

Vital Statistics Records

202 Research Guide

Most Recent Update:
November 2021

Vital statistics are the official information about important events in human life – births, marriages and deaths – officially registered with the Government of Ontario. This research guide provides information on finding and using province of Ontario vital statistics records.

This guide provides information about the vital statistics records we hold, their contents, and how to access them. For more detailed information, and the resources mentioned in this guide, [click here to access our Vital Statistics Webpage](#) (on our Website, this page is located under “Tracing Your Family History”).

The Archives holds various other records from government and non-government sources that document births, marriages and deaths in the province. For more information, [click here to access Research Guide 204: Sources for Birth, Marriage and Death Records](#).

GETTING STARTED.....	1
Vital Statistics Records in the Archives of Ontario:	2
Vital Statistics Records at the Office of the Registrar General of Ontario:	2
Getting Birth, Marriage or Death Certificates	3
Registration vs certificate:.....	3
FINDING THE RECORDS	3
Where to access the Vital Statistics records at the Archives of Ontario.....	3
Finding Vital Statistics registrations on microfilm	4
Vital Statistics Indexes on microfilm.....	4
WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN VITAL STATISTICS RECORDS	5
Making Contact	6
TABLE 1: WHERE TO ACCESS VITAL STATISTICS RECORDS.....	7

GETTING STARTED

Vital Statistics records for Ontario births, marriages and deaths (i.e., official Ontario government registrations) are in two places: the Archives of Ontario and the Office of the Registrar General of Ontario.

Vital Statistics Records in the Archives of Ontario:

Indexes (where they exist) and registrations for:

- Births – from ca. 1830 to 1917, predominantly 1869-1917 (please note: delayed birth registrations also exist for a small number of pre-1869 births; these are available through the Family Search Website; see the table at the end of this guide for more information)
- Marriages – from ca. 1801 to 1939
- Deaths – from 1869 to 1949
- Ontario overseas deaths, 1939-1947, documenting Ontarians who died outside of the country during those years.

These records are available publicly, up to 1917 (for births), 1938 (for marriages), 1948 (for deaths), as well as the Registrations of Ontario deaths overseas (1939-1947). If you need Archives' records from those time periods, please see the section on Finding the Records.

Every year, the Office of the Registrar General transfers another year of marriage and death records to the Archives.

Please note: Due to changes in regulations, 1918 and newer birth registrations and indexes will be retained by the Office of the Registrar General for 104 years after the year of registration. The 1918 birth registrations and indexes will be transferred to the Archives in 2023.

Please note: Until the early 1900's, many births, marriages and deaths were not registered with the provincial government. It was the responsibility of the people involved to register the event. Birth, marriages and deaths not registered with the government may be recorded in church records. For more information on church records, [click here to access Research Guide 204: Sources for Birth, Marriage and Death Records](#).

Vital Statistics Records at the Office of the Registrar General of Ontario:

For records of:

- Births – from 1918 - present
- Marriages – from 1940 - present
- Deaths - from 1950 – present

Please contact:

Office of the Registrar General
Box 4600
Thunder Bay, ON
P7B 6L8

[Click here to access Service Ontario's website.](#)

416-325-8305

1-800-461-2156 (toll-free, Ontario only)

Getting Birth, Marriage or Death Certificates

The Archives of Ontario:

- Does not issue birth, marriage or death certificates
- Will only certify photocopies of registrations made in the presence of Archives' staff in our Reading Room, or requested by mail, e-mail, fax or telephone. See the end of this guide for contact information, or [click here to email the Archives of Ontario](#).

Please include, as far as you know, the name of the person(s), the location, the date (we will search a five year range), and the parents' names (for a birth). See this guide for information on how you can search and locate a registration before requesting a certified copy. A certification fee of \$33.00 (plus HST and postage and handling fees) applies. Please do not include payment with your request; we will invoice you only when a certified copy is ready.

The Office of the Registrar General of Ontario:

- Will *not* issue Death Certificates for Vital Statistics records in the Archives of Ontario collection
- Will issue Birth and Marriage Certificates *only* to the person identified on the record.

Registration vs certificate:

- The registration is the original government record of the birth, marriage or death.
- A certificate is produced by the Office of the Registrar General using information from the registration.
- Certified copies of registrations held at the Archives of Ontario have the same legal value as a certificate produced by the Office of the Registrar General.

FINDING THE RECORDS

Where to access the Vital Statistics records at the Archives of Ontario

You can access the Vital Statistics records at the Archives of Ontario in one of two ways

1. On microfilm, in our reading room and through interloan
2. Online on the ancestry.ca website or the Family Search's website [Click here to access ancestry.ca](#); [click here to access the Family Search website](#).

For detailed information on where to access these records, including the years available in each format, [click here to view table 1, at the end of this guide](#)

Finding Vital Statistics registrations on microfilm

To find Vital Statistics registrations at the Archives of Ontario using microfilm, you will need to consult our Vital Statistics Indexes. Please see the section on Vital Statistics Indexes below. It has more information on using the indexes.

Lists of microfilm reels and pathfinders are available in our Reading Room and in our online Vital Statistics Webpage; [click here to access the Vital Statistics Webpage](#)

You can view the microfilm in one of two ways:

1. Visit the Archives' Reading Room. See our contact information at the end of this research guide.
2. Ask your public library to borrow the film from the Archives of Ontario. You may request up to three reels per researcher.

The Archives does not provide research services. If you wish to hire a genealogical researcher to undertake research for you, [click here to access Customer Service Guide 111: Genealogical Researchers in Ontario](#).

Vital Statistics Indexes on microfilm

- *Birth, death and marriage registrations (except marriages before 1873):* The indexes are available as microfilmed computer print-outs. The computer printout Indexes are sorted in the following order:

Up to 1895 for births, 1910 for marriages, and 1925 for deaths, they are sorted:

- First by *surname initial*
- Then by *year of event*
- Lastly *alphabetically, by the person's full name*.

After the above dates, they are sorted:

- First by *year of event*
- Then *alphabetically, by the person's full name*.

The Indexes have the full name, date and place of the event, registration number and registration year.

To request the correct registration microfilm, you must have the *registration number* and *registration year*. For more information, [click here to access Research Guide 203: Understanding the Vital Statistics Indexes](#).

- *Marriages 1801-June 1869:* These registrations are recorded in the District Marriage Registers 1801-1857 or the County Marriage Registers 1858-June 1869. The registers and corresponding Indexes (where they exist) were

transferred to microfilm together. There are published indexes in the Reading Room and in some public libraries.

- *Marriages July 1869-December 1872*: There was NO computer printout Index for these records. Two indexes are available:
 - Published indexes, available in the Reading Room and in some public libraries
 - The Original (hand-written) microfilmed Indexes (MS 938 Reel 1 for July-December 1869; MS 941 Reel 1 for 1870-1872). Each Index is sorted in the following order:
 - First by *year*
 - Then within year, *by surname initial*
 - Then lastly *grouped by county/ district*.

You need the Liber (volume) and Folio (page) numbers listed to order the correct Registration microfilm.

- *Registrations of overseas deaths, 1939-1947*: There is no index by the Office of the Registrar General for these records.

A published index is available in our Reading Room and in some libraries: Bruce Thornby (ed. By Clifford Collins), *Index to overseas deaths of Ontario servicemen and servicewomen, 1939-1947* (Toronto: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2006), 2 vol.

WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN VITAL STATISTICS RECORDS

BIRTHS: Birth registrations include the year of birth, name, gender, father's name, mother's maiden name, father's rank or occupation, signature and residence of informant (usually a relative), accoucheur's name (the person assisting with the birth), registration date, registrar's signature, county / district of registration (an exact city, town or township is normally not given in the records for the earliest years).

MARRIAGES (1801-June 1869): There is a lot of variation in recorded information for marriages. It can be very limited in the early years (e.g., name of groom, bride, and clergy, location, date and religious denomination of ceremony).

MARRIAGES (July 1869 and after): There is information about each person and about the marriage. *About each person*: Name, age, place of residence and birth, marital status (bachelor/ widower, spinster / widow), occupation, father's name, mother's maiden name, and religious denomination. *About the marriage*: Location and date marriage occurred, witnesses' names and residences, name of clergy conducting the marriage, whether marriage was by issuance of a marriage license or publication of banns and registration date.

DEATHS: The records *may* include the deceased person's name, age, sex, religious affiliation, rank or profession, birthplace, cause of death, name and description of informant, registrar's name, date registered and county/ district of registration.

Registrations after 1907 may also include the place of burial and the name of the parents.

Please note that all of the above requested information *was not always recorded* in the registration. The data in the records can be incomplete, entered on the wrong line or incorrect. If the computer printout Index (see above) does not list a registration, order the Original Index for that year.

Making Contact

Ready and Willing

Although unable to do your research for you, our reference archivists are waiting to assist you. You may telephone or write to them by mail or email or — best of all — visit the Archives of Ontario.

Contact us

Telephone: 416-327-1600 Toll free (Ontario): 1-800-668-9933

Email: [Click here to email the Archives of Ontario](#)

Address: Archives of Ontario, 134 Ian Macdonald Blvd., Toronto, ON M7A 2C5

Website

For information about the Archives' holdings, as well as access to research guides and other customer service materials available through the Archives of Ontario. [Click here to visit our website..](#)

Customer Service and Research Guides

The Archives of Ontario has published a series of in-depth research guides on a variety of specific topics. For more information, please see "Customer Service and Research Guides" under "Accessing Our Collection" on the home page of the Archives website.

TABLE 1: WHERE TO ACCESS VITAL STATISTICS RECORDS

Use the tables below to find what Vital Statistics records are:

- available online on ancestry.ca; [click here to access ancestry.ca](#)
- available online on the Family Search website, [click here to access the Family Search website](#)
- available on microfilm, in the Archives of Ontario reading room and through interloan; [for microfilm lists and instructions, click here to access our Vital Statistics Webpage](#)
- at the Archives of Ontario, and closed for digitization
- held by the Office of the Registrar General (for contact information, go to page 2 of this research guide)

Birth, marriage and death registrations and indexes

Type of records	Available on ancestry.ca	Available on Family Search website	Available in the Reading Room and through Interloan	At the Archives of Ontario, closed for digitization	Held by the Office of the Registrar General
Births	1869-1914	ca. 1830-1912 (registrations ca. 1830-1868 are online only)	1869-1917	No records closed for digitization.	1918-present
Marriages District Registers ([ca. 1801-1857])	[ca. 1801-1857]	[ca. 1801-1857]	[ca. 1801-1857]	All records have been digitized	No records held by the Office of the Registrar General
Marriages County Registers ([ca. 1858-1869])	[ca. 1858-1869] (transcriptions only, no image of the records)	[ca. 1858-1869]	[ca. 1858-1869]	All records have been digitized	No records held by the Office of the Registrar General
Marriages (July 1, 1869 and after)	1869-1938	1869-1927	1869-1932	1939	1940-present
Deaths	1869-1948	1869-1937	1869-1942	1949	1950-present
Deaths of Ontarians overseas	1939-1947	1939-1947	1939-1947	All records have been digitized	No records held by the Office of the Registrar General

Other Registrar General Records held by the Archives of Ontario

The records listed below are available on microfilm only, in the Archives of Ontario Reading Room and through interloan

Records	Years	Reference Code
Roman Catholic Marriage Registers	1828-1870	RG 80-27-4
Vital Statistics Files	1838-1952	RG 80-15
Book of Marriages Not Registered, St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Toronto	1858-1917	RG 80-18
Division Registrar Vital Statistics Records	1858-1930	RG 80-13
Evidence for Delayed Registrations of Births	1861-1907	RG 80-19
Direct Clergy Returns for Simcoe County Births Marriages and Deaths	1892-1896	RG 80-14
Registers by Clergy	1896-1948	RG 80-27-3
Marriage Licence Books	1907-1910	RG 80-22
Miscellaneous Vital Statistics Registers	1859-1931	RG 80-27-5

© Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2015

This information is provided as a public service. Although we endeavour to ensure that the information is as current and accurate as possible, errors do occasionally occur. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information. Readers should where possible verify the information before acting on it.