

# Massachusetts Vital Records

-Records of birth, marriage, and death created by local governments -

## *Who records them?*

In Massachusetts, records are kept on the town level, with duplicate copies to the state. Records – with some exceptions – are public.

## *When were they kept?*

Massachusetts started keeping vital records on the state level in 1841, but local records date back to the 1600s.

## *How do I access them?*

- 1) There's an excellent guide at "Researching Vital Records at the Massachusetts State Archives," *Archives* (<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcvitalrecords/vitalrecordsidx.htm> : accessed 16 June 2023).
- 2) Older vital records can be accessed from *FamilySearch* using the catalog. These records should be available from home.
- 3) Records from 1841 to 1925 are available on the above page.
- 4) Records from 1925–1930 can be ordered from the Archives or the town clerk.
  - a. The copying fee to request from the Archives is typically lower than that of the clerk.
  - b. The archives will make scans upon request.
- 5) Records from 1930 to the present can be ordered from the town clerk or from the Registry of Vital Records.