

# Rhode Island Vital Records

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

## *Who records them?*

In Rhode Island, records are kept on the town level, with duplicate copies to the state.

## *When were they kept?*

Statewide recording began in 1853.

## *How do I access them?*

### 1) Older records:

a. Vital records up to 1850 have been abstracted and indexed as part of the Arnold Collection. An excellent overview is available on the blog *One Rhode Island Family* at <https://onerhodeislandfamily.com/free-rhode-island-resources/free-r-i-vital-records/>.

b. Births and marriages covering 1853-1922 and deaths covering 1853-1946 have been digitized by the Rhode Island State Archives at [https://sosri.access.preservica.com/uncategorized/SO\\_aa84016c-a20c-4a02-8f03-eae14378f70a/](https://sosri.access.preservica.com/uncategorized/SO_aa84016c-a20c-4a02-8f03-eae14378f70a/).

i. Deaths up to 1972 can be requested here:

<https://forms.sos.ri.gov/VitalRecordsOrderForm.aspx>.

c. Other records may be available using the catalog or image search on *FamilySearch*.

2) More recent records can be requested from the local clerk or the state Department of Health. Be aware that you will need to be a member of an approved genealogical society (Rhode Island Genealogical Society works) to request a copy of most records.