



Georgia's Vital Records

Official Records

Officially, statewide registration of births and deaths began in 1919. Death records for 1919-1942 are available for research at the Georgia Archives. Death records for 1919-1941 are available online. An index to death records is available online for the years 1919-1998, and this may be consulted to confirm the exact year of death and obtain the certificate number.

For birth certificates from 1919-present and death records 1943-present, contact the Georgia Department of Human Resources at:

Vital Records
1680 Phoenix Blvd, Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30349
404-679-4702
<http://dph.georgia.gov/VitalRecords>

You may also request birth and death certificates 1919-present from the Vital Records Office in the county where the birth or death occurred. A list of county offices is available online at www.vitalrec.com/ga.html

Early Registration

In general, there are no official birth or death certificates before 1919 in Georgia. However, there are some exceptions. The records listed below are available on microfilm at the Georgia Archives and must be used by researchers on-site at the Archives. Most of them are not indexed.

An 1875 act of the Georgia General Assembly mandated statewide registration of births, deaths, and marriages. Few counties complied with this law, and even fewer citizens within those counties reported the required information. This effort for statewide registration of vital records was funded by the legislature for only two years, but some birth records from 1875 and 1876 are available on microfilm at the Georgia Archives. The participating counties were:

Carroll: Birth, 1875; Marriage, 1875; Death, 1875
Chattooga: Birth, 1875-76; Marriage, 1874-76; Death 1874-76
Clayton: Birth, 1875; Marriage, 1875
Colquitt: Birth, 1875; Marriage, 1875; Death, 1875
Early: Birth, 1876; Marriage, 1876
Jackson: Birth, 1875; Marriage 1875-76; Death, 1875
Jefferson: Death, 1875
Lincoln: Marriage, 1875
Lumpkin: Birth, 1875; Marriage 1875-76; Death, 1875
McIntosh: Marriage, 1875; Death, 1875
Miller: Birth, 1875-76; Marriage, 1875-76; Death, 1875-76
Muscogee: Marriage, 1876
Oglethorpe: Birth, 1875-78
Pulaski: Birth, 1875
Richmond: Marriage, 1875-76
Sumter: Birth, 1875-76; Marriage, 1875-76
Talbot: Death, 1875
Taliaferro: Birth, 1875-76; Marriage, 1875-76
Walton: Birth, 1875-76; Death, 1875



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In 1914 the General Assembly vested the State Board of Health with the duty of compiling vital statistics in the state and authorized the establishment of a central bureau of vital statistics. Early registration was scant. The few certificates that were filed with the state were grouped roughly by year as they were gathered together, placed in binders, and stamped with a "file number." To some extent the sequence of the certificates reflects the order in which they were received by the state registrar. These certificates, which principally cover the years 1914-1919, were transferred to the custody of the Georgia Archives and have been scanned. They are available on-line at www.GeorgiaArchives.org.

Included in the microfilmed holdings of the Georgia Archives are widely-scattered, pre-1919, birth and death records for the localities listed below. These registrations are not to be considered complete for the indicated dates.

Chatham: Death, 1803-1847; Myrick Index to Marriages and Deaths, 1733-1837
Clarke: Birth, 1808-1852
Emanuel: Birth, 1822-1863
Greene: Death, 1811-1833
Meriwether: Death, 1890; 1917-1919
Richmond: Birth, 1823-1896
City of Gainesville: Birth, 1865-1919; Death, 1908-1919

Marriage licenses in Georgia have been required since 1805, although some counties exercised voluntary registration as early as the 1780s. They are maintained by the Probate Court of each county. The fact that marriage records are not at the Vital Records office for any period of time does not mean that they are missing from a county's records. The Georgia Archives has county marriage records on microfilm. These filmed marriage records generally date from the nineteenth century, but the records for some counties may be as current as the 1950s. Contact the Archives to identify the span of dates for specific counties.

Local Registration of Vital Records Prior to 1919

Vital records were recorded prior to 1919 in the cities of Macon, Savannah, Atlanta, and Augusta. Information on these records may be obtained by using the contact information below. These records are not at the Georgia Archives.

- **The City of Atlanta** (Fulton County) began recording births in 1896 and deaths in 1889. Contact the Fulton County Vital Records Office located at Fulton County Government Center, 141 Pryor Street, SW, Suite 1029A, Atlanta, GA 30303. Tel: 404-613-1260
- **The City of Augusta** (Richmond County) began recording births in 1919 and deaths in 1904. Inquiries should be made by mail or in person to Richmond County Health Department, Vital Records, 1916 North Leg Road, Bldg. E, Augusta, GA 30909-4402. General questions about copies may be answered by telephone at 706-667-4335. No records may be released by telephone.
- **The City of Macon** (Bibb County) began recording births in 1891 and deaths in 1882. For information, contact Macon (Bibb County) Health Department, 171 Emery Highway, Macon, GA 31217-3666. Tel: 478-749-0102
- **The City of Savannah** (Chatham County) has birth records beginning in 1890 and death records beginning in 1803. Birth and death registers are available on Ancestry.com. The death records from 1803-1890 are at the Georgia Historical Society, 501 Whitaker Street, Savannah, GA 31499. Tel: 912-651-2128. City of Savannah vital records requests should be addressed to the Chatham County Health Department, P.O. Box 14257, Savannah, GA 31416. Tel: 912-356-2138

Substitutes for Vital Records

County records, particularly wills and other estate records, are useful substitutes for death records. Pre-1900 county records for the majority of Georgia counties are available at the Georgia Archives. As a substitute for birth records, we recommend a search of federal population schedules (known as census records). Federal census records for Georgia, 1820 through 1940, are available at the Georgia Archives.

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