



How to apply for a correction to a birth registration

1. General Information

A correction can only be made when the information on the certificate is wrong. The certificate cannot be corrected to show new information if your circumstances change after the birth is registered. A correction is made in the register held at the office responsible for the area where the birth took place.

Generally, corrections fall into **two** categories:

1. Corrections that can be authorised at the register office for the area where the person was born – these tend to be minor mistakes e.g. - in an occupation, a parent's place of birth, an address etc.
2. Corrections that need to be sent to the General Register Office (GRO) for authorisation – these tend to be mistakes involving names.

2. How do I apply for a correction?

First of all, you should contact the register office for the area where the birth was registered to find out if it is a mistake that they can correct. Alternatively, you can ring GRO on **0300 123 1837** who can also confirm where your application needs to be sent.

If the local register office can make the correction, you will need to arrange an appointment with them.

If it is an application that must be sent to GRO, you will need to complete an application form and take it or send it to the local register office where the birth has been registered. The register office will carry out a triage service for the correction to ensure that the correct fee is applied.

3. Is there a Fee?

There is a statutory fee for each application. If the application does not need to be referred to the General Register Office (GRO) the fee will be £75.00. Any application requiring referral to GRO the fee will be £90.00.

This is a consideration fee and, as such, is not refundable. The fee must be paid at the point of application. You should contact the register office before sending your application to ask them how they will take the fee.

4. Where can I get an application form?

- by downloading it from www.gov.uk/correct-birth-registration/how-to-apply
- your local register office may be able to supply you with one
- you can get one from GRO by ringing **0300 123 1837**

5. Who can apply for a correction?

- the mother
- the father/2nd parent (if their details are included on the certificate)

If neither parent is available it may be possible for the child named on the certificate to apply themselves. If you are applying for a correction to a child's name, the application form will need to be signed by both parents if they are both named on the birth certificate.

6. What does a correction look like?

The original information will always be shown as it was first given at the time of the registration, but a note will be written in the margin of the register explaining what the correct information should be and the date on which the correction was made. All certificates issued afterwards will include this note.

7. Do I need to prove that the information contained in the birth certificate is wrong?

You need to show that the information originally given at the time of the registration was wrong. You will have to provide a copy of the birth certificate **and** produce document(s) showing the correct information. These document(s) should be valid or dated around the date of birth. Please see the application form for a list of suitable documents.

If you cannot send any evidence of an error having occurred, then normally a correction will not be possible. Further advice can be obtained by calling **0300 123 1837**

8. Do I need to send in original documents?

Please do not send original documents or photographs of original documents with your application form. You should only send photocopies of documents which have been certified by a professional or reputable person as true copies of the originals. A list giving examples of suitable persons can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/countersigning-passport-applications>

Acceptable certifiers are listed under the heading '**Occupations**'.

The person certifying the photocopies must not be related by birth or marriage/civil partnership to the applicant(s), be in a personal relationship with them or live at the same address. The certifier should:

- include the words - "*Certified to be a true copy of the original seen by me*"
- sign the photocopy
- print their name
- confirm their occupation
- add their address and telephone number

If you are taking the application to a Register Office and paying in person then the Register Office should be able to certify your documents as a true copy of the original which means you can retain your original documentation.

GRO or the local registration service reserves the right to ask you to submit the original

document if needed.

GRO will confidentially destroy all certified copies submitted here **unless** specifically asked to return them.

9. Do I have to be there when the registration is corrected?

If the correction is being carried out by the register office in the area where the person was born, you need to organise a time with them when you can go to witness the correction and sign the note in the register.

If it is a correction that needs to be sent to GRO, you can indicate on the application form whether or not you want to be present at the register office when the correction is being made.

However, if the correction involves a serious mistake you may be asked to make a statutory declaration. This declaration must be signed by someone who is legally qualified to attest an oath - e.g. a solicitor or a magistrate. A fee may be charged for this service. In these cases, you will not have to be present for the correction.

10. How long will it take for the birth registration to be corrected?

For corrections that can be made at the register office in the area where the person was born, you will need to contact them to arrange an appointment. As different local register offices can have different targets, we cannot give precise timescales.

For corrections that have to be sent to GRO, if there are no problems with your application, you can expect the paperwork authorising the correction to be sent out within **25 working days**. If GRO need more information or you need to send in more paperwork or make a statutory declaration, each further reply may take up to **25 working days**.

However, in exceptional circumstances, it may not always be possible to meet these targets.

11. Where can I find out more?

You can contact the register office in the area where the person was born. They will be happy to explain what you need to do.

Alternatively, you can telephone GRO who will advise you on your individual circumstances and how to apply for a correction. Our contact details are:

Address: GRO Casework Team, PO Box 476, Southport, PR8 2WJ

Phone: 0300 123 1837

E-mail: GROcasework@gro.gov.uk

Internet: Go to <https://www.gov.uk/correct-birth-registration/how-to-apply> to find forms for downloading.

The information contained in this leaflet is based on the **Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953** but is not a full statement of the law.

For the purpose of detecting and preventing crime, information relating to an application may be shared and verified with other government departments or law enforcement agencies

The General Register Office is part of Her Majesty's Passport Office.