

Access to Birth Records

(by persons adopted in Northern Ireland before 18 December 1987)

People adopted in Northern Ireland who are at least 18 years of age have the right to get a copy of their original birth certificate by applying to the General Register Office (GRO).

However, applicants adopted before 18 December 1987 must have a meeting with a specialist social worker (called a post-adoption counsellor) within the adoption team in a Health and Social Care Trust or a voluntary adoption agency before they can be given access to their records.

The reason for this legal requirement is that in the years before 1987, some parents and adopters may have been led to believe that the children being adopted would never be able to find out their original names or the names of their biological parents. These arrangements were made in good faith and the requirement to meet with a post-adoption counsellor has been put in place to ensure that adopted people who want to find out more about their origins are helped to understand what it may mean for themselves and for others.

Places where you can meet a Post-Adoption Counsellor

You are asked to choose where you would prefer to meet a post-adoption counsellor. Links to adoption agencies may be found on our web site at www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/tracing-and-contacting-birth-relatives-and-adopted-adults

If you reside in other parts of the United Kingdom and have any difficulty in deciding the location where you may be counselled, please consult your local Citizens Advice Bureau. If you reside outside of the UK you should contact the relevant authorities in that country.

Meeting the Post-Adoption Counsellor

You will understand that it is very important that precautions are taken against information about you being given to an unauthorised person.

To avoid this you must take with you to the meeting some means of identification, such as a bank card, a passport/identity card or driving licence.

What the Post-Adoption Counsellor can tell you

The GRO will have sent the post-adoption counsellor information from your adoption court order. This will include your original name and typically the name of your birth mother and possibly, but not certainly, the name of your natural father, as well as the name of the court where the order was made. The counsellor will give you this information at your request plus

- an application form to enable you to apply to the GRO for a certified copy of your original birth entry if you were born in the UK or Republic of Ireland. (The fee required will be shown on the application form and should accompany your application); and
- the counsellor will be provided with an application form to enable them to apply to the court, on your behalf, which granted your adoption for the name of the adoption agency, if any, which handled your adoption and/or the name of the Health and Social Services Board or Trust notified (provided this information is available).

GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE (NORTHERN IRELAND)

Application Form for Access to Original Birth Records

(by a person adopted in Northern Ireland before 18 December 1987)

Please read our privacy notice to see how we use and protect your personal information at www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/nisra-privacy-notice

Applicant Details

Full Name:

Address:
 Post Code:

Telephone No. Email:

Details of Adoption

Full Adopted Name & Surname:

Date of Birth: Country of Birth:

Name of Adoptive Mother

Name of Adoptive Father

Date of Adoption (if known): Adoption Entry No*:

**This number will be found in the column headed "No of Entry" on a full certificate and in the top right hand corner of most short certificates. If you are unable to quote this number a search fee of £7.00 will be required*

Declaration

I hereby apply for the information necessary to enable me to obtain a certified copy of the original record of my birth. I understand that before this information is given to me, I am required to attend an interview with a counsellor.

I wish to have my interview with the counsellor/counselling service detailed below, and I instruct the General Register Office to forward the information relating to my birth to this counsellor/organisation.

Name of Counsellor (if applicable)

Name & Address of Organisation

Telephone No. Email:

I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, I am the adopted person to whom the above particulars relate.

Your signature Date

Please Note -

- If you have changed your name through marriage or by deed poll, the relevant certificate should be enclosed with your application. (Any documents received will be returned to you)
- This office can only accept completed forms. If you are having any issues completing this form or finding a counsellor in your area. Please contact this office on the relevant telephone number below to speak to a member of the Casework and Registration team.

Payment Mandate Form for Postal Applications

Contact details: **GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE**
COLBY HOUSE
STRANMILLIS COURT
BELFAST BT9 5RR
Telephone: 0300 200 7890 (within UK) or +44 300 200 7890 (outside UK)
Website: www.nidirect.gov.uk/gro Email: gro_nisra@finance-ni.gov.uk

Fees and payment methods

Details of fees payable are available in on our website at www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/tracing-and-contacting-birth-relatives-and-adopted-adults; or by contacting us using the telephone number above.

Payment can be made by post with a cheque or postal order. Cash should not be sent in the post. Should you wish to pay by credit/debit card please fill in the instruction below and include it with your application.

ALL PAYMENTS BY POST SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS

We can also accept payment by credit/debit card or cash at our office.

Please note: if you are completing your credit/debit card details, we recommend that you use a secure form of posting. This payment mandate form will be destroyed once payment has been confirmed.

For security reasons we cannot accept payment details by e-mail and payments cannot be made online for these applications.

Payment should be made in pounds sterling.

Credit/debit card instruction

Applicants Name

Type of card
Mastercard Visa Switch/Maestro or Solo Visa Electron

Card Number

Security number (the last three numbers shown on your cards signature strip)

Expiry date Issue No. (Switch/Maestro or Solo) Valid from date.

Total Fee £ Cardholders signature:

Cardholders name: (BLOCK CAPITALS)

Cardholders

Full Address

Telephone No. Email: