Canadian Vital Records Reference List: Where to Order and Where to Search

Every province and territory, with the exact wording to ask for, the office, the fee, and where older records can be searched. Fees and coverage checked November 5, 2026. All fees are in Canadian dollars and change regularly, so confirm with the office before paying.

Recent records: order them

Roughly the last 100 years. The record is still held by the provincial or territorial vital statistics office. You apply, pay a fee, and entitlement rules decide who may order. You can order your own, and usually a parent's with consent, but generally not a living grandparent's.

Older records: search for them

Past the cutoff (it varies by province and record type), the record is generally public. You find the registration in an archive or online database, save the image, and record the citation. Many of these are free to view.

- Ask for the version that names the parents. The short wallet card does not.
- A screenshot or an index entry is not a document. The registration image is.
- No province checked requires you to live in Canada to order.
- Save every image with its citation: archive, collection, and registration number.
- A "no record found" receipt or clerk's letter is evidence. Keep it.
- Do not buy certified copies of everything. Color copies with a source citation are accepted.

Provinces

Ontario

Civil registration from 1869

ORDER RECENT RECORDS

ServiceOntario. Ask for a **birth certificate with parental information** $25 or a **certified copy of birth registration** $35 (regular online fees).

For someone who has died, Ontario issues only the certified copy of birth registration, to next of kin or the estate, with proof of death.

ontario.ca/page/get-or-replace-ontario-birth-certificate

SEARCH OLDER RECORDS

The Archives of Ontario holds the original registrations: births to 1920, marriages to 1945, deaths to 1955. It has no search tool of its own; use Ancestry (births to 1919) or FamilySearch (births to 1912). Step-by-step instructions are at the end of this list.

Before 1869: baptism records, marriage filings with county courts, and congregation records.

archives.gov.on.ca/topic/birth-marriage-and-death

Quebec

A different system and vocabulary

ORDER RECENT RECORDS

Directeur de l'état civil. Ask for a **copy of an act of birth** (copie d'acte de naissance), not a certificate. **$46.75** online, **$64.25** by mail, in effect until March 31, 2027.

IRCC does not accept Quebec birth or marriage certificates issued before January 1, 1994.

etatcivil.gouv.qc.ca

SEARCH OLDER RECORDS

BAnQ holds the civil status registers from 1621 to roughly 100 years ago, and registers into the early 1900s are free to view on BAnQ numérique (French interface; browse by judicial district, parish, and year). The Drouin Collection on Généalogie Québec and Ancestry adds name search (subscription).

A certified copy from BAnQ costs non-residents **$350** for the first copy and $100 for each additional copy, so view free first.

banq.qc.ca/vital-records

Nova Scotia

Registration lapsed 1878 to 1907

ORDER RECENT RECORDS

Service Nova Scotia, Vital Statistics. Ask for a **long form birth certificate** **$39.90**. The short form ($33) leaves out parents.

novascotia.ca/apply-birth-certificate

SEARCH OLDER RECORDS

The Nova Scotia Archives runs a free database where each name links to the digitized registration: births 1864 to 1877 and 1908 to 1924, marriages to 1949. Births are released at 100 years, marriages at 75, deaths at 50.

archives.novascotia.ca/vital-statistics

New Brunswick

ORDER RECENT RECORDS

Service New Brunswick, Vital Statistics. Ask for a **long form birth certificate** (adds parents' names and birthplaces). **$40** online, $45 in person or by mail.

gnb.ca (Vital Statistics, birth certificate)

SEARCH OLDER RECORDS

Provincial Archives of New Brunswick: births registered before 1930, marriages and deaths before 1976. Search online first; certified copies are **$11** per record, with new fees taking effect December 1, 2026. A staff search can take six months or more to begin.

gnb.ca/.../archives/citizenship

Prince Edward Island

Civil registration from 1906

ORDER RECENT RECORDS

PEI Vital Statistics (Montague). Ask for a **detailed birth certificate** **$35** or a **certified copy of registration of birth** **$35**. The standard certificate is $25.

princeedwardisland.ca (birth, marriage and death certificates)

SEARCH OLDER RECORDS

Public Archives and Records Office (PARO). For births before 1906 the baptismal record is the source; PARO holds baptisms to 1923 and offers a request service for copies.

services.princeedwardisland.ca (archival baptismal records)

Newfoundland and Labrador

Civil records from 1892

ORDER RECENT RECORDS

Vital Statistics Division, Digital Government and Service NL. Ask for a **long form birth certificate**. $30 online, $35 otherwise.

gov.nl.ca/birth

SEARCH OLDER RECORDS

Before 1892, records were kept by churches. The Rooms Provincial Archives searches church registers on request, one record per form; you need the community and the religious denomination.

therooms.ca (genealogy research)

Manitoba

ORDER RECENT RECORDS

Vital Statistics Branch. Ask for a **birth certificate with parents' names** or a **certified copy of the registration**. $30 each, including the search. If the person or their immediate next of kin is living, restricted records need written consent.

vitalstats.gov.mb.ca

SEARCH OLDER RECORDS

Online database of unrestricted records: births over 100 years, marriages over 80, deaths over 70. A copy is $12 if you supply the registration number, $30 if staff search. No match gets you a search receipt, which is worth keeping.

vitalstats.gov.mb.ca/Query.php

Saskatchewan

ORDER RECENT RECORDS

eHealth Saskatchewan. Ask for a **long form birth certificate** $40 or a **copy of registration of live birth** $55, which eHealth describes as commonly used for international purposes.

ehealthsask.ca (birth certificates)

SEARCH OLDER RECORDS

Free Genealogy Index: births over 100 years, marriages over 75, deaths over 70. Genealogical copies are $55. These records stay with eHealth; the Provincial Archives does not hold them.

ehealthsask.ca (genealogy)

Alberta

ORDER RECENT RECORDS

Alberta Vital Statistics, through a registry agent. Ask for a **birth certificate with personal information and parentage**. $20 government fee plus the agent's service fee.

From outside Alberta: mail the application and a notarized statutory declaration of identity to Registry Connect or AMA. Electronic signatures and remote commissioning are rejected.

alberta.ca/order-birth-certificate

SEARCH OLDER RECORDS

Registrations 120 years old or older, or where the person died 50 or more years ago (proof of death required), are historical records. Anyone may apply, through the Provincial Archives of Alberta.

British Columbia

ORDER RECENT RECORDS

BC Vital Statistics Agency. Ask for a **birth certificate with parental information**. $27 by mail (four to six weeks) or $60 by courier. The person named, someone with their written permission, or anyone who satisfies the registrar general the request is in good faith may apply.

gov.bc.ca (birth certificates)

SEARCH OLDER RECORDS

BC Archives Genealogy Search. Births are released after 120 years, marriages after 75, deaths after 20, and more than half of released records have digitized images online.

search-collections.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/Genealogy

▲ Territories

Yukon

ORDER

Yukon Vital Statistics. One type of birth certificate, $10; anyone who knows the person's details can apply. Confirm it shows the parents before relying on it.

yukon.ca (replace a birth certificate)

OLDER RECORDS

Ask Vital Statistics which office holds the registration and how to request it.

Northwest Territories

Also holds Nunavut births before April 1, 1999

ORDER

NWT Vital Statistics (Inuvik). Certificate $26; a photocopy of the registration ($39) is released at the Registrar General's discretion. A child or grandchild of the person may apply.

hss.gov.nt.ca (order a birth certificate)

OLDER RECORDS

Ask Vital Statistics which office holds the registration and how to request it.

Nunavut

ORDER

Nunavut Vital Statistics (Rankin Inlet), by mail. $10. Ask for the certificate that includes parental information.

gov.nu.ca (birth certificate)

OLDER RECORDS

Births before April 1, 1999 are Northwest Territories records; order them from NWT Vital Statistics.

Ontario step by step: births on FamilySearch

FamilySearch is free with an account. Search by place and year rather than by name; names are often mis-indexed, but the registers are not. These steps follow the Archives of Ontario's own guidance for births registered 1869 to 1912.

1. Create a free FamilySearch account and sign in.
2. Choose **Search**, then **Catalog**.
3. In the Place field, enter **Canada, Ontario**, set availability to Any, and search.
4. Near the bottom of the results, open the Ontario **Vital records, Indexes** entry.
5. Choose **Births, stillbirths, and delayed registration with indexes, 1869-1912**.
6. Scroll to **Film/Digital Notes**. This lists the digitized microfilm of the birth indexes and the registrations.
7. Open the index for the year of birth. Indexes for the 1800s are split by surname; after 1900 they run A to Z.
8. Find the name and write down the registration number.
9. Go back to the list and open the registration film that covers that year and number.
10. Browse to the registration. Save the image and record the film or image number and the page URL as your citation.

Which site covers which Ontario years (as of November 2026)

Record	FamilySearch (free)	Ancestry	Archives of Ontario
Births	to 1912	to 1919	to 1920
Marriages	to 1927	to 1943	to 1945
Deaths	to 1937 (1947 overseas)	to 1953	to 1955

For a birth from 1913 to 1919, use Ancestry. It is free through Ancestry Institution at the Archives of Ontario and most public libraries. Later registrations held by the Archives can be requested from it; anything newer comes from ServiceOntario.

National: the census

Library and Archives Canada's census search is free and shows the whole household, with ages and places of birth. It is the next-best evidence when a birth record does not exist. Census returns are released after 92 years: the 1931 census opened on June 1, 2023, and 1941 is due in 2033. Pull up the town and read the pages rather than relying on the name index.

recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/index

▲ United States: your side of the chain

Birth certificates. Order your own and your parent's long-form certificates, the versions that name parents. VitalChek handles most states, often around $30 and ten days in the firm's experience (as of August 2026). Massachusetts and Vermont are straightforward; New York is slow, so order early.

Marriage certificates. For any woman in the line whose surname changes, order the marriage certificate itself. A license, abstract, or confirmation does not record the name change.

Naturalization and census. The emigrating ancestor's naturalization file shows arrival and naturalization dates. US census entries show the household and places of birth. See the US National Archives naturalization records guide.

Record each document you find in the five-column tracker that accompanies this list. When you have your own long-form birth certificate and your parents', you have enough for a real conversation: marinimmigrationlaw.ca/book-a-consultation.

This reference list is general information, current as of November 5, 2026, and is not legal advice for your specific situation. Fees, release dates, and record-access rules change; confirm with the issuing office before ordering. Property of Marin Immigration Law, marinimmigrationlaw.ca.

● Sources (checked November 5, 2026)

ServiceOntario, Get or replace an Ontario birth certificate (updated Sept 2, 2026)

Archives of Ontario, Birth, marriage and death records (updated Oct 30, 2026)

Directeur de l'état civil, Fees and processing time (reviewed Mar 31, 2026)

BAnQ, Reproduction of vital records

IRCC, Guide CIT 0001, documents issued in Quebec (modified Sept 23, 2026)

Nova Scotia Archives, Birth and marriage registrations; release background

Service Nova Scotia, Apply for a birth certificate (modified Oct 5, 2026)

Service New Brunswick, Birth certificate; PANB, Requesting records for citizenship by descent

PEI Vital Statistics service fees; CanadaVisa PEI documents guide (Sept 9, 2026)

Digital Government and Service NL, Birth; The Rooms, Genealogy research

Manitoba Vital Statistics, Genealogy; Fees and services

eHealth Saskatchewan, Birth certificates; Genealogy

Government of Alberta, Order a birth certificate or document

Government of BC, Birth certificates; Vancouver Public Library, BC civil registration guide

Yukon, Replace a birth certificate (modified Oct 19, 2026); GNWT, Order a birth certificate; Government of Nunavut, Birth certificate

Library and Archives Canada, Census search; 1931 census release