

Notice about Nova Scotia Birth Certificates

Greater security without a hassle

Security has *always* been a priority and our safeguards meet national guidelines. Now we're taking additional steps to protect you from identity theft.

Changes Effective February 15th

Changes to the *Vital Statistics Act* will go into effect on February 15, 2002. Yet fast, courteous service will still be the norm. Mail, fax and Internet orders take about 10 days; counter service at Vital Statistics (1690 Hollis St. Ground Floor, Joseph Howe Building, Halifax) is often processed the same day.

As of February 15, birth certificates will only be issued to the individual named on the certificate, or the individual's parent or legal guardian. An executor/executrix of an estate may obtain a birth certificate for a deceased person.

To obtain a birth certificate, you must be able to provide:

- your full name, place and date of birth
- your parents' names and birthplaces, your mother's maiden name
- your street address (not a post office box) and a daytime telephone number

In most cases, that's all you need to provide. Some people may be asked to provide additional documentation or information – such as a passport, SIN or driver's licence – as further proof of identity. When applying for someone else's birth certificate, your name must appear as a parent on our record, or you must have proof that you are their legal guardian or executor/executrix.

You have a role to play too

We are tightening our security and you should too. Keep birth, marriage and death certificates in a safe place, somewhere you can access them but out of the reach of criminals. Don't regularly carry a certificate in your wallet or purse.

What else should you know?

Other behind the scenes measures will offer additional checks and balances to make our system safer. And criminals will face fines up to \$50,000 and jail terms up to two years for crimes related to identity theft.