

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 21-21—HB 6105

Planning and Development Committee

AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATES BY ADULT ADOPTED PERSONS

SUMMARY: This act expands access to birth certificates for adopted persons age 18 and older and their adult children or adult grandchildren by allowing them to obtain an uncertified copy of the adoptee's original birth certificate upon request, regardless of when the adoption occurred. Prior law provided this access only for adoptions finalized on or after October 1, 1983.

For adoptions before that date, prior law allowed access to the original certificate by these individuals only through a court order. If the birth parents were alive, the court could issue the order only with their consent or, in certain circumstances, the consent of a legal representative or guardian ad litem (GAL).

The act also transfers, from the Department of Public Health (DPH) to municipalities, the responsibility to issue the original birth certificate upon an eligible individual's request. Specifically, it requires the registrar of vital statistics in the municipality of the adopted individual's birth to issue the uncertified copy of the certificate to the adoptee age 18 or older or his or her adult child or adult grandchild. The registrar must do so within 30 days after a written request by these individuals. Prior law did not set a timeframe for DPH to issue these birth certificates.

The act similarly transfers, from DPH to municipalities, the responsibility to issue original birth certificates to certain relatives (e.g., adult descendants or biological siblings of the adoptee) upon a court order in cases where an adoptee is deceased. (In these cases, the same requirement to obtain consent from the living birth parents or a legal representative or GAL applies as noted above.)

The act also makes conforming and technical changes, including repealing certain expired reporting requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2021, and changes to court petitions apply to petitions filed on and after July 1, 2021.

BACKGROUND

Adoptee Birth Certificates

In most cases, DPH seals the original birth certificate when a court notifies it that a child born in Connecticut has been adopted. It prepares a new certificate substituting the adoptive parents' names for those appearing on the original certificate (CGS § 7-53).