangements are made in advance with the CPHS Administrator. All meetings are open to the public and conducted in compliance with the [Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act](#).

For more information about CPHS, see the [CPHS Website](#).

### **Vital Statistics Advisory Committee/Vital Records Policy Advisory Committee**

Per Statute, CHSI is required to maintain VSAC and a Vital Records Protection Advisory Committee (VRPAC), respectively. Committee members are appointed to represent both VSAC and VRPAC; this committee operates as one joint committee, collectively referred to as VSAC.

Pursuant to HSC Section 103527, VRPAC is responsible for providing policy recommendations to protect individual privacy, inhibiting identity theft, and preventing fraud involving birth, death, and marriage certificates while providing needed access to birth, death, and marriage record information to those seeking it for legitimate purposes.

VSAC is responsible for reviewing the findings of the CPHS pursuant to subdivision (c) of HSC Section 102430 and make recommendations to the State Registrar regarding all requests for studies that propose to use confidential information with respect to whether a legitimate scientific interest is presented and whether the significance of the project justifies use of the confidential information.

Requests for the use of confidential birth and death data are reviewed by VSAC to determine whether a legitimate scientific interest is presented and the significance of the project justifies use of confidential information. The committee assures that all research conducted using birth and death certificate data is consistent with guidelines provided

by the CPHS. All meetings are open to the public and conducted in compliance with the [Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act](#).

An agenda for each month's VSAC meeting is posted online at least 10 days prior to the meeting date. This agenda will list all research applications to be reviewed at the meeting. CHSI and the VSAC aim to review all research applications that have been received and deemed complete in the prior month. All VSAC meetings are conducted in compliance with the [Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act](#) which allows both applicants and the public to participate in the VSAC review of data requests. The monthly VSAC meetings are scheduled through December of each calendar year, and are held at 3701 North Freeway Blvd., Sacramento, California. The schedule and location of upcoming meetings and the agendas for those meetings are available on [CDPH's VSAC webpage](#).

### **Vital Statistics Data Products**

To request Vital Statistics data, please visit [CHSI's website](#) for instructions and applications. Data can be delivered by CD, DVD, SFTP server, or secure email. Method of delivery is limited by the size of the custom data file. Data files are subject to cost recovery pursuant to the HSC Section 102230. Contact the HIRS staff at [HIRS@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:HIRS@cdph.ca.gov) for more information regarding data delivery.

The CDPH data retention policy is to retain the data files and/or programming for only 120 days after data delivery. Therefore, as soon as a data file is received, please review for accuracy and completeness. If an issue is discovered after the destruction of the data file, a new application will need to be submitted and will be subject to cost recovery.

To receive e-mail notifications when new data files become available, please subscribe to the Vital Records Data [LISTSERV](#).

See the [Vital Statistics Application Grid](#) and the [Summary of Vital Statistics Data Files](#) to assist in selecting the correct data application.

### **Contact**

Please contact [HIRS@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:HIRS@cdph.ca.gov) for any assistance with your vital statistics data requests:

Mailing address:

California Department of Public Health  
Vital Statistics Branch - MS 5101  
P.O. Box 997410  
Sacramento, CA 95899-7410

**Birth Cohort Data Files** - Link to [Application](#)

The birth cohort files contain data for all live births and infants who died in the first year of life (linked to the birth). Fetal death data is only included in years 2004 – 2011. CPHS and the VSAC approvals are required to obtain confidential data fields.

Cost Estimate: Annual First Year \$500, additional years = \$75/year  
Future years = \$75 x Frequency

- Quarterly = 4 x \$75= \$300
- Monthly = 12 x \$75 = \$900
- Weekly = 52 x \$75 = \$3,900

### **Birth Data Files - Link to [Application](#)**

The birth files include all state registered births, and births to California residents that occurred out-of-state. These files contain detailed demographic information related to the child, mother, and father, as well as medical data related to the birth. CPHS and VSAC approvals are required to obtain confidential data fields. In addition, Public Use and Anti-Fraud data files are available. Please see the [Comparison of California Birth Data Sources](#) to assist in selecting the appropriate birth data source.

Cost Estimate: Annual First Year \$500, additional years = \$75/year  
Future years = \$75 x Frequency

- Quarterly = 4 x \$75= \$300
- Monthly = 12 x \$75 = \$900
- Weekly = 52 x \$75 = \$3,900

### **Death Data Files - Link to [Application](#)**

The death files are available with in-state California deaths only, a combination of in-state deaths and deaths to California residents that occurred in other states or jurisdictions, or out-of-state deaths only. CPHS and the VSAC approval may be required to obtain the death files. In addition, Public Use and Anti-Fraud data files are available. Please see [Comparison of California Death Data Sources](#) to assist in selecting the appropriate death data source.

Cost Estimate: Annual First Year \$400, additional years = \$75/year  
Future years = \$75 x Frequency

- Quarterly = 4 x \$75= \$300
- Monthly = 12 x \$75 = \$900
- Weekly = 52 x \$75 = \$3,900

### **Limited Death Data Files - Link to [Application](#)**

California makes available a “Limited Death File” (LDF) for 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and annually thereafter, as data becomes available. The LDF contains a very limited number of data variables. The entire LDF is burned onto a CD-ROM and is

available to requestors at no charge. Obtaining the data file requires an application and approval from the Committee for Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS).

Information about CPHS and their approval process is available on the CPHS [website](#). Questions can be sent via email to: [cphs-mail@oshpd.ca.gov](mailto:cphs-mail@oshpd.ca.gov) or call (916) 326-6660.

### **Fetal Death Data Files - Link to [Application](#)**

The fetal death files contain data obtained from fetal death certificates registered in California each year. These files contain demographic information related to the fetus, mother, and father, as well as medical data related to the fetal death. The medical data includes the underlying cause of the fetal death. CPHS and VSAC approvals are required to obtain the confidential data fields. Fetal death files do not include induced abortion data.

Cost Estimate: Annual First Year \$500, additional years = \$75/year  
Future years = \$75 x Frequency

- Quarterly = 4 x \$75 = \$300
- Monthly = 12 x \$75 = \$900
- Weekly = 52 x \$75 = \$3,900

### **Multiple Causes of Death Data Files (MCOD) - Link to [Application](#)**

MCOD files are created by the NCHS. These files include underlying, immediate, intermediate, and contributing causes of death and demographic data. Each record may include up to 20 causes of death derived from California death certificates. All causes of death are coded according to the International Classification of Diseases. These files include certificate numbers, but do not include names or other personal identifiers. These files can be linked to other death files using the certificate number. A list of variables for these files may be obtained at the NCHS or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Effective 2016, the MCOD variables are available in the California Comprehensive Death File and the California Comprehensive Master Death File; sequence numbers 201-240.

Cost Estimate: Currently available at no charge.

### **Annual Public Use and Anti-Fraud Data Files - Link to [Application](#)**

The California birth and death indices are available to the public pursuant to HSC Section 102230(b). The birth and death indices are also available for fraud prevention and law enforcement purposes, pursuant to HSC Section 102230(c). These annual files are available without approval from CPHS and/or VSAC and at no cost.

The public-use and anti-fraud files are intended for public release but are non-comprehensive and not intended to be a precise enumeration of birth or death events in a given year. Both the public-use and anti-fraud files may contain multiple entries for a single birth or death event. The public-use and anti-fraud files may also omit some birth or death events. As a result, the number of records in the public-use and anti-fraud files may differ significantly from the actual number of birth or death events in a given year. Data users interested in a precise enumeration of vital events for a given year, may reference the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) public files or complete and submit a research application to CHSI in order to access the comprehensive birth or death files. If you have any questions regarding the public-use and anti-fraud files, please contact [HIRS@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:HIRS@cdph.ca.gov).

The birth public use/anti-fraud data files include the following variables:

- First, Middle and Last Name of Child
- Date of Birth
- Sex of Child
- Place (Facility, Street Address, City, and County) of Birth

In addition, anti-fraud files include:

- Mother's Maiden Name (for fraud prevention and law enforcement use only)

The death public use/anti-fraud data files include the following variables:

- First, Middle, and Last Name of Decedent
- Sex of Decedent
- Date of Birth
- Place of Birth (Country or U.S. State)
- Place of Death (Facility, Street Address, City, and County)
- Date of Death
- Father's Last Name

In addition, anti-fraud includes:

- Mother's Maiden Name (for fraud prevention and law enforcement use only)
- Social Security Number (for fraud prevention and law enforcement use only)

Cost Estimate:      Annual = Currently available at no charge.  
                            Quarterly = 4 x \$10 = \$40  
                            Monthly = 12 x \$10 = \$120  
                            Weekly = 52 x \$10 = \$520

### **Tabulated Data Requests - Link to [Application](#)**

The CHSI's Data Analysis Reporting Unit processes tabulated data requests. Vital Statistics data can be released in aggregate or tabular format without CPHS and VSAC approval. Any data table produced by CHSI will be reviewed to prevent the disclosure of personal information prior to release. CHSI uses the California Health and Human Services Data De-Identification Guidelines to determine if the data tables pose a disclosure risk. Please contact [DAReports@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:DAReports@cdph.ca.gov) for any assistance with tabulated data requests.

Cost Estimate: \$75 x Creation Time (hours)

## Statutes

### Health and Safety Code

**102230** - (a) (1) The State Registrar shall arrange and permanently preserve the certificates in a systematic manner and shall prepare and maintain comprehensive and continuous indices of all certificates registered.

(2) The birth, death, and marriage record indices prepared pursuant to paragraph (1) and all comprehensive birth, death, and marriage record indices prepared or maintained by local registrars and county recorders shall be kept confidential and shall be exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 6250) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code).

(3) Notwithstanding paragraph (2), the State Registrar, at his or her discretion, may release comprehensive birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage record indices to a government agency. Local registrars and county recorders, when requested, shall release their comprehensive birth, death, and marriage record indices to the State Registrar. A government agency that obtains indices pursuant to this paragraph shall not sell or release the index or a portion of its contents to another person except as necessary for official government business and shall not post the indices or any portion thereof on the Internet.

(b) (1) The State Registrar shall prepare and maintain separate noncomprehensive indices of all California birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage records for public release.

(2) For purposes of this section, noncomprehensive birth record indices for public release shall be comprised of first, middle, and last name, sex, date of birth, and place of birth.

(3) For purposes of this section, noncomprehensive death record indices for public release shall be comprised of first, middle, and last name, sex, date of birth, place of birth, place of death, date of death, and father's last name.

(4) For purposes of this section, noncomprehensive nonconfidential marriage record indices for public release shall be comprised of the name of each party to the marriage and the date of marriage.

(5) Requesters of the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices prepared pursuant to this subdivision shall provide proof of identity, complete a form, and sign the form under penalty of perjury. The form shall include all of the following:

(A) The proposed use of the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices.

(B) A disclaimer crediting analyses, interpretations, or conclusions reached regarding the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices to the author and not to the State Department of Public Health.

(C) Assurance that technical descriptions of the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices are consistent with those provided by the State Department of Public Health.

(D) Assurance that the requester shall not sell, assign, or otherwise transfer the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices.

(E) Assurance that the requester shall not use the birth or death record indices for fraudulent purposes.

(6) Birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage record indices obtained pursuant to this subdivision, and any portion thereof, shall not be used for fraudulent purposes.

(c) (1) The State Registrar shall prepare and maintain separate noncomprehensive indices of all California birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage records for purposes of law enforcement or preventing fraud.

(2) For purposes of this section, noncomprehensive birth record indices for the purpose of preventing fraud shall be comprised of first, middle, and last name, sex, date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name.

(3) For purposes of this section, noncomprehensive death record indices for the purpose of preventing fraud shall be comprised of first, middle, and last name, place of death, mother's maiden name, sex, social security number, date of birth, place of birth, date of death, and father's last name.

(4) For purposes of this section, noncomprehensive nonconfidential marriage record indices for the purpose of preventing fraud shall be comprised of the name of each party to the marriage and the date of marriage.

(5) The birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage record indices prepared pursuant to this subdivision shall be made available to financial institutions, as defined in Section 6827(4)(A) and (B) of Title 15 of the United States Code, its representatives or contractors, consumer credit reporting agencies, as defined in subdivision (d) of Section 1785.3 of the Civil Code, its representatives or contractors, those entities providing information services for purposes of law enforcement or preventing fraud, officers of the court for the sole purpose of verifying a death, and to persons or entities acting on behalf of law enforcement agencies or the court, or pursuant to a court order.

(6) The birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage record indices prepared pursuant to this subdivision may be released to a government agency.

(7) Requesters of the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices prepared pursuant to this subdivision shall provide proof of identity, complete a form, and sign the form under penalty of perjury. The form shall include all of the following:

(A) An agreement not to release or allow public access to the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices, and an agreement not to post the indices on the Internet, except as permitted by this subdivision.

(B) The proposed use of the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices.

(C) The names of all persons within the organization, if applicable, who will have access to the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices.

(D) A disclaimer crediting analyses, interpretations, or conclusions reached regarding the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices to the author and not to the State Department of Public Health.

(E) Assurance that technical descriptions of the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices are consistent with those provided by the State Department of Public Health.

(F) Assurance that the requester shall not sell, assign, or otherwise transfer the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices, except as permitted by this subdivision.

(G) Assurance that the requester shall not use the birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record indices for fraudulent purposes.

(8) (A) Birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage record indices, and any portion thereof, obtained pursuant to this section, shall not be used for fraudulent purposes and shall not be posted on the Internet.

(B) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), individual information contained in birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage record indices may be posted on the Internet if all of the following requirements are met:

(i) The individual information is posted on an Internet Web site that is protected by a password.

(ii) The individual information is posted on an Internet Web site that is available to subscribers only for a fee.

(iii) The individual information is not posted for public display.

(iv) The individual information is available to subscribers pursuant to a contractual agreement.

(v) The individual information is posted for purposes of law enforcement or preventing fraud.

(d) Mail-in requests from nongovernmental agencies for birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage record indices requested pursuant to subdivisions (b) and (c) shall include a notarized statement attesting to the identity of the requester.

(e) Noncomprehensive birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage record indices pursuant to subdivisions (b) and (c) shall be updated annually.

(f) Birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage record indices provided pursuant to this section shall be made available subject to cost recovery provisions of the California Public Records Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 6250) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code).

(g) Noncomprehensive birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage record indices created by local registrars or county recorders shall be subject to the conditions for release required by this section.

(h) A person or entity that obtains a birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage record index, or any portion thereof, from a requester who has obtained the index in accordance with paragraph (7) of subdivision (c) shall not sell, assign, or otherwise transfer that index, or any portion thereof, to a third party.

(i) Paragraphs (2) and (3) of subdivision (a) and subdivisions (b) to (h), inclusive, shall be implemented only to the extent that funds for these purposes are appropriated by the Legislature in the annual Budget Act or other statute.

**102231** - (a) Notwithstanding any other law, birth data files, birth data files for public release, death data files for public release, death data files for purposes of law enforcement or preventing fraud, and nonconfidential marriage data files prepared and maintained by the State Registrar, local registrars, and county recorders shall only be released as follows:

(1) Birth data files containing personal identifiers shall be subject to the same restrictions as the confidential portion of a birth certificate and shall only be released under the terms and conditions specified in Section 102430.

(2) Birth data files for public release shall not contain the mothers maiden name.

(3) Death data files for public release shall not contain the mothers maiden name and social security number.

(4) Death data files for purposes of law enforcement or preventing fraud shall include the mother s maiden name and social security number. Death data files prepared pursuant to this subdivision may be released to governmental agencies and to those entities described in paragraph (5) of subdivision (c) of Section 102230.

(5) Death data files containing personal identifying information may be released to persons expressing a valid scientific interest, as determined by the appropriate committee constituted for the protection of human subjects that is approved by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and has a general assurance pursuant to Part 46 (commencing with Section 46.101) of Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(6) Nonconfidential marriage data files shall include the name of each party to the marriage and the date of the marriage. Nonconfidential marriage data files for public release shall not contain the maiden names of the mothers.

(b) Requesters of birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage data files pursuant to this section shall provide proof of identity, complete a form, and sign the form under penalty of perjury. The form shall include all of the following:

(1) An agreement not to release the birth, death, or marriage data files and not to post the files on the Internet, except as permitted by this subdivision.

(2) An agreement not to provide public access to data files obtained pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (4) of subdivision (a).

(3) The proposed use of the data file.

- (4) For data files obtained pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (4) of subdivision (a), the names of all persons within the organization, if applicable, who will have access to the data files.
- (5) A disclaimer that credits analyses, interpretations, or conclusions reached regarding the birth or death data files to the author and not to the State Department of Public Health.
- (6) Assurance that technical descriptions of the data files are consistent with those provided by the State Department of Public Health.
- (7) Assurance that the requester shall not sell, assign, or otherwise transfer the data files, except as permitted by subdivision (e).
- (8) Assurance that the requester shall not use the data files for fraudulent purposes.
- (c) Mail-in requests for birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage data files pursuant to this section shall include a notarized statement attesting to the identity of the requester.
- (d) Birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage data files provided pursuant to this section shall be made available subject to cost recovery provisions of the California Public Records Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 6250) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code).
- (e) (1) Birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage data files, and any portion thereof, obtained pursuant to this section, shall not be used for fraudulent purposes and shall not be posted on the Internet.
- (2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), individual information contained in death data files obtained pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (a) may be posted on the Internet if all of the following requirements are met:
- (A) The information is posted on an Internet Web site that is protected by a password.
- (B) The information is posted on an Internet Web site that is available to subscribers only for a fee.
- (C) The information is not posted for public display.
- (D) The information is available to subscribers pursuant to a contractual agreement.
- (E) The information is posted for purposes of law enforcement or preventing fraud.
- (f) A person or entity that obtains a birth, death, or nonconfidential marriage data file, or any portion thereof, from a requester who has obtained the data file in accordance with subdivision (b) shall not sell, assign, or otherwise transfer that data file, or any portion thereof, to a third party.
- (g) This section shall be implemented only to the extent that funds for these purposes are appropriated by the Legislature in the annual Budget Act or other statute.

**102430** - (a) The second section of the certificate of live birth as specified in subdivision (b) of Section 102425, the electronic file of birth information collected pursuant to subparagraphs (B) to (F), inclusive, of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 102426, the birth mother linkage collected pursuant to Section 102425.2, and the second section of the certificate of fetal death as specified in Section 103025, are confidential. Access to the confidential portion of any certificate of live birth or fetal death, the electronic file of birth information collected pursuant to subparagraphs (B) to (F), inclusive, of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 102426, and the birth mother linkage collected pursuant to Section 102425.2 shall be limited to the following:

- (1) Department staff.
- (2) Local registrar's staff and local health department staff when approved by the local registrar or local health officer, respectively.
- (3) The county coroner.
- (4) Persons with a valid scientific interest as determined by the State Registrar, who are engaged in demographic, epidemiological, or other similar studies related to health, and who agree to maintain confidentiality as prescribed by this part and by regulation of the State Registrar.
- (5) The parent who signed the certificate or, if no parent signed the certificate, the mother.
- (6) The person named on the certificate.
- (7) A person who has petitioned to adopt the person named on the certificate of live birth, subject to Section 102705 of the Health and Safety Code and Sections 9200 and 9203 of the Family Code.
- (8) The following state government departments requesting the information for official government business purposes as deemed appropriate by the State Registrar that agree to maintain confidentiality as prescribed by this part:
  - (A) The State Department of Public Health.
  - (B) The State Department of Health Care Services.
  - (C) The Department of Finance. This section shall not be construed as a limitation of the authority granted to the Department of Finance in Sections 13073 to 13073.5, inclusive, of the Government Code.
- (9) The birth hospital responsible for preparing and submitting a record of the birth or fetal death for purposes of reviewing and correcting birth or fetal death records. The birth hospital shall not further disclose the information nor use the information for purposes other than allowed by this part.

(b) (1) The department shall maintain an accurate record of all persons who are given access to the confidential portion of the certificates. The record shall include all of the following:

(A) The name of the person authorizing access.

(B) The name, title, and organizational affiliation of persons given access.

(C) The dates of access.

(D) The specific purpose for which the information is to be used.

(2) The record of access shall be open to public inspection during normal operating hours of the department.

(c) All research proposed to be conducted using the confidential medical and social information on the birth certificate or fetal death certificate shall first be reviewed by the appropriate committee constituted for the protection of human subjects that is approved by the federal Department of Health and Human Services and has a general assurance pursuant to Part 46 of Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Information shall not be released until the request for information has been reviewed by the Vital Statistics Advisory Committee and the committee has recommended to the State Registrar that the information shall be released.

**102465** - (a) The State Registrar shall appoint a Vital Statistics Advisory Committee that shall have the following duties:

(1) Review and make recommendations to the State Registrar as to the adequacy of procedures to assure accuracy and confidentiality of personal health and medical information.

(2) Review the findings of the committee for the protection of human subjects pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 102430 and make recommendations to the State Registrar regarding all requests for studies that propose to use confidential information with respect to whether a legitimate scientific interest is presented and whether the significance of the project justifies use of the confidential information.

(3) Assure that all research conducted using the data from birth certificates is consistent with guidelines provided by an appropriately constituted committee for the protection of human subjects of the department, as specified in subdivision (c) of Section 102430 .

(4) Review and make recommendations to the State Registrar as to proposals for addition or deletion of items on the certificate of live birth and advise the State Registrar on the content and format of the certificate.

(5) Take testimony and make recommendations to the State Registrar regarding changes in the birth registration system.

(b) The Vital Statistics Advisory Committee shall include representatives from the users, providers, and informant groups who are involved in the process of the provision and collection of information for and the use of the certificate of live birth, and shall include the chairpersons of the Assembly Health Committee and the Senate Health and Welfare Committee or their designated representative, and shall have a majority of lay persons in its composition. The State Registrar shall make every effort to ensure that committee membership is representative of the community at large. Consideration shall be given to providing access to relevant classes of persons including, but not limited to, women, men, racial and ethnic minorities, in proportion to their representation in the affected population.

Membership on the committee shall be for a term of three years, appointments to be made on a staggered basis to allow for one-third membership to change annually.

**103527** - (a) The State Registrar shall appoint a Vital Records Protection Advisory Committee to study and make recommendations to protect individual privacy, inhibit identity theft, and prevent fraud involving birth, death, and marriage certificates while providing needed access to birth, death, and marriage record information to those seeking it for legitimate purposes. The committee shall have the following duties:

(1) Review and make recommendations as to the adequacy of procedures to safeguard individual privacy and prevent fraud, while ensuring appropriate access to birth, death, and marriage records.

(2) Make recommendations to the State Registrar as to items that should be redacted from informational certified copies of birth, death, and nonconfidential marriage certificates issued pursuant to Section 103526.

(3) Make recommendations to the State Registrar regarding fraud prevention measures concerning vital records.

(b) The committee shall include representatives from private and governmental entities that use vital records as identity or legal documents, consumers, law enforcement officials, genealogists, and organizations that research vital records for legal or social purposes. The State Registrar shall make every effort to ensure that committee membership also represents the community at large.

(c) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), membership on the committee shall be for a term of three years.

(2) Appointments shall be made on a staggered basis to allow for a change of one-third of the membership on an annual basis. One-third of the initial committee membership shall be appointed to one-year terms, and one-third of the initial committee membership shall be appointed to two-year terms.

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**Vital Statistics Applications Grid**

Requestor / Organization	Research	Government (non-research)	Public Use	Anti-fraud	CDPH	Local Health Department	California Cancer Registry (CCR)	Tabular	Limited Death
Researchers	Yes		Yes				Yes	Yes	Yes
Student with sponsor	Yes		Yes				Yes	Yes	Yes
Universities	Yes		Yes				Yes	Yes	Yes
Government Agency	Yes	Yes	Yes				Yes	Yes	Yes
Media			Yes					Yes	Yes
Public			Yes					Yes	Yes
Law Enforcement			Yes	Yes				Yes	Yes
Fraud Prevention Agencies			Yes	Yes				Yes	
Consumer Credit Reporting Agencies			Yes	Yes				Yes	
Officers of the Court			Yes	Yes				Yes	Yes
School District	Yes		Yes					Yes	
Local Health Department	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes		Yes	Yes
CDPH	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Mortuaries/Funeral Homes			Yes					Yes	Yes

- Please contact [HIRS@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:HIRS@cdph.ca.gov) with any questions about the application process.
- OSHPD Data can be found for Non-CDPH requestors at OSHPD's [website](#).
- CPHS Information can be found at CPHS' [website](#).

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**Summary of Vital Statistics Data Files**

Who Can Request	Type of Data	Years Available	Data Frequency	Requirements & Limitations	Cost Estimate <sup>3</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• Universities</li> <li>• Student with sponsor</li> <li>• CDPH Employees performing research</li> <li>• Government Agencies performing research</li> <li>• Local Health Departments</li> </ul>	Birth Statistical Master Files	1960-2017	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) approval and the recommendation from the Vital Statistics Advisory Committee (VSAC) are required for access to confidential data.</li> <li>• Persons expressing valid scientific interest as determined by the State Registrar, who are engaged in demographic, epidemiological, or other similar studies related to health<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Custom data files require completed data dictionary(s).</li> <li>• Estimated turnaround time after complete application received: 2-4 months</li> <li>• File Creation time: approximately two hours/year requested. Time varies based on the complexity of the request.</li> </ul>	Approximately \$500 generation fee for the first year of data requested + \$75 x frequency (annual, quarterly, monthly, annual) for additional years requested.

<sup>1</sup> Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 102430

<sup>3</sup>Data files are subject to cost recovery pursuant to the HSC Section 102230

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Who Can Request	Type of Data	Years Available	Data Frequency	Requirements & Limitations	Cost Estimate <sup>3</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• Universities</li> <li>• Student with sponsor</li> <li>• CDPH Employees performing research</li> <li>• Government Agencies performing research</li> <li>• Local Health Departments</li> </ul>	Birth Cohort Files	1978-2016	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) approval and the recommendation from the Vital Statistics Advisory Committee (VSAC) are required for access to confidential data.</li> <li>• Persons expressing valid scientific interest as determined by the State Registrar, who are engaged in demographic, epidemiological, or other similar studies related to health<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Custom data files require completed data dictionary(s).</li> <li>• Estimated turnaround time after complete application received: 2-4 months</li> <li>• File Creation time: approximately two hours/year requested. Time varies based on the complexity of the request.</li> </ul>	Approximately \$500 generation fee for the first year of data requested + \$75 x frequency (annual, quarterly, monthly, annual) for additional years requested.

<sup>2</sup> Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 102430

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Who Can Request	Type of Data	Years Available	Data Frequency	Requirements & Limitations	Cost Estimate <sup>3</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• Universities</li> <li>• Student with sponsor</li> <li>• CDPH Employees performing research</li> <li>• Government Agencies performing research</li> <li>• Local Health Departments</li> </ul>	California Comprehensive Birth File	1960-2019	Weekly Monthly Quarterly Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) approval and the recommendation from the Vital Statistics Advisory Committee (VSAC) are required for access to confidential data.</li> <li>• Persons expressing valid scientific interest as determined by the State Registrar, who are engaged in demographic, epidemiological, or other similar studies related to health<sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Custom data files require completed data dictionary(s).</li> <li>• Estimated turnaround time after complete application received: 2-4 months</li> <li>• File Creation time: approximately two hours/year requested. Time varies based on the complexity of the request.</li> </ul>	Approximately \$500 generation fee for the first year of data requested + \$75 x frequency (annual, quarterly, monthly, annual) for additional years requested.

<sup>3</sup> Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 102430

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Who Can Request	Type of Data	Years Available	Data Frequency	Requirements & Limitations	Cost Estimate <sup>3</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• Universities</li> <li>• Student with sponsor</li> <li>• CDPH Employees performing research</li> <li>• Government Agencies performing research</li> <li>• Local Health Departments</li> </ul>	California Comprehensive Master Birth File	1960-2018	Weekly Monthly Quarterly Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) approval and the recommendation from the Vital Statistics Advisory Committee (VSAC) are required for access to confidential data.</li> <li>• Persons expressing valid scientific interest as determined by the State Registrar, who are engaged in demographic, epidemiological, or other similar studies related to health<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• Custom data files require completed data dictionary(s).</li> <li>• Estimated turnaround time after complete application received: 2-4 months</li> <li>• File Creation time: approximately two hours/year requested. Time varies based on the complexity of the request.</li> </ul>	Approximately \$500 generation fee for the first year of data requested + \$75 x frequency (annual, quarterly, monthly, annual) for additional years requested.

<sup>4</sup> Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 102430

<sup>3</sup>Data files are subject to cost recovery pursuant to the HSC Section 102230

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Who Can Request	Type of Data	Years Available	Data Frequency	Requirements & Limitations	Cost Estimate <sup>3</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• Universities</li> <li>• Student with sponsor</li> <li>• CDPH Employees performing research</li> <li>• Government Agencies performing research</li> <li>• Local Health Departments</li> </ul>	Fetal Death	1978-2018	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) approval and the recommendation from the Vital Statistics Advisory Committee (VSAC) are required for access to confidential data.</li> <li>• Persons expressing valid scientific interest as determined by the State Registrar, who are engaged in demographic, epidemiological, or other similar studies related to health<sup>5</sup></li> <li>• Custom data files require completed data dictionary(s).</li> <li>• Estimated turnaround time after complete application received: 2-4 months</li> <li>• File Creation time: approximately two hours/year requested. Time varies based on the complexity of the request.</li> </ul>	Approximately \$400 generation fee for the first year of data requested + \$75 x frequency (annual, quarterly, monthly, annual) for additional years requested.

<sup>5</sup> Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 102430

<sup>3</sup>Data files are subject to cost recovery pursuant to the HSC Section 102230

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Who Can Request	Type of Data	Years Available	Data Frequency	Requirements & Limitations	Cost Estimate <sup>3</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• Universities</li> <li>• Student with sponsor</li> <li>• CDPH Employees performing research</li> <li>• Government Agencies performing research</li> <li>• Local Health Departments</li> </ul>	<p>Death Statistical Master Files</p> <p>California Comprehensive Death Files (CCDF)</p> <p>California Comprehensive Master Death File (CCMDF)</p>	<p>1970-2013</p> <p>1977-2019</p> <p>2014-2018</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Weekly Monthly Quarterly Annually</p> <p>Annually</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) approval and the recommendation from the Vital Statistics Advisory Committee (VSAC) are required for access to confidential data.</li> <li>• Persons expressing valid scientific interest as determined by the State Registrar, who are engaged in demographic, epidemiological, or other similar studies related to health<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• Custom data files require completed data dictionary(s).</li> <li>• Estimated turnaround time after complete application received: 2-4 months</li> <li>• File Creation time: approximately two hours/year requested. Time varies based on the complexity of the request.</li> </ul>	<p>Approximately \$400 generation fee for the first year of data requested + \$75 x frequency (annual, quarterly, monthly, annual) for additional years requested.</p>

<sup>6</sup> Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 102430

<sup>3</sup>Data files are subject to cost recovery pursuant to the HSC Section 102230

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Who Can Request	Type of Data	Years Available	Data Frequency	Requirements & Limitations	Cost Estimate <sup>3</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public</li> </ul>	Public Use – Birth	1905-2019	Weekly Monthly Quarterly Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPHS and VSAC approvals are <u>not</u> required</li> <li>• A signed statement of intended use on your organization’s letterhead. Describing how you propose to use the requested data is required.</li> <li>• <b>Birth Contains six variables:</b> Last Name of Child, First Name of Child, Middle Name of Child, Date of Birth, Sex of Child, and place of Birth.</li> </ul>	There is no cost for annual data. For frequencies other than annual, for example monthly or quarterly, the cost is approximately \$10 x frequency for a given year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public</li> </ul>	Public Use – Death	1905-2019	Weekly Monthly Quarterly Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPHS and VSAC approvals are <u>not</u> required</li> <li>• A signed statement of intended use on your organization’s letterhead. Describing how you propose to use the requested data is required</li> <li>• <b>Death Contains nine variables:</b> Last Name of Decedent, First Name of Decedent, Middle Name of Decedent, Sex of Decedent, Date of Birth, Place of Birth, Place of Death, Date of Death, and Father’s Last Name.</li> <li>• Estimated turnaround time after complete application received: 1-2 Months.</li> </ul>	There is no cost for annual data. For frequencies other than annual, for example monthly or quarterly, the cost is approximately \$10 x frequency for a given year.

<sup>3</sup>Data files are subject to cost recovery pursuant to the HSC Section 102230

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Who Can Request	Type of Data	Years Available	Data Frequency	Requirements & Limitations	Cost Estimate <sup>3</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law Enforcement</li> <li>• Fraud Prevention Agencies</li> <li>• Banks/Credit Union</li> <li>• Officers of the Court</li> </ul>	Anti-Fraud Birth	1905-2019	Weekly Monthly Quarterly Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPHS and VSAC approvals are <u>not</u> required</li> <li>• <b>Birth Contains eight variables:</b> Last Name of Child, First Name of Child, Middle Name of Child, Date of Birth, Sex of Child, and Place of Birth, Mother's Maiden Name, and Father's Last Name</li> <li>• Estimated turnaround time after complete application received: 1-2 Months</li> <li>• File creation time: 30 minutes/year requested</li> </ul>	There is no cost for annual data. For frequencies other than annual, for example monthly or quarterly, the cost is approximately \$10 x frequency for a given year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law Enforcement</li> <li>• Fraud Prevention Agencies</li> <li>• Banks/Credit Union</li> <li>• Officers of the Court</li> </ul>	Anti-Fraud Death	1905-2019	Weekly Monthly Quarterly Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPHS and VSAC approvals are <u>not</u> required</li> <li>• <b>Death Contains eleven variables:</b> Last Name of Decedent, First Name of Decedent, Middle Name of Decedent, Sex of Decedent, Date of Birth, Place of Birth, Place of Death, Date of Death, Mother's Maiden Name, Social Security Number, and Father's Last Name</li> <li>• Estimated turnaround time after complete application received: 1-2 Months</li> <li>• File creation time: 30 minutes/year requested</li> </ul>	There is no cost for annual data. For frequencies other than annual, for example monthly or quarterly, the cost is approximately \$10 x frequency for a given year.

<sup>3</sup>Data files are subject to cost recovery pursuant to the HSC Section 102230

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Who Can Request	Type of Data	Years Available	Data Frequency	Requirements & Limitations	Cost Estimate <sup>3</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• Student with sponsor</li> <li>• Universities</li> <li>• Government Agency</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Public</li> <li>• Law Enforcement</li> <li>• Fraud Prevention Agencies</li> <li>• Consumer Credit Reporting Agencies</li> <li>• Officers of the Court</li> <li>• School District</li> <li>• Local Health Department</li> <li>• CDPH</li> <li>• Mortuaries/ Funeral Homes</li> </ul>	Tabular	See Type of Data Being Requested	Weekly Monthly Quarterly Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPHS and VSAC approvals are <u>not</u> required</li> <li>• Data is subject to small cell size suppression in order to prevent inadvertent or intentional re-identification of individuals.</li> <li>• Data is not record level data; counts are provided.</li> <li>• Time varies based on the complexity of the request.</li> <li>• Estimated turnaround time after complete application received: 1-3 months</li> <li>• File Creation time: Varies based on complexity of the request.</li> <li>• Data subject to California Health and Human Services Data De-Identification Guidelines.</li> </ul>	Approximately \$75 per hour x production time.

<sup>3</sup>Data files are subject to cost recovery pursuant to the HSC Section 102230

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Who Can Request	Type of Data	Years Available	Data Frequency	Requirements & Limitations	Cost Estimate <sup>3</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• Universities</li> <li>• Student with Sponsor</li> <li>• Government Agency</li> <li>• CDPH</li> </ul>	California Cancer Registry (CCR)	1978-2018	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPHS, CCR and VSAC approvals are required for all research projects.</li> <li>• Estimated time for VSAC/State Registrar approval: 1-3 months</li> </ul>	Please contact CCR for more information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• Universities</li> <li>• Student with Sponsor</li> <li>• Local Health Department</li> <li>• Government Agency</li> <li>• CDPH</li> </ul>	Multiple Causes of Death (MCOB)	1970-2017	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Applications require VSAC/State Registrar approvals</li> <li>• Estimated turnaround time after complete application received:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Research applications: 2-4 Months</li> <li>○ Non-Research applications: 1-2 Months</li> </ul> </li> <li>• File Creation time: approximately 30 minutes/year requested</li> </ul>	<p>There is no cost. A list of variables for these files may be obtained at the NCHS or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.</p> <p>Effective 2016, the MCOB variables are available in the CCDF and the CCMBF; sequence numbers 201-240. Subject to same costs listed for CCDF and CCMBF.</p>

<sup>3</sup>Data files are subject to cost recovery pursuant to the HSC Section 102230

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Who Can Request	Type of Data	Years Available	Data Frequency	Requirements & Limitations	Cost Estimate <sup>3</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• Student with Sponsor</li> <li>• Universities</li> <li>• Government Agency</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Public</li> <li>• Law Enforcement</li> <li>• Officers of the Court</li> <li>• Local Health Department</li> <li>• CDPH</li> <li>• Mortuaries/Funeral Homes</li> </ul>	Limited Death File (LDF)	2014-2018	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contains a very limited number of data variables</li> <li>• The entire LDF is burned onto a CD-ROM and is available to requestors at no charge</li> <li>• Obtaining the data file requires an application and approval from the Committee for Protection of Human Subjects</li> </ul>	There is no cost.

**Note:**

- Vital Statistics data prepared pursuant to Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 102230 or 102231 may not be accurate or complete due to a variety of circumstances, including amendments to the legal records that may have been filed after the production of the data files
- Please contact [HIRS@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:HIRS@cdph.ca.gov) with any questions about the application process.
- CPHS Information can be found at CPHS' [website](#).
- File creation time is an estimation of the amount of time to create custom data files. This does not include reviews, approvals, data validation, etc.

<sup>3</sup>Data files are subject to cost recovery pursuant to the HSC Section 102230