



Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Health



Center for Policy, Planning, and Evaluation

September 17, 2015

To Whom it May Concern,

The Department of Health Vital Records Division (VRD) is in the process of completing an exciting project to preserve and digitize historic birth and death records.

The District of Columbia vital record indexes are the primary source for tracking and inventorying older records. They contain information used to search for birth records from 1874 to 1935 and death records from 1874 to 1965. As the paper indexes age, we risk losing vital and historic data that many citizens rely on for genealogical and other purposes. Preserving and digitizing the records will not only protect legacy birth and death information but also provide easier access, which will mean shorter response time for legacy requests.

The project will be ongoing for three years and during this time, genealogy requests may take **8-12 weeks** to process. Prior to beginning the search, VRD staff will assess a fee of \$23 for births or \$18 for deaths and provide you with a receipt that notes the timeline for processing. Please be sure that you provide an e-mail address and phone number where you can be reached. Should any of your contact information change before you hear from us again, please call 1-877-572-6332 and press Option 3 to update your application.

VRD staff will search for your record using the registrant's information that you provide on your application. Once the record is located, we will contact you to return to our office to retrieve the record. Should we be unable to locate a record with the information you provide on your application, VRD staff will issue you a Certificate of Search. VRD does not provide refunds for records search services so please be sure that the information you provide on your application is as accurate as possible.

Many of these records are associated with the lives of persons nationally significant in United States history or relate to significant events in our nation. We are excited to preserve these historic District records and appreciate your patience.

Sincerely,

Terra J. Abrams, MBA, BPM
State Registrar
Vital Records Division
Center of Policy, Planning, and Evaluation