

Re-Issuance of Puerto Rico Birth Certificates

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The following information is summarized from the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration: Birth Certificate Law and frequently asked questions (FAQs), <http://www.salud.gov.pr/Servicios-al-Ciudadano/Pages/Registro-Demografico.aspx>

Summary of the New Birth Certificate Law 191:

A new law adopted in Puerto Rico in December of 2009, (Law 191) is aimed at strengthening the issuance and usage of birth certificates to combat fraud and protect the identity and credit of all persons born in Puerto Rico. Approximately, 40% of passport fraud cases investigated by the U.S. Department of State (DOS) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in recent years involved stolen Puerto Rican birth certificates. This left Puerto Rico-born citizens vulnerable to identity theft, ruined credit, improper access to Social Security benefits, and increased “random” security checks at airports.

The new law 191, which went into effect on January 1, 2010, implements the following changes:

- On October 30, 2010, the law will invalidate all birth certificates issued before that date by the Puerto Rico Health Department, through its Vital Statistics Record Office. Until that date, **all birth certificates will remain valid.**
- On July 1, 2010, the Vital Statistics Record Office will begin issuing new birth certificates incorporating state-of-the-art technology to limit document forgery. The law provides that the date of validity for the current birth certificates may be extended by the Puerto Rico Health Department if the new birth certificates are not ready to be issued on July 1, 2010.
- As of January 1, 2010, the law also establishes that no public or private entity within the jurisdiction of Puerto Rico may retain an original copy of a Puerto Rico issued birth certificate. Local agencies in Puerto Rico, as well as private employers, may request to inspect birth certificates and even can copy them, but cannot retain the original under any circumstance.

How to Apply for a New Birth Certificate if Currently Residing Outside of Puerto Rico:

Order a birth certificate through VitalChek, a private company offering this service. If you have already placed an order on the website or by telephone the estimated time for your order to be processed can be found on the order confirmation email you were sent at the time it was placed. You can also access your Order Receipt which will have the processing time by visiting the Manage My Order page on the website, <http://www.vitalchek.com> or at 866-842-6765, a 24-hour, bilingual call center service is available.

Citizens born in Puerto Rico but residing elsewhere may obtain a **new** birth certificate by filling out a Birth Certificate Application form from the Puerto Rico Vital Statistics Record office **on or after July 1, 2010**. Application forms can be obtained at: <http://www.salud.gov.pr/Servicios-al-Ciudadano/Pages/Registro-Demografico.aspx>; or call 787-767-9120, The Puerto Rico Vital Statistics Record Office for additional information.

Once an applicant completes and signs the form, they should follow these steps

- Applicants residing outside of Puerto Rico may mail the completed application to the following address:
**Puerto Rico Vital Statistics Record Office
(Registro Demografico)**



P.O. Box 11854
San Juan, PR 00910

- Include a photocopy of a valid government issued photo identification document (A passport or drivers license may be used; all other forms of government issued photo ID will be subject to approval.
- Include a \$5.00 Money Order payable to the Secretary of the Treasury of Puerto Rico (If multiple copies are requested with one application, all additional copies after the first will cost \$4. Fees will be waived for all veterans and persons over the age of 60.)
- Include a self-addressed envelope with paid postage.

To send applications, through premium mail services (FedEx, Express Mail, Registered Mail, UPS) correspondences should be directed to the following street address:

Puerto Rico Vital Statistics Record Office
(Registro Demografico)
171 Quisqueya Street
Hato Rey, PR 00917

SOURCE: Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration, Puerto Rico Birth Certificates Law 191 of 2009 Fact Sheet; Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration (PRFAA)

PREPARED BY: 211/tb

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