

Genealogy Searching Policies

The **Dane County Register of Deeds Vital Records** department contains birth, death, marriage and divorce records searchable by members of the public age 18 and over who agree to the State of Wisconsin Administrative Code Conditions for Users of Vital Records Area (DHS 142.07). Children under age 18 are not allowed in the search area.

Advance appointments are required. An appointment must be made for each person entering the search area. Walk-ins are not accepted. To schedule an appointment, or to check appointment availability, phone (608)267-8810.

There are two 2-hour appointments available Monday through Friday, from 9:00am-11:00am and 1:00pm-3:00pm. Two searchers are allowed at each appointment block. Each searcher is allowed no more than four appointments per week. Searchers will be provided an orientation to the archives upon request. Cancellations are required ahead of time. No-shows will be restricted from future searching appointments.

Each searcher must register by completing a Vital Records Office Application for In-Person Search and showing acceptable ID each day he or she enters the search area. At least one form of identification must show the researcher's name and current address. Expired cards or documents will not be accepted. If scheduled for two appointments on the same day, the registration form must be completed at each appointment.

Searchers are expected to refrain from talking and keep all noise to a minimum. Failure to do so could result in expulsion.

No food or beverages are allowed in the search area.

No pens, markers, or highlighters are allowed. Only pencils are permitted.

Cell phones, tablet devices such as iPads and other devices with cameras are not allowed in the search area. No bags, purses, backpacks, or briefcases are allowed in the search area. These items must be locked in the lockers at all times during the searcher's appointment. Items may be kept behind the counter if they do not fit in the lockers. Lockers require 25 cents to open; the 25 cents is refunded when the key is re-inserted and items are removed.

Non-marital birth records are available only to persons who meet the statutory requirements for direct and tangible interest. Sealed records are on file only at the State Vital Records Office, and are available only with a certified court order of release.

The following records require staff-assisted searching:

Birth records	1996 to present
Death records	2013 to present
Marriage records	2015 to present
Divorce records	2016 to present
Birth records from another county in Wisconsin.	

The first three staff-assisted searches are performed free of charge. Requests for any copies of any vital record, require an application and a fee of \$20.00 for each request.

Per the Wisconsin State Statutes, copying a vital record is a criminal violation unless done under the authority outlined in s. 69(1).