

Texas Foster Youth Justice Project

www.texasfosteryouth.org

(877) 313-3688

Changing Your Birth Certificate After Adoption

When I was adopted, my birth certificate was changed to reflect my adoptive parents' names. Is there a way to change it back so that it reflects my birth parents' names?

You can only take your adoptive parents' names off of your birth certificate if your adoption was revoked or annulled. If the adoption remains legally valid, or if your adoptive family's parental rights were terminated without affecting the underlying adoption itself, you cannot change your parents' names on your birth certificate.

If my adoption was revoked or annulled, how can I get back my original birth certificate?

Birth certificate changes are handled by Texas Vital Statistics, which is part of the State Department of Health Services.

- If the judge who revokes or annuls your adoption orders that your original birth certificate be re-instated, Texas Vital Statistics will re-instate your old birth certificate.
- If the judge's order revoking or annulling the adoption does not mention re-instating your old birth certificate, Texas Vital Statistics will issue you a new birth certificate with your old information on it.

How do I get Texas Vital Statistics to issue a birth certificate with my original information on it?

You need three things:

1. A certified copy of the judge's order revoking or annulling the adoption, or a certified copy of the certificate of revocation or annulment of the adoption.
2. A letter explaining your situation, what information you want on your "new" birth certificate, and why. [\[See sample letter\]](#)
3. A check or money order for \$47 made payable to Texas Vital Statistics

Once you have these three things, mail them to:

Texas Vital Statistics
Department of State Health Services
PO Box 12040
Austin, TX 78711-2040

They should mail you back a certified copy of your "new" old birth certificate. If they have any problems getting your information changed, they should contact you by mail and explain what went wrong and how to fix it.

What if the judge's order doesn't mention changing the information on my birth certificate?

Most orders revoking or annulling an adoption do include a requirement that your birth certificate be changed back to reflect your original information, but if the order in your case leaves this out for some reason, Texas Vital Statistics will still change back your birth certificate information, as long as the order makes it clear that your adoption was terminated or revoked.

How do I get a certified copy of the judge's order or of the certificate of revocation or annulment of adoption?

You must contact the clerk of the court that issued the order. Each court has slightly different procedures, but in general you will have to provide your contact information and pay a small fee before they will send you a certified copy of the order.

How do I contact the clerk of the court?

If you know which court issued the order, you can find contact information at its website.

What if I do not know which court issued the order?

Only the court that granted an adoption in the first place can revoke or annul that adoption. This means that the court that issued the revocation order is the same as the court that granted the adoption. Texas Vital Statistics will send you information about which court granted your adoption if you send them:

1. A completed "Application for Identity of Court of Adoption" form.
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/vs/reqproc/forms/vs143.pdf>
2. A check or money order for \$10.
3. A photocopy of your valid photo ID.

What is the \$47 for?

There is a \$25 fee for Texas Vital Statistics to create and file a new birth certificate for you (even if what they are really doing is re-filing your old birth certificate). There is a \$22 fee to send you a certified copy of your "new" birth certificate.

I don't have a checking account; can I just send cash?

No. If you don't have a checking account or don't want to use your checking account, you can send a money order, which may be obtained at any post office or bank.