



Revising Namibia's Births, Marriages and Deaths Registration Act of 1963

What do you think the new law should say?

Registering the birth of a child

The Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration is in the process of replacing the Births, Marriages and Deaths Registration Act of 1963 with a new law that will be more appropriate to the needs of Namibia and more feasible to implement in practice. The Ministry will be engaging in public consultation around the law reform proposals, and hopes that this process will also raise the level of public awareness of the importance of registering all vital life events.

1. The importance of birth registration

A birth certificate is an official document issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration when a birth is registered. The certificate proves the child's identity, date of birth, place of birth, and the identity of one or both parents. A parent should register a child's birth as soon as possible after the birth. Birth registration is free.

It is very important to have a birth certificate. For example you need a birth certificate:

- to access some health services
- to access social welfare grants
- to enrol at school
- to get an ID card or passport
- to get married
- to vote.

2. Namibia's current rules for registering the birth of a child

You should register the birth of your child as soon as possible. You should go to the nearest office of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration. This might be a hospital-based office or one of the regional or sub-regional offices.

It is best that both parents come in person. But, if the other parent is unavailable or unwilling to get involved, one parent can register the birth of a child alone.



- Take **proof of the child's birth** (such as child's health passport).
- Take **your ID card and birth certificate** (or certified copies), and the same documents for the other parent if possible.
- Parents who are **not Namibian citizens** should bring their **passport** and the **permit giving them permission to be in Namibia**.
- If the parents of the child are **married to each other**, they should bring their original **marriage certificate** (or a certified copy) or **statement from the village headman or headwoman** if the parents are married under customary law.
- If **one of the parents has died**, the other parent should bring the **death certificate** (or a certified copy).

There are additional procedures if the birth of a child is registered more than one year after the birth. This is called late registration.

The Ministry needs your input:

- 1) What **problems** do people face when registering the birth of their child?
- 2) What would **encourage more people to register** the birth of their children?
- 3) Why do some people **delay** registering their child's birth?



Send your comments to:

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Facebook: Revision of the Namibian Births, Marriages and Deaths Registration Act

For more information about the Act revision process, contact the **Under-Secretary of the Department of Civil Registration, Lydia Kandetu**, at the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration in Windhoek, by email to lkandetu@mha.gov.na or by telephone on **061-2922093**.



Fact sheet developed by the
**Ministry of Home Affairs
and Immigration**,
facilitated by the
Legal Assistance Centre
and supported by
UNICEF.

Windhoek, February 2013

