



STEVEN M. FULOP
MAYOR OF JERSEY CITY

CITY OF JERSEY CITY
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY HALL | 280 GROVE STREET | JERSEY CITY, NJ 07302
P: 201 547 5500 | F: 201 547 5442



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Mayor Fulop and Assemblywoman McKnight Announce Jersey City Residents Now Have Full Access to Obtaining Vital Birth Records Directly from City Hall, Eliminating Delays and Added Costs

Two Decades in the Making, Birth Certificates Now Available in Jersey City for the First Time, a Service Formerly Processed Only out of Trenton

JERSEY CITY - Mayor Steven M. Fulop announced today *anyone born in Jersey City can now obtain birth certificates directly from City Hall, eliminating delays and added cost burdens*. After working with the State Registrar's Office to obtain the birth records, the City Clerk's Office has established a localized database enabling the City to provide anyone born in Jersey City between 1918 and 2015 with certified copies of their birth certificates right from City Hall, located at 280 Grove Street.

Today's announcement comes nearly 20 years after the Department of Health (DOH) ceased all operations from the Hudson County Office of Vital Statistics in 2004 when an investigation uncovered a County-level scheme to create and sell fraudulent birth records within the County office.

"This is an important day for Jersey City as we have worked to create a comprehensive system that removes the potential for future corruption while rectifying an unfair situation where, for two decades, the community ultimately suffered the consequences as a result of County-level corruption," said **Mayor Fulop**. "We've worked to build a localized database that allows our Clerk's Office to efficiently obtain people's birth records without our residents being forced to travel to Trenton or wait six weeks by mail. The turnaround time to obtain the documents from City Hall will now be immediate."

"I have worked with the city, state, and federal government on making birth certificates available in Jersey City since I became elected to office because it truly pained me to know that residents had to go through so much red tape to access something as important and necessary to them as a birth certificate," said **Assemblywoman Angela McKnight**. "Residents should never have had to travel far, pay extra money, and wait over six weeks to get such a personal, vital certificate. This is truly an amazing milestone, and I'm very happy to see this service become a reality once again for so many people."

As a result of the 2004 investigation, the DOH determined all birth certificates issued by the Hudson County Office of Vital Statistics were not valid and compromised security. The ban resulting from the County-level corruption has affected many people beyond the foreign-born since any copy of birth certificates issued out of the Hudson County count not be used for obtaining a passport and were not recognized by federal agencies.

Additionally, over the last 18 years, the DOH mandated anyone born in Jersey City to obtain a certified copy of their birth certificate by either requesting it directly from DOH in Trenton or through the DOH's web-based system - which still took a minimum of six weeks unless an expediting fee was paid.

The new, comprehensive database established by Jersey City eradicates the potential for future corruption with the use of electronic records that cannot be manipulated without the State Registrar's consent.

“Providing birth records is a critical function of this office that we take very seriously, and we are handling the operation just as we have successfully been issuing marriage licenses for decades. I'm confident by bringing these services home to Jersey City, we will improve access to vital records for residents and all those born in Jersey City,” added **Sean Gallagher, City Clerk**.

With today's announcement, the Jersey City Clerk's Office will start accepting requests for birth records both by mail and in-person by appointment only. To request an in-person appointment, please call 201-547-5150. Appointments are available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Anyone looking to obtain certified copies must complete an application, which can be found in English and Spanish on the City's website [here](#). Proof of identification is required, such as a driver's license or other Government-issued photo ID. The cost is \$15 for the first copy and \$5 for each additional copy. For those born after 2015, Jersey City will continue to use the State's Vital Record Platform.

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