

# Statistics for states implementing access to original birth certificate (OBC) laws since 2000

State	Year OBCs Sealed	Access Law Effective	Data as of	Sealed Original Birth Certificates <sup>1</sup>	Unrelated Adoptions (Estimated at 50%) <sup>2</sup>	Adoptees Requesting OBCs	Percent Adoptees Requesting OBCs <sup>3</sup>	Birth Parents		
								Requesting Contact	Requesting No Contact	Percent Requesting No Contact <sup>3</sup>
Oregon	1957	5/31/00	4/29/11	107,730	53,865	10,914	20.3%	568	85	0.16%
Alabama <sup>4</sup>	1991	8/1/00	5/2/11	300,000	150,000	5,266	3.5%	218	7	0.00%
New Hampshire <sup>5</sup>	1973	1/1/05	3/26/10	24,000	12,000	1,315	11.0%	57	12	0.10%
Maine	1953	1/1/09	4/30/11	24,000	12,000	848	7.1%	25	8	0.07%
Illinois <sup>6</sup>	1962	5/19/10	5/4/11	300,000	150,000	635	0.4%	235	84	0.06%
Totals/Averages				755,730	377,865	18,978	5.0%	1103	196	0.05%

**Bottom line: 1 out of 2,000 birth parents requested no contact.**

**Notes:**

- <sup>1</sup> Birth certificates are sealed upon the final order of adoption. If a child remains in foster care and is never adopted, the certificate is not sealed.
- <sup>2</sup> Historically, *in-family* (related) adoptions have accounted for approximately *half* of all adoptions world-wide; therefore, the other half are unrelated. By definition, in-family adoptions were not confidential.
- <sup>3</sup> Percentages are based on *unrelated adoptions*, which are approximately *half* the number of sealed records. The results are:  
**Adoptees requesting their original birth certificate represent a range up to about 20% of unrelated adoptions.**  
**In these 5 states, only 196 birth parents requested no contact, or five-one-hundredths of one-percent, which equates to 1 out of 2000.**
- <sup>4</sup> Alabama-born adopted persons, whose original birth certificates were sealed, may obtain a non-certified copy along with all other documents in the file. While most of these requests are from adopted persons, others (who had a legal determination of paternity causing their OBC to be sealed) have also made requests to open sealed files and are included in these counts. Requests for no contact are not tracked. In 2007, they were estimated to be 3 or 4, and since then, 1 per year.
- <sup>5</sup> Updated stats are not available; however the NH Adoption Coordinator says "it's rare that I get a no contact form...probably no more than 1 or 2 at maximum."
- <sup>6</sup> Illinois unsealed OBCs for adoptees born prior to 1/1/46. Adoptees born after that date may request their OBCs effective 11/15/11.

**Delaware** has ~10,000 sealed records. From 1/99 to 4/11, **818** birth certificates have been released and **18 persons filed disclosure vetos**. Requests for contact are not tracked.

Sealed records are estimates, requests are actual as of date shown. All data provided by:

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Est. Population 4/10:

- OR 3.8M <http://oregon.gov/DHS/ph/chs/order/58update.shtml>
- AL 4.8M [Cathy.Molchan@adph.state.al.us](mailto:Cathy.Molchan@adph.state.al.us)
- NH 1.3M [MOrman@SOS.STATE.NH.US](mailto:MOrman@SOS.STATE.NH.US)
- ME 1.3M [Sharon.Wright@maine.gov](mailto:Sharon.Wright@maine.gov)
- IL 12.8M
- NJ 8.8M

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