

Replacing Important Papers

After a disaster, important papers may be destroyed, lost, or damaged. Following is information on how to replace your important papers.

Birth and Death Certificates

To replace a birth or death certificate for U.S. citizens who were born or died in the United States, visit www.vitalrec.com.

For birth records of U.S. citizens born abroad, visit travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first_825.html or request a copy of Form FS-240 (Consular Report of Birth Abroad) from:

U.S. Department of State
Passport Services
Vital Records Section
1111 19th Street, NW, Suite 510
Washington DC 20522-1705

This address is also used to obtain a “Report of the Death of an American Citizen Abroad” form for U.S. citizens who died abroad.

Citizenship and Naturalization Papers

For papers related to citizenship, immigration, permanent residency (green card), re-entry permit, employment authorization, etc., visit www.uscis.gov. Complete Form N-565. You may also contact your county court house.

Credit Cards

American Express: 1-800-528-4800

Discover: 1-800-347-2683
(TDD/TTY – 1-800-347-7449)

Master Card: Contact issuing financial institution or 1-800-622-7747.

Visa: Contact issuing financial institution or 1-800-847-2911.

Driver Licenses or State ID Cards

The quickest way to obtain a duplicate driver license is to apply in person at any state department of motor vehicles (called different names in different states). You will need to complete an application for a license or identification card. To find a department of motor vehicles location near you, visit www.4dmv.com.

Income Tax Returns

To receive copies of your income tax returns, call the nearest IRS office, or call the national office at 1-800-829-3676, and request Form 4506 (“Request for Copy of Tax Return”). To find your local IRS office, visit: www.irs.gov/localcontacts/index.html.

Insurance Policies

Contact the agent or company providing coverage. You may be required to complete a form, pay a fee for duplicate copies, or both. The policy number will expedite this request.

Marriage Certificates and Divorce Records

Copies of certificates of marriage are available from the county that issued the marriage license, and divorce decrees are available from the county that granted the divorce. For ordering and fee information, please contact the local registrar in the county where the marriage certificate was issued or the divorce granted.

To learn where to obtain vital records, including marriage certificates and divorce degrees, contact the National Center for Health Statistics at: www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2welcom.htm.

Military Discharge Papers

Request Standard Form 180 (SF-180) from any office of the Veterans Administration, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Red Cross, a veterans' association, or military recruiter. You may also download the form from: www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html.

Fax the completed form to 314-801-9195 or mail it to:

National Personnel Records Center
Military Personnel Records
9700 Page Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63132-5011

To find out if you are eligible for veterans' benefits, how to apply, and what it will cost. Call the VA Health Benefits Service Center at 1-877-222-8387. You may be able to complete an application form online.

Mortgage Papers

Contact your lending institution (mortgage holder).

Passports

Call Passport Services at 1-877-487-2778 or 1-888-874-7793 (TTY). Complete form DS-64 (Statement Regarding Lost or Stolen Passport) from travel.state.gov/passport/lost/lost_848.html.

Mail it to:

U.S. Department of State
Passport Services
Consular Lost/Stolen Passport Section
1111 19th Street, NW, Suite 500
Washington DC 20036

Property Deeds

Contact the Clerk of Court in the county where the property is located.

Savings Bonds/Notes

Call 304-480-7527 or visit www.treasurydirect.gov/forms/sav1048.pdf and complete Form PDF 1048E (Claim for Lost, Stolen or Destroyed U. S. Savings Bonds).

To replace Series HH/H Bonds, mail the completed form to:

Bureau of the Public Debt
P.O. Box 7012
Parkersburg, WV 26106-2188

To replace Series EE/E Bonds, mail the completed form to:

Bureau of the Public Debt
P.O. Box 7012
Parkersburg, WV 26106-7012

Social Security Card

Visit secure.ssa.gov/apps6z/FOLO/fo001.jsp to find your local Social Security Administration office. Obtain Form SS-5 (Application for Social Security Card) from this office or download it from: ssa.gov/ssnumber/ss5.htm. Follow the instructions to complete the form.

For additional help, contact the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213, or write:

Office of Public Inquiries
Social Security Administration
Windsor Park Building
6401 Security Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21235

Vehicle Titles

Contact your state's department of motor vehicles; find it at www.4dmv.com/.

Complete a "Vehicle Application" form. Submit to the address given on the form.

Wills

Contact the attorney who prepared your will. If circumstances have changed, you may need to write a new will.

Additional Information About This Document

All contact information was verified at the time of last revision of this publication (October 23, 2011). However, this information is subject to change, so always confirm its accuracy on your own.

The information in this section was originally compiled by Jeanette A. Tucker, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Family Economics, Louisiana State University Agricultural Center (April 2006).

This is the non-state-specific version of this tool. It was adapted, with permission from Jeanette Tucker, by:

- Becky Hagen Jokela, MS, AFC, CFCS
- Phyllis Onstad, MEd, AFC

Both authors are Extension Educators in Family Resource Management with University of Minnesota Extension.