

REGISTERING A HOME BIRTH

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do I need to register my baby's birth?	Maryland law requires that all births occurring in the State be registered with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Md. Health-General Code Ann. 4-208). Registration of your child's birth establishes the facts of birth and will be used throughout your child's lifetime for a variety of legal purposes.
How do I register a home birth?	When a baby is born outside of an institution, the local health officer or designee of the jurisdiction where the birth occurred is required to attempt to verify the facts regarding the birth within 72 hours after the birth occurs (COMAR 10.03.01.02F, MD statute 4-208). If the facts can be verified, the local health officer will sign the birth record and file the record with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Division of Vital Records.
How do I begin the registration process?	Contact the local health department in the jurisdiction (county or Baltimore City) where the birth occurred. For Worcester County Health Department, call 410-632-1100 (main office) or 410-629-0164 (Berlin) as soon as the birth occurs and ask for the Nursing Department. If you are planning a home birth, please call at least two weeks prior to the delivery date to pre-register.
What information is needed to register my baby's birth?	<p>You will be required to provide information that verifies the following facts of birth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Identity of parent(s);○ Fact of pregnancy;○ Fact of live birth; and○ Place of delivery. <p>You will also be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete the Mother's Worksheet, which will be provided by the local health department; and• Provide information required by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for public health purposes.
What information is required to verify the facts of birth?	<p>1. Identity of parent(s)</p> <p>One of the following valid, unexpired, government-issued documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Driver's license;• State issued photo identification card;• Passport;

- Permanent resident card (Green Card); or
- Military identification card

Or:

- A signed statement that the mother does not have one of the identification documents above; **and**

Two of the following documents that contain the applicant's name and current address:

- Utility bill;
- Car registration form;
- Pay stub;
- Bank statement;
- Income tax return;
- Income tax W-2 form;
- Lease or rental agreement; or
- Letter from a government agency.

2. Fact of pregnancy

One of the following:

- A prenatal or postnatal medical record that is consistent with the date of delivery and includes the mother's name, mother's date of birth, date of health exam, health care provider's signature, health care provider's printed name, signature date, and license number
- A statement from a physician or certified nurse midwife who has first hand knowledge of the pregnancy and is willing to attest to the fact of pregnancy. The statement should include the mother's name, mother's date of birth, LMP or EDC, provider's printed name, and signature, signature date, and license number.
- Documentation of by a public health nurse or other health care provider who has first hand knowledge of the pregnancy.
- Other evidence acceptable to the local health officer.

3. Fact of live birth

One of the following:

- A statement from a physician, certified nurse midwife, or other licensed health care provider who saw or examined the infant;
- A physical assessment and confirmation of newborn status by a public health nurse or licensed health care provider; or
- Other evidence acceptable to the local health officer.

	<p>4. Place of delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>If the birth occurred in the mother's place of residence, <u>one</u> of the following:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driver's license or other state-issued identification card that includes the mother's current residence on the face of the license/card; • Rent receipt, mortgage statement, or deed that includes the mother's name and address; • Recent pay stub that includes mother's name and address; • Utility, telephone, or other bill that includes the mother's name and address; or • Other evidence acceptable to the local health officer. <p><i>If the birth occurred outside of the mother's place of residence, and the mother is a resident of Maryland, <u>all</u> of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An affidavit from the tenant of the premises where the birth occurred stating that the mother was present on those premises at the time of the birth; <u>and</u> • Evidence of the affiant's residence similar to that required in Section 4; <u>and</u> • Evidence of the mother's residence in the State similar to that required in Section 4; <u>or</u> • Other evidence acceptable to the local health officer. <p><i>If the mother is not a resident of Maryland, evidence must consist of clear and convincing evidence acceptable to the local health officer.</i></p>
<p>What happens if the local health officer cannot verify the facts of birth?</p>	<p>If the facts regarding a birth cannot be verified by the local health officer, parents may seek an order from a court of competent jurisdiction that lists the facts about the birth and orders the Secretary of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to create the birth record.</p>

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