

## Birth Certificate

### Can I get my Birth Certificate?

To get a copy of your Birth Certificate without a parent/guardian's consent, you have to go to a Vital Records Office with the homeless liaison from your school or with a staff person from a shelter.

### Who can help me?

Ask the homeless liaison in your school district for help, or ask at your school, or call Louis Tallarita at the State Department of Education at 860-807-2058. Or, you can call a shelter and ask for help:

Janus Center for Youth in Crisis  
203-374-9473  
1100 Boston Ave, Building 5A, Bridgeport

Kids In Crisis  
203-327-5437  
One Salem Street, Cos Cob

Women and Families Center  
203-213-8667 (call or text)  
169 Colony Street, Meriden

Youth Continuum  
203-777-8445  
24 River Street, New Haven

### What do I need to know about going to the Vital Records office?

You must go to Vital Records with the person who is helping you. Call before you go to find out which of these offices to go to:

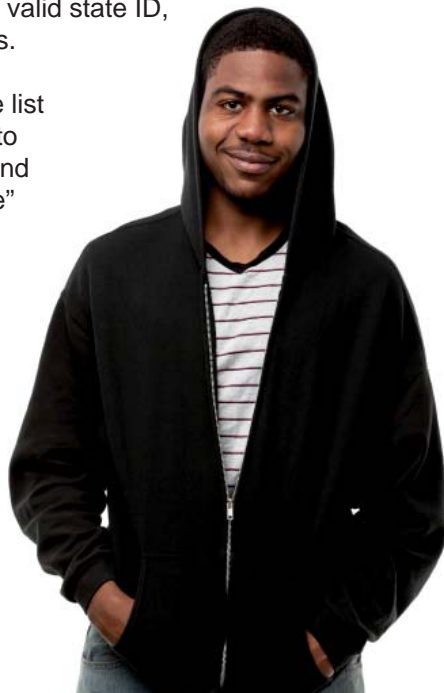
- Vital Records Office in your town (\$20)
- Vital Records Office in the town your mother lived in when you were born (\$20)
- State Vital Records Office at 410 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Mon-Fri from 8:15 to 3:30 (\$30)

### Do I need identification?

When you go to Vital Records, you and the person going with you both have to bring identification.

It is best to bring a valid state ID. If you do not have a valid state ID, bring two substitutes.

To see the complete list of substitute ID, go to [speakupteens.org](http://speakupteens.org) and type "birth certificate" into the search box.



### Were you kicked out of your house?

### Did you run away?

### Are you staying with friends?

### Couch hopping?

### Lose your housing?

### Are you wondering . . .

### Where you can go to school?

### How to get medical care?

### Can you see a therapist?

### How to get your birth certificate?

The information in this brochure is intended as reference only and should not be interpreted as legal advice in an individual case.

If you need specific information about the law, please call 860-570-5327 or 203-223-8975.

## Where can I get help?

**If you move around a lot because you do not have a permanent place to live, there are laws to help you.**

### Do you have questions about your legal rights?

Call 860-570-5327 or 203-223-8975.

For information on other teen legal rights topics, go to [speakupteens.org](http://speakupteens.org) or go to [kidscounsel.org](http://kidscounsel.org) and click on 'Teen Legal Rights.'



**Center for Children's Advocacy**  
65 Elizabeth Street, Hartford, CT 06105

(860)570-5327 or (203)223-8975  
[kidscounsel.org](http://kidscounsel.org) and [speakupteens.org](http://speakupteens.org)

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# I've been moving around a lot.

**Do I have to change schools every time I move?**

**If I'm on my own, what are my rights?**

## If you are moving around and staying in temporary places, there are laws to help you.

### School

#### If you . . .

- were kicked out of your house
- ran away from home
- are staying in a shelter
- are staying in a temporary place in DCF care
- are staying with another family because you lost your housing
- live in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or campground because you lost your housing
- have no place to stay

If one of these describes you, you have special legal rights. Even if you have a temporary place to stay, you may still be able to get help. The law helps students who are alone and moving around, and those who are living with family and moving around.

#### Do I have to change schools if I move to another school district or town?

You have the right to choose between the school you went to before you lost your housing, the school where you are staying now, or the school where you were last registered.



#### How will I get to school?

You have a right to get transportation back to your old school - if that is what you or your parent/guardian believes is best for you. The transportation might be a bus, a bus pass, or even a taxi.

#### Who can help me figure this out?

Every school district has a person called a “homeless liaison.” That person’s job is to help you. Call the school district and ask for the homeless liaison. If that doesn’t work, go to [www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov) and type “homeless liaison” in the search box at the top.

#### The school won’t let me register until they get records. How long do I have to wait?

If you are a homeless student, you have the right to be registered immediately - even if you don’t have proof of residency, immunizations, school records, or other documents. If the school disagrees with you, you still have the right to be registered immediately while the disagreement is worked out. Call the homeless liaison or call us if you have any questions about this.

#### Can I do after-school activities?

You have the right to be involved in all school activities.



#### How can I register in school if I am not living with my parent/guardian?

The homeless liaison will help you register if you are by yourself. You are considered an “unaccompanied youth.”

#### Do I have to leave my school when I find a place to live?

If you find a permanent place to live during the school year, the law allows you to stay in your school for the rest of the school year, if that is best for you.

### Going to College

#### Can I get financial aid for college?

Unaccompanied youth can apply for financial aid without a parent/guardian’s financial information.

The homeless liaison can write a letter saying that you are an “unaccompanied youth.” You must send this to the colleges to let them know. The financial aid form, called the FAFSA, will also ask you if you are on your own. Be sure to fill out this part of the form.

#### Do I have to pay to take the SATs?

Students who cannot afford to take the SATs can apply for a fee waiver. Ask the homeless liaison to help you.

### Medical Care, Therapy, Counseling

#### Can I get medical care?

Usually, the law requires that a parent/guardian give permission for a minor to get medical care, but there are times when a minor can do this alone.

If you need to go to a clinic or a doctor for birth control, the morning after pill, abortion services, testing/treatment for sexually transmitted infections or HIV/AIDS, the law allows you to do these things without a parent/guardian’s permission.

Consent is usually not required for routine gynecological care. If you have questions, talk with your doctor/nurse or call us.

#### Can I see a therapist?

You can see a social worker, licensed therapist, psychologist or psychiatrist without a parent/guardian’s consent for six sessions if:

- the therapist feels you need therapy
- it would harm you to not get therapy
- you want therapy
- you are mature, and
- you wouldn’t be able to get therapy if you had to ask your parent/guardian for permission

#### Can I get treatment or rehab for drugs or alcohol?

A minor does not need parental consent to get treatment or rehab for drug or alcohol addiction.

### Help from DCF

#### Can I get help from DCF if I am on my own?

If you are under 18 and on your own because of neglect or abuse or you were kicked out of your home, you can call the DCF hotline for help any time of the day or night.

If you were in DCF care when you turned 18, you can go back to DCF if you are under 21.

DCF hotline: 1-800-842-2288

#### What if I do not have legal status in the US? (illegal)

DCF can still help you. They will not call Immigration (ICE, immigration enforcement).

See our brochure, “Some Facts About Immigration” for more about this.

### Food Stamps, Cash Assistance, Medical

#### Can I apply for cash assistance?

You cannot be turned away from applying for cash assistance, food stamps, or health insurance just because you are on your own. There are a lot of rules for each of these programs and if you fit under the rules, you can apply for these services through the Department of Social Services (DSS).

You can check this on the DSS website at [ct.gov/dss](http://ct.gov/dss).