

COOK COUNTY VITAL RECORDS

Important notes about Cook County Vital Records:

- All Cook County vital records were destroyed in the Chicago Fire of October 1871.
- Pre-1916 Cook County vital records were incompletely recorded; strict state filing requirement started in 1916.

For information about ordering paper copies of Cook County vital records, see the Repository Information section of this document.

Birth Records

* The Illinois Vital Records Act (410 ILCS 535/) states that birth records are confidential for 75 years.

Certificates:	1871 – 1936 *	online at Cook County Clerk's website (free search; fee for images)
	1871 – 1915	microfilm at IRAD
	1878 – 1922	online at FamilySearch.org; microfilm at Family History Library
	1916 – 1922	microfilm at Family History Library
Registers:	1871 – 1915	online at FamilySearch.org; microfilm at Family History Library
	1878 – 1894	outside Chicago - microfilm at Family History Library, IRAD
Indexes:	1871 – 1916	microfiche at the Newberry, Family History Library, IRAD
	1871 – 1922	online at Ancestry.com
	1916 – 1935	online at Ancestry.com
	1871 – 1948	Chicago delayed birth index; microfilm at the Newberry, Family History Library

Marriage Records

* The Illinois Vital Records Act (410 ILCS 535/) states that marriage records are confidential for 50 years.

Licenses:	1871 – 1960*	online at Cook County Clerk's website (free search; fee for images)
	1871 – 1920	online at FamilySearch.org; microfilm at Family History Library
	1871 – 1914	microfilm at IRAD
Indexes:	1833 – 1871**	online at Ancestry.com, Illinois State Archives website; microfilm at the Newberry
	1872 – April 1901	online at Illinois State Archive's website
	1871 – 1916	microfilm at Family History Library, IRAD
	1871 – 1920	online at Ancestry.com
	1912 – 1924	online at Ancestry.com
	1930 – 1960	online at Ancestry.com

Applications: Marriage applications 50 years or older are available from the Cook County Clerk's Office for genealogical purposes by mail request only. Applications contain the names of the groom and bride at the time of application, one or both parties' address. Some applications will show ages and/or birth dates, however parental information was not required on marriage applications prior to January 1, 1968.

**Sam Fink's Index was compiled from Chicago newspaper marriage notices 1833-1871, Chicago newspaper death notices 1833-1889 (bulk 1856-1874) and Cook County death records 1878-1884.

Death Records

* The Illinois Vital Records Act (410 ILCS 535/) states that death records are confidential for 20 years.

- Certificates:** 1871 – 1991* online at Cook County Clerk's website (free search; fee for images)
1871 – 1909 microfilm at IRAD (non-Chicago)
1878 – 1922 online at FamilySearch.org; microfilm at Family History Library
1916 – 1947 microfilm at Illinois State Archives
- 1879 – 1904 microfilm at Family History Library (coroner's death certificates)
- Transcriptions:** 1916 – 1947 online at FamilySearch.org; microfilm at Family History Library
- Indexes:** 1833 – 1889 ** online at Ancestry.com; microfilm at the Newberry
1871 – 1915 online at Illinois State Archive's website
1871 – 1916 microfiche at the Newberry, Family History Library, IRAD
1916 – 1938 microfiche at Family History Library
1916 – 1950 online at Illinois State Archive's website
- 1871 – 1933 microfilm at Newberry, Family History Library (burial permit index, Chicago only)

Death certificates prior to 1908 do not include parental information.

**Sam Fink's Index was compiled from Chicago newspaper marriage notices 1833-1871, Chicago newspaper death notices 1833-1889 (bulk 1856-1874) and Cook County death records 1878-1884.

Repository Information

Paper copies of vital records can be ordered from the Cook County Clerk's Office, the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois Regional Archives Depository and the Illinois State Archives.

Cook County Clerk's Office (312) 603-7790
Bureau of Vital Records - Genealogy Email: vitalrecords@cookcountygov.com
P.O. Box 642570 <http://www.cookcountygenealogy.com>
Chicago, IL 60664-2570

Birth, marriage and death certificates from 1871 – most current available under Illinois law

Online: Records can be downloaded for \$15 per record, plus a \$1.75 service charge. Stephen Morse has created a helpful one-step search page at <http://stevemorse.org/vital/cook.html> Note: Not all records are available yet

By mail: Mail and in-person orders can take 8-12 weeks to process. Forms are available at the Genealogy Reference Desk or the Clerk's web site, http://www.cookcountygenealogy.com/pdf/Genealogy_Birth_Death_Marriage.pdf.

In person: Cash or debit cards only. No bills larger than \$20. Most records are not available same day. Additional courthouses listed at: http://www.cookcountyclerk.com/aboutus/hours_locations. Records can be ordered at some currency exchanges for an additional \$5 fee.

Newberry Library
60 West Walton St.
Chicago, IL 60610

(312) 255-3512
Email: genealogy@newberry.org
<http://www.newberry.org>

Printouts of digitized records may be made from the Newberry's public access computers. See Family History Library section below for information about ordering microfilm records. Some Family History Library films may be held on permanent loan – ask at the 2nd floor reference desk.

Family History Library
35 North West Temple Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3440

(801) 240-2584
Email: fhl@familysearch.org
<http://www.familysearch.org>

Check the Family History Library catalog (<https://www.familysearch.org/#form=catalog>) for film numbers of birth, marriage and death records. In addition to the County Clerk's records, some hospital birth records and birth corrections have been filmed.

Readers may borrow film for \$5.50 a reel to be delivered to the Newberry or any Family History Center (<https://www.familysearch.org/films/>). Allow about two weeks for films to arrive. Loan time is about a month. The Wilmette Family History Center has many films on extended loan. Contact them for details - 847-251-9818

Illinois Department of Public Health
Division of Vital Records
925 E. Ridgely Ave.
Springfield, IL 62702-2737

(217) 782-6553
Fax: (217) 785-3209
Email: DPH.Vitals@illinois.gov
<http://www.idph.state.il.us/vitalrecords/index.htm>

Records are not searchable by public. Births and deaths after 1916 (order online, by fax, mail or in person). Marriage verification (not applications or licenses) after 1962 (order by mail, fax or in person).

Illinois Regional Archives Depository (IRAD)
Ronald Williams Library
Northeastern Illinois University
5500 N. St. Louis Avenue
Chicago, IL 60625-4699

(773) 442-4506
Fax: (217) 523-2648
<http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/irad/iradhome.html>

Birth, marriage and death records on microfilm. See reference policy at <http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/irad/refpol.html>. Will search their records free of charge with information supplied by you. Two requests at a time. Nominal charge for copies. Will supply estimates for orders over \$5.

Illinois State Archives
Reference Unit
Margaret Cross Norton Building
Capitol Complex
Springfield, IL 62756

(217) 782-3556
Fax: (217) 524-3930
<http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/services.html>
Databases (incl. marriage and death indexes):
<http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/databases.html>

Death certificates after 1916. Only available in person.

Additional options:

- Some Cook County records can be ordered through VitalChek (<http://www.vitalchek.com>). Additional fees apply.
- The Illinois State Genealogical Society offers a death certificate look-up service for deaths between 1916-1947. The cost is \$6 for members and \$10 for non-members. Information is available on their website. (<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ilsgs/projects/deathcerts.html>)
- Check <http://www.genlighten.com/> for independent researchers.
- For more details on Illinois Vital Records, check https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/Illinois_Vital_Records
- For a research tutorial on Cook County vital records and their contents, consult: <http://chicagogenealogy.com/tutorial.html>