

BY EMAIL AND REGULAR MAIL

January 23, 2017

Victoria L. Beard
Adoption Registry Program Supervisor
Illinois Department of Public Health
925 Ridgely Avenue
Springfield, IL 62702

Dear Ms. Beard:

I am an attorney and the founder of Adoptee Rights Law Center, PLLC, which advocates exclusively for adult adoptees on various issues, including the right to obtain their own original birth certificates upon request.

I've come across information that you or your department appears to interpret Illinois law to limit adult adoptees to a single lifetime copy of their own original birth certificate. An Illinois adoptee provided a copy of a letter you sent to her. Your letter stated the following:

A request for a non certified copy of your original birth certificate has been received and was being researched when it was discovered this was a duplicate request.

Our records indicate that your first request was received and a copy of your original birth record was issued to you on July 20, 2012. **We issue only one copy of these original birth records.**

Since we identified this as a second request before the fee was submitted to the state comptroller we are returning all documentation along with the submitted fee. If there is a specific reason you need an additional copy feel free to contact the Illinois Adoption Registry and Medical Information Exchange (IARMIE) at 877 323 5299 to discuss your request.

I am not aware of any law or regulation in Illinois that limits an adult adoptee to a single copy of the original birth certificate, even if that copy is subject to Illinois' version of birthparent redaction. I am also unaware of any law or regulation in Illinois that requires an adult adoptee, who otherwise qualifies for issuance of an original birth certificate, to provide *any reason whatsoever* for requesting a non certified copy of the original birth certificate, whether it is the first copy, second copy, or thirty fifth copy they desire.

Please inform me in writing of the law or regulation that supports your or your department's interpretation of Illinois law to limit an adult adoptee to one lifetime copy of the original birth certificate.

Please note that I do not represent the adoptee who provided the above quoted letter to me. Rather, I am writing on my own behalf and on behalf of all adoptees. I seek information about your department's interpretation of Illinois law and do so as a national advocate on legal issues affecting us all.

By separate letter, I am also making a request for public records under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act. A copy of that letter is attached.

Best regards,

ADOPTEE RIGHTS LAW CENTER PLLC



Gregory D. Luce

greg@adopteerightslaw.com

cc: William Bryant

BY EMAIL AND REGULAR MAIL

January 23, 2018

William Bryant, MPA
Acting Freedom of Information Officer
Division of Legal Services
Illinois Department of Public Health
535 W. Jefferson, 5th Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Dear Mr. Bryant:

Pursuant to the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140, I request the opportunity to inspect or obtain copies of the following public records:

Records that set forth, communicate, or support any policy or practice of the Illinois Department of Public Health (“the Department”) to limit an adult adoptee to one copy of the adoptee’s original birth certificate, as stated and reflected in the attached letter of Victoria L. Beard, dated January 16, 2018;

Records that reflect or set forth the Department’s position or interpretation of Illinois law or regulations to limit an adult adoptee to a single copy of the adoptee’s original birth certificate, as stated and reflected in the attached letter of Victoria L. Beard, dated January 16, 2018;

Records that reflect or set forth the Department’s interpretation of Illinois law or regulation to require an adult adoptee to provide any specific reason for requesting a copy of his or her own original birth certificate under 750 ILCS 50/18.04 *et seq.*;

I understand that the Department may charge a reasonable copying fee not to exceed the actual cost of reproduction and not including the costs of any search or review of the records. The Department may, however, grant a waiver or reduction of fees when information is sought in the public interest, as is the case for this request. I am an attorney who advocates nationally for adult adoptees. I maintain a comprehensive online

resource to track legislation across the United States, and I continually update the public about laws that regulate the release of original birth certificates in all fifty states and the District of Columbia. That website is at <https://adopteerightslaw.com>. Information from this request will inform adult adoptees and the public about the policies and practices, if any, that the Illinois Department of Public Health follows when an adult adoptee requests his or her original birth certificate, specifically any additional copy after they previously received a copy.

Please note that I do not represent the individual adoptee who is the subject of the attached letter. She has provided this letter to me for use in obtaining public records and clarifying the Department's position on this issue.

I look forward to your reply.

Best regards,

ADOPTTEE RIGHTS LAW CENTER PLLC



Gregory D. Luce

greg@adopteerightslaw.com

cc: Victoria L. Beard



925 East Ridgely Avenue • Springfield, Illinois 62702-2737 • www.dph.illinois.gov

January 16, 2018

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

A request for a non-certified copy of your original birth certificate has been received and was being researched when it was discovered this was a duplicate request.

Our records indicate that your first request was received and a copy of your original birth record was issued to you on [REDACTED]. We issue only one copy of these original birth records.

Since we identified this as a second request before the fee was submitted to the state comptroller we are returning all documentation along with the submitted fee. If there is a specific reason you need an additional copy feel free to contact the Illinois Adoption Registry and Medical Information Exchange (IARMIE) program at 877-323-5299 to discuss your request.

Sincerely,

Victoria L. Beard
Adoption Registry Program Supervisor
Division of Vital Records

VLB
Enclosure(s)