Missouri Adoptee Rights Act

Information for Adoptees

On July 1, 2016, Governor Nixon signed House Bill 1599 providing adult adoptees born in Missouri with the opportunity to obtain a non-certified copy of their original birth certificate.

When can adoptees obtain copies of their original birth certificate?
An adoptee born before 1941 may request a copy of his or her original birth certificate beginning August 28, 2016.

Adoptees born in or after 1941 may request a copy of his or her original birth certificate beginning January 1, 2018. Applications for original birth certificates for adoptees born during or after 1941 will not be accepted at this time and will be returned to the applicant.

How can adoptees request their original birth certificate?
To make a request, an adoptee shall complete the Application for Non-Certified Copy of an Original Birth Certificate form and pay a non-refundable $15 fee. The application form is available on the website at www.health.mo.gov.

Can adoptees appear in person to obtain their original birth certificate?
Adoptees born prior to 1941 may submit applications in person at the Bureau of Vital Records office in Jefferson City. The department must identify, request and retrieve the original birth record before a copy can be issued. Copies of original birth certificates may not be available on the same day requested. Original copies of Missouri vital records, including birth certificates, are stored offsite at a secure, environmentally controlled facility to preserve these important documents. The department will make every effort to provide eligible applicants the requested documents as quickly as possible.

Applications for the original birth certificate may also be mailed to the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Bureau of Vital Records. Please review the application form for the address, fees and other information that will be required of the applicant.

Can anyone other than the adoptee request a copy of the original birth certificate?
Yes, the Missouri Adoptee Rights Act allows an adopted person's attorney to request a copy of the original birth certificate.

Can a family member of the adoptee request a copy of the original birth certificate for genealogy purposes?
No, the Missouri Adoptee Rights Act only allows an adoptee or the adoptee's attorney to request the original birth certificate.

What will the applicant for the original birth certificate receive?
An authorized applicant may receive a non-certified copy of the original birth certificate that is on file with the Bureau of Vital Records if the record can be located based on the information supplied by the applicant.

The preference selected by the birth parent determines what the applicant will receive:

The Department shall not issue a copy of the original birth certificate to the applicant when:

- The applicant does not meet the requirements of section 193.125, RSMo and 19 CSR 10-10.130; or
- Both birth parents have filed a Birth Parent Contact Preference Form indicating that they prefer not to be contacted or prefer contact through an intermediary.

The Department shall issue a non-certified, unredacted copy of the original birth certificate stamped "For genealogical purposes only—not to be used for establishing identity" upon request to a qualified applicant when:

- The original birth certificate lists two (2) parents and neither birth parent has filed a Birth Parent Contact Preference Form;
- The original birth certificate lists two (2) parents and both birth parents have filed a Birth Parent Contact Preference Form indicating that he/she prefers to be contacted;
- The original birth certificate lists two (2) parents and one (1) parent has filed a Birth Parent Contact Preference Form indicating that he/she prefers to be contacted and the other parent has not filed a Birth Parent Contact Preference Form;
- The original birth certificate only lists one (1) parent and that parent has filed a Birth Parent Contact Preference Form indicating that he/she prefers to be contacted; or
- The original birth certificate only lists one (1) parent and that parent has not filed a Birth Parent Contact Preference Form.

The Department shall issue a non-certified copy of the original birth certificate stamped "For genealogical purposes only—not to be used for establishing identity" to the applicant with the identifying information redacted for the birth parent who indicated they preferred not to be contacted or preferred to be contacted through an intermediary when:

- The original birth certificate only lists one (1) parent and that birth parent has filed a Birth Parent Contact Preference Form indicating that he/she prefers not to be contacted or prefers contact by an intermediary;
- The original birth certificate lists two (2) parents and one (1) birth parent has filed a Birth Parent Contact Preference Form indicating that he/she prefers not to be contacted or prefers contact through an intermediary and the other parent has not filed a Birth Parent Contact Preference Form; or

- The original birth certificate lists two (2) parents and one (1) birth parent has filed a Birth Parent Contact Preference Form indicating that he/she prefers not to be contacted or prefers contact through an intermediary and the other parent has filed a Birth Parent Contact Preference Form indicating that he/she prefers to be contacted.

What happens if the original birth certificate cannot be located?
If the Department cannot locate the original birth certificate, the Department will issue to the applicant a written statement that no record was found.

Can adoptees receive copies of their birth parents' vital records, such as birth, marriage or death certificates?
No, they cannot.

Can the original birth certificate be amended?
No, it cannot.

Where can I locate a copy of the law?
The Missouri Adoptee Rights Act can be found here:
http://www.house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills161/billpdf/truly/HB1599T.PDF.