

Inquiries on opening a sealed file

If a file was sealed before October 1, 1985, or 30 years or more ago, whichever date is later:

The individual must write to our office and formally request us to open their sealed file and issue them a copy of their original birth certificate. We can only issue the certificate to the individual on the certificate. Anyone else will need a court order to open another person's sealed file. The request must have the following information:

Full Adopted Name
Date and town of birth
Full Adopted mother's maiden name
Full Adopted father's name

Photocopy of a pictured ID (driver's license)
\$25.00 check or money order

The request must be signed.

Copies of any of the other documents in the sealed file will always require a court order. See instructions for a court order below.

If a file was sealed between October 1, 1985 and before October 1, 1997:

The individual must **submit a certified court order** to open their sealed file.

The court order must **state the person's current name on the birth certificate and their date and place of birth. It must then state that Montana Vital Statistics will open the sealed file and issue a copy of the birth certificate OR copies of all the documents in the file to (name of person we are to send the copy(s) to).**

Photocopy of a pictured ID (driver's license)
\$25.00 check or money order

If a file was sealed on or after October 1, 1997:

Upon written request of an adoptee who has attained 18 years of age unless the birth parent has requested in writing that the original birth certificate not be automatically released; or a Court Order. The request must have the following information:

Full Adopted Name

Date and town of birth

Full Adopted mother's maiden name

Full Adopted father's name

Photocopy of a pictured ID (driver's license)

\$25.00 check or money order

The request must be signed.

Copies of any of the other documents in the sealed file will always require a court order.

When an individual has a sealed file and is required to have a copy of their original birth certificate to assist them in becoming enrolled as a member of an Indian tribe:

The individual must write to our office and formally request us to open their sealed file and issue a copy of their original birth certificate for tribal enrollment. We can only issue a copy of the birth certificate to the individual named on the birth record or in the case of a minor child the request may come from the parent's and the certificate issued to them. We will require:

Full current name on birth record

Date and town of birth

Adopted Mother's maiden name on current birth record

Adopted Father's name on current birth record

Photocopy of a pictured ID (driver's license)

\$25.00 in check or money order

A statement or a check list (on the tribes letterhead) stating that a copy(or certified copy) of the original birth certificate is needed to enroll in the tribe.