

Vital Records Chart

The chart below indicates when statewide and county vital-record-keeping officially began in each state—that's when counties started to collect birth, marriage and death information and report it to state offices. Some counties or towns kept statistics earlier, and some were slow to comply with state laws, so check with ancestors' local government for record availability.

Note: Most states maintain marriage records at the county level. Even though counties were mandated to keep records, early records are sporadic and/or unavailable. Many states have index only despite indications to the contrary.

State	Birth	State Marriage	County Marriage	State Divorce	County Divorce	Death	Notes
Alabama	1908	1936	1818	1950	1864	1908	
Alaska	1913	1913	----	1950	----	1919	
Arizona	1909	1909	1864	----	1864	1909	
Arkansas	1914	1917	1848	1923	1848	1914	
California	1905	1905	1851	1962	1851	1905	
Colorado	1900	1900	1860	1900	1860	1907	State has index only
Connecticut	1897	1897	----	1897	1711	1897	Town records beg 1635
Delaware*	1861	1847	1832	1703	1900	1881	
District of Columbia	1874	1811	----	1803	----	1874	
Florida	1899	1927	1825	1927	1825	1899	
Georgia	1919	1952	1800	1952	1835	1919	
Hawaii	1842	1842	1905	1849	1905	1859	
Idaho	1911	1947	1865	1947	1865	1911	
Illinois	1916	1962	1813	1962	1813	1916	Marriage license required after 1877
Indiana	1907	1958	1811	----	1853	1899	
Iowa	1880	1880	1836	1906	1838	1880	
Kansas	1911	1913	1832	1951	1832	1911	
Kentucky	1911	1958	1797	1958	1809	1911	
Louisiana*	1914	1948	1808	----	1818	1914	
Maine	1892	1923	----	1892	1738	1892	See town records beg abt 1653
Maryland	1898	1950	1640	1961	1829	1898	Marr Lic required aft 1777; minister returns aft 1865
Massachusetts	1841	1841	1636	1952	1738	1841	See also towns for records beg 1620
Michigan	1867	1867	1805	1897	1857	1867	
Minnesota	1900	1958	1842	1970	1842	1908	State has index only
Mississippi	1912	1926	1836	1920	1859	1912	
Missouri	1910	1881	1816	1948	1808	1910	
Montana	1907	1943	1883	----	1883	1907	State has index only
Nebraska	1905	1909	1855	1909	1855	1905	
Nevada	1911	1968	1861	1868	1861	1911	

State	Birth	State Marriage	County Marriage	State Divorce	County Divorce	Death	Notes
New Hampshire	1901	1901	----	----	1774	1901	See town records beg 1639
New Jersey	1848	1848	1795 (most)	1850	1743	1848	Town records beginning 1699
New Mexico	1920	1920	1850	----	1850	1920	
New York*	1880	1847-65 1881	1848, 1908	1963	1787	1880	County marriages, most 1908 (not all)
North Carolina	1913	1962	1669	1958	1814	1913	
North Dakota	1907	1925	1872	-----	1872	1907	
Ohio	1908	1949	1789	1949	1852	1908	Copies of state records not available
Oklahoma	1908	1908	1890	----	1907	1908	
Oregon	1903	1906	1847	1925	1853	1903	
Pennsylvania	1906	1885	1852, 1885	1946	1804	1906	Marriages most counties 1885 (not all)
Rhode Island	1853	1853	----	1644	1749	1853	See town records beg in 1636
South Carolina	1915	1950	1836	1962	1949	1915	Divorce illegal until 1949
South Dakota	1905	1905	1873	1905	1873	1905	
Tennessee*	1908	1945	1786	----	1797	1908	
Texas	1903	1966	1837	1968	1841	1903	Copies of state records not available by mail
Utah	1905	1887	1887	1978	1851	1905	Copies of state records not available
Vermont	1955	1955	----	1860	----	1955	See town records beg in 1760
Virginia	1912	1853	1646	1853	1848	1912	See also vestry records
Washington	1907	1968	1852	1968	1889	1907	
West Virginia	1917	1964	1754	----	1848	1917	
Wisconsin	1907	1907	1823	----	1823	1907	
Wyoming	1909	1941	1864	1941	1864	1909	

***Delaware's** statewide birth and death records stop in **1863** and resume in **1881**.

All **Louisiana** birth records are kept in parish clerk offices.

Tennessee has no statewide birth or death records for **1913**.

New York: State records do not include New York City boroughs, or Albany, Yonkers, or Buffalo before 1914; see also town and city records from the 1640s.

Washington, DC's birth records go back to 1874, death records to 1855 (but none were filed during the Civil War) and marriage records to 1811.

Bibliography

<http://www.familytreemagazine.com/upload/images/pdf/vitalrecords.pdf>

Schaeffer, Christina Kassabian, *The Hidden Half of the Family*, Genealogical Publishing Co., 1999, pp.35-37.