



19 December 2022

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Tangata Whenua

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dia.govt.nz

Tēnā koe Tangata

OIA request 22/23 0444 Request for information on New Zealand birth certificates

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 5 December 2022.

You requested –

- 1. WHO or WHAT does the New Zealand Birth Certificate Identify, if it is not Identifying the person presenting it?*
- 2. Why does it have my family name and my name and my Live Born date but does not identify me? What type of trickery or deception is this?*
- 3. Are police and other government agents also liable for using the birth certificate as true after I disclose to them that it is false?*
- 4. If the Birth Certificate D.I.A issued me does not identify me, Please refund my payment in full and I will return that fraudulent document with my name on it because it Identifies a person but not the person presenting it (which is me) To use that Fraudulent document will results in prosecution*

In response to your request, I can provide you with the following information.

Questions one and two

A New Zealand Birth Certificate is an official document containing registered information about a person's birth, as at the date of issue. The birth register is publicly accessible, with access regulated by the Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Relationships Registration Act 1995 (BDMRRA). Which means any individual can generally be issued a birth certificate, providing the request is in respect of a named individual, in a manner approved by the Registrar-General, the regulated fee is paid, and the required information is supplied.

Therefore, a birth certificate is only evidence that an identity exists. The birth certificate should not be used as the sole form of evidence for asserting an individual's identity, as it does not provide any link to the person presenting it.

Question three

Section 71 of the BDMRRA stipulates that, a birth, death, marriage, civil union, or name change certificate shall in any proceedings be received as prima facie evidence of the truth of the information it contains.

Question four

The Department does not inform any person purchasing a birth, death, marriage, civil union, or name change certificate that the document can be used as a primary identification document. Additionally, a person will not be prosecuted for using an unaltered birth certificate in the prescribed manner. As such, there is no adequate reason to refund your purchase of a birth certificate in this case.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, the Department has decided to proactively release a copy of this response on the DIA website. All requestor data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release. The released response will be made available here: <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Official-Information-Act-Requests-2>.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi



John Crawford-Smith
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Service Delivery and Operations