

Public comments received on NYC Rules for: [Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions \(Article 207 of the NYC Health Code\)](#)

#1

Eda Perman

Comment:

The categories listed exclude important family relationships that are now common today and will become more common in the future. Many families simply don't fit the traditional approach proposed. These omissions, alongside the inability for adoptees to access information regarding their family history, create an unfair barrier to access. Death records list cause of death and for an adoptee, this is important health information they probably cannot get anywhere else. Another problem is that non-family cannot do research. Professional genealogists would be unable to perform their jobs. Also, the greatly expanded time periods (which are now amongst the most restrictive in the nation) keep people from researching and educating others about important historical information such as military veterans, Holocaust survivors, and immigrant communities.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

#2

Kathi Galvin

Comment:

Obtaining a birth or death record is not the only way someone can get a persons information. To try to say that holding back the records because there is a privacy issue is unrealistic. You can get a persons social security number online just months after their death. Genealogists and average family reasearcher like myself need and use these records to identify if in fact we have the right person on our family trees. Coming from a family where my dad was raised in foster care and knew none of his family information these rules and provision would cause me to be stuck right away. This information is invaluable to people who are searching for their family histories. Please allow the records to be open to everyone.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

#3

Emily Citraro

Comment:

While the proposed amended rules would allow a few more family members to access records, it would not be sufficient for those who are doing research for others (such as people who need records but don't live in NY) or those of us trying to put together the records of more distant family in order to try to complete a family tree. It would be a terrible disservice to the genealogical researcher to have these limits put in place, and they are far too extreme. Please reconsider, so we can continue to find our roots.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

#4

Drew Egan

Comment:

These records are more than just documents, they are a tangible piece of history that in many cases ties us to relatives some of which we never met before. For myself being able to obtain vital records for my family has become very important due to my application for dual citizenship. The current law goes well beyond what other jurisdictions require for the same type of information, and frankly as a taxpayer is unacceptable. The proposed amendment is a step in the right direction, however the city has more to do to allow families to access key documents.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

#5

Donna Sexton

Comment:

In addition to family history, genealogical information is also required to learn family medical history. Often times families are fractured and without expansion of family members able to obtain death certificates it will be impossible for many people to correctly evaluate their risk of certain diseases and to make informed health care decisions.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

#6

Fern Gutman

Comment:

The people who will have access to birth and death records should also include step family members. There is a problem with limiting research to relatives who need the documentation to prove their relationship. I

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

#7

Jody Lutter

Comment:

The Proposed Amendment to Article 207 of the NYC Health Code to expand access to vital records will not permit most family researchers to obtain records. The modern-day researcher is often more removed than four generations from the people studied and would still be precluded from obtaining records even with the Proposed Amendment. Other towns, counties, and states publish vital records online. New York City has moved in the opposite direction by restricting these records with Article 207 and the Proposed Amendment does little to support research of family and local history.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

#8

Will Holman

Comment:

We applaud the efforts of the NYCDOHAMH to expand the range of those to whom copies of birth and death records would be accessible. The newly established categories will help many individual genealogists access these important records. However, these expansions still unnecessarily limit the ability for individuals to access these records for research purposes. A researcher often needs to view the information on an individual's birth or death record before being able to correctly assert their relationship to that individual. Genealogists are frequently beset by research questions that involve individuals with extremely common names, inconsistencies in biographical details, and other hurdles that make identifying a specific familial relationship difficult – if not impossible – to determine without access to birth and death records. Furthermore, the categories exclude important familial elements that are becoming more prevalent today and will continue to do so over the next 125 years. The reality of New York's families today and in the immediate past is incongruent with the traditional approach proposed by the NYCDOHAMH. For example, the exclusion of step-relationships from the list discriminates against thousands of families living in NYC today. These omissions, alongside the inability for adoptees to access information regarding their family history, create an unfair barrier to access. While an individual genealogist might focus on their specific family, this is not the only use of these materials for genealogical and historical research. The greatly expanded time periods (which are now amongst the most restrictive in the nation) prohibit local and family historians from studying an incredibly large number of topics, such as: --Members of a community who served in WWII, the Korean Conflict, or the Vietnam War (as records pertaining to most WWII veterans fall within of the new timeframes). The stories of these heroic men and women, who sacrificed their --lives for our freedom, will remain hidden for up to a century. -- Survivors of the Holocaust, as the records of family members who escaped to New York in the 1940s are now inaccessible to researchers until the mid-21st century. -- Biographical, genealogical, and cultural studies of any immigrant communities and their impact on NYC throughout the 20th century. --Those seeking research into family health history, as applicable information is needed from third and fourth cousins, categories not covered under the proposed expansions. Therefore we ask that the Department of Health create an additional category for access – Researcher – that specifically allows researchers to access these records. The creation of this category would help to resolve the situations outlined above. This level of access could still require an appropriate level of identification (such as a drivers license, passport, or state ID) and clarify an individual's purpose in requesting a specific record.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

#9

Charles Weinstein

Comment:

The proposed new rules are definitely a step in the right direction. However, for those in need of information to verify issues of inheritance and family medical history, the relationship should extend to first cousins and their direct descendants and ancestors, as well. In addition, there should be a provision, similar to a power of attorney, for a qualified person to allow an attorney or genealogist representing them, to acquire birth and death certificates, either for family medical history, or to prove relationships for purposes of estate inheritance or for proving descent for genealogical purposes. In order to qualify for membership in various descendency organizations (such as Sons of the American Revolution, DAR, etc.), or to apply for dual citizenship in many countries, based on a direct ancestral relationship to that country, obtaining birth and death records are vital. There is no reason to prohibit access when it is needed for these purposes. The numbers of people requesting these records under these suggestions should not be onerous, provided the original records, themselves, are properly stored and filed.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

#10

Jeff Kaplan

Comment:

I think that this proposed change would be a significant improvement, although not perfect, to the newly adopted rules. I have a number of aunts, uncles, great aunts and great uncles that have been deceased for decades and some were born over 100 years ago and I still cannot get their birth/death certificates. So I welcome this change. Thank you.

#11

Robbin Smith

Comment:

I would like to express my opinion that the amendment be passed. The family chain now is longer than immediate families.

#12

Karen Ramon

Comment:

I appreciate the consideration to add the new proposed guidelines to the vital records access. This is a great step and am in support of the amendments. I hope the board considers extending the guidelines to create an additional category, Researcher, which would allow persons who are not necessarily family members to conduct scholarly research on certain locations, immigrant groups, etc. Thank you, Karen Ramon

#13

Morris McKee

Comment:

Why is the privacy of deceased persons so very important? Like HIPPA, this proposed rule goes too far. If you insist on promulgating this rule please include a way around it that is not too onerous. For example, genealogical and historical societies should be exempt and have an easy way to request birth and death records.

#14

Jean King

Comment:

I have been researching my family in New York City for over 25 years and have used birth and death records to solve many brick walls in my family tree. Extending the waiting periods for these records will prevent researchers from obtaining information that is available from the rest of the state in 75 for birth records or 50 years for death records. The proposed amendment would be of some help but would not solve the problem of the extended waiting periods. I agree with others posting comments that birth and death records could be marked as an unofficial copy - with the stamp For Genealogical Purposes Only. This is used in other states and I feel this should be used for genealogy purposes in New York City.

#15

Cinthia Mahon

Comment:

I am a child of divorced parents. My father and his family had no contact with me or any of my siblings from the time we were little children. I would like to access family health information contained on my grandparents and great grandparents death certificates. I cannot access them without proof that I am a child of my father. I need his birth record listing their names so that I can prove my relationship to them and obtain their death certificates. If there are no modifications to the current rule I will not be able to do so. The rule changes and time periods are too restrictive and I would not be able to show proof of my lineage. I would be long dead before I could access them publicly.

#16

Lauren Holt

Comment:

As so many have commented, having access to records for NYC available for genealogical purposes is convenient and a "requirement" for those of us still struggling with details of our families. While I have found many records available, i still have a long way to go to complete the process of identifying several births and marriages from the mid 1800's. I can't imagine a worse plan to thwart people in their search for family history. PLEASE do all that you can to insure that our records stay open and accessible, so that families can savor the connections to the past that this resource brings to us all.

#17

Claudia Williams

Comment:

While I understand the City's need to ensure the safety of its records, in so doing it should not cripple the availability of said records to those endeavouring to explore their family's genealogy or to further learn about their family's medical history. So far I have been fortunate to be a direct descendant but as I spread out looking for relatives who married into my family or other family members who are not direct descendants I should have options to obtain these records too. As I noted someone earlier suggested perhaps a stamp across the non-direct family could have a large stamp stating for genealogy purposes only. I appreciate the fact that I have been able to obtain so much information about my family from the NYC records. I have both confirmed old family stories and learned many new things, such as specific medical issues seem to run in the family. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment.

#18

jacqueline helt

Comment:

have been researching my family for about 20yrs & still have a few roadblocks which could be solved by access to birth & death records.....extending the time frame only worsened this problem.....the proposed amendment would possibly help, but even better would be a special category for researchers & family history buffs like the state of ny has - simply mark the document as an unofficial copy - for research purposes.

#19

Linda Johnson

Comment:

I fail to understand the necessity of making family records virtually inaccessible to researchers. The primary goal is to accurately research and document known information on one's lineage. This cannot be accomplished if vital records are kept from the researcher for an unreasonable amount of time. Vital records are mandatory for proving or disproving a relationship to the researcher. How can this be accomplished if the records are denied? Many researchers will be gone by the time the documents become available, thereby preventing the researcher from accomplishing his/her goal. Included in these documents could be family health and medical information needed to determine genetic illnesses that are inclusive in a particular line. If NYC is doing this to "protect" individuals' privacy in these documents, who are they protecting? The individuals have long since passed and have no vested interest in these documents. Let us be realistic and use some common sense here. I applaud the proposed amendment for extended family access, but let us not make it more difficult to access these records by extending the timeframe of when they can be. Family researchers are writing their histories and they need to view documents that add to this history, not be kept from it.

#20

Pat Shea-Bischoff

Comment:

Recently retired, I am currently working on the genealogy for my family. We have lived in NYC for generations and it is incredibly important that I have access to documents in the NYC Vital records to lend credibility to this research. PLEASE ensure in the upcoming amendment that family members have access to birth, death, marriage and other important records. At this time, I expect to be able to demonstrate that one branch of the family goes back to 1700 America, enabling me and my descendants "DAR" status. But records need to be presented to validate this claim. The current "rule" disallows my "deeper" research. Thank you for your consideration of this earnest request. Pat Shea-Bischoff, PhD

#21

John D Leith

Comment:

Some of my and my wife's direct ancestors and their relatives came thru NYC and upstate NY. We regularly find ourselves researching NY and NYC records for information about them, trying to find data that offer good proof of relationships. Like others, we know and often find that NY records are vital to proving these relationships. We have also helped friends in experienced in genealogical research to find more about their ancestors and relatives - as a hobby, with no pay involved. We greatly value our access to old written records wherever they lie, not just in NY but certainly very importantly including NY and NYC. We use Ancestry.com and their New York records almost every day, sometimes spending all day researching one issue. New York, as a gateway to the entire U.S., is one of the richest sources of old written records. We earnestly hope that it can stay that way!

From: Jason Gersh
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Friday, March 23, 2018 10:57:17 AM

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Dear Members of the Board of Health:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed amendment. Given the restrictive nature of the recently approved timetable for releasing birth and death certificates to DORIS (against which I, and many others, argued quite firmly), this latest proposed amendment is a welcome -- albeit imperfect -- change to the status quo. Extending access to the additional classes of entitled parties referenced in the amendment will have a significant and immediate positive impact upon the genealogical community. I wanted to start my comments by commending the Board's willingness to acknowledge that genealogical research serves a "proper purpose" and to propose amending the Health Code accordingly.

As an experienced amateur genealogist with extensive roots in New York City (and, therefore, a strong vested interest in the outcome of the proposed rule change), I see a number of ways in which the proposed amendment could be improved. In that vein, I would recommend a few revisions to the amendment that I believe would assist in making it better serve the needs of genealogists and family historians:

1. For access to birth certificates of deceased persons, I would recommend adding the class of *great-grandnieces* and *great-grandnephews* to the list of entitled parties. This class of persons falls under the same generational relationship to the deceased as great-grandchildren, who are already in the list of entitled parties under the proposed amendment. This class also falls into the same type of relationship to the deceased as grandnieces/grandnephews (an entitled party per the proposed amendment), simply one generation further removed. Extending access to this additional generation of relatives would facilitate research by younger generations of family historians without creating any additional privacy issues. This can be particularly critical in the cases of deceased persons born in the 1910s, for whom there may not be living children, grandchildren, nieces/nephews, or grandnieces/grandnephews.
2. For access to death certificates, I would recommend adding the classes of *great-grandnieces/great-grandnephews* and *great-great-grandnieces/great-great-grandnephews* to the list of entitled parties. These classes of persons fall under the same generational relationships to the deceased as great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren, who are already in the list of entitled parties under the proposed amendment. These classes also fall into the same type of relationship to the deceased as grandnieces/grandnephews (an entitled party per the proposed amendment), simply one or two generations further removed. The rationale for extending access to these classes is the same as the rationale for extending access to great-grandnieces/great-grandnephews for birth certificates -- facilitating research by younger generations of family historians without creating any additional privacy issues.

As an example of how extending access to great-great-grandnephews would benefit family historians, I can provide a case in my own family of a great-great-granduncle who was born circa 1870 in Poland and died in 1952 in Manhattan. To the best of my knowledge, this

individual has no living relatives who fall under the entitled parties in the proposed amendment. Obtaining access to his death certificate now (rather than waiting another 10 years for the record to be transferred to DORIS) would potentially allow me to fill in gaps about his parents and the latter part of his life. No doubt there are many other researchers facing this same generational situation.

3. For access to death certificates, I would additionally recommend adding the class of *great-great-great-grandchildren* to the list of entitled parties. With death certificates from as far back as 1949 remaining in the custody of the Department of Health, the passage of time makes it exceedingly likely that some of these individuals have great-great-great-grandchildren who would benefit from access to their ancestors' death certificates. The rationale for extending access to this class is the same as the rationale in my previous two recommendations -- facilitating research by younger generations of family historians without creating any additional privacy issues.

4. For access to both birth certificates of deceased persons and death certificates, I would encourage the Board to add the classes of first, second, and third cousins (within one or more degrees of removal) to the list of entitled parties. These classes of persons are also within a close degree of consanguinity of the deceased, and extending record access to these classes would enable a broader group of family historians to research their extended family.

5. To facilitate research by professional genealogists working on behalf of clients, I would recommend that the Board extend enhanced access privileges for credentialed genealogists. The Board for Certification of Genealogists (<https://bcgcertification.org/>) is a nationally recognized organization that certifies the credentials of professional genealogists in one or more categories according to a set of robust, uniform standards. In addition, this organization provides a code of ethics for professional conduct for its members, and provides mediation/arbitration for disputes between its members and clients. Extending enhanced access privileges to credentialed genealogists would facilitate access to records for family members who hire professional researchers, while the code of ethics to which credentialed genealogists are bound would provide the Board and the public with assurance that records and research would be handled with the utmost of integrity. (For the record, I am not a professional genealogist, nor am I certified by -- or affiliated with -- the Board for Certification of Genealogists.)

I strongly believe that extending access to New York City birth and death certificates to as broad a population as possible would best serve the interests of the public, and I also believe it would be in the best interests of the City to avail itself of the opportunity to bring in the additional revenue that would be realized from the large population of researchers eager to explore their family history. Thank you very much for your consideration of my comments. I am

Yours sincerely,

Jason Gersh

Jason A. Gersh
32 Meridian Circle
Newtown, PA 18940
Home: [\(215\) 860-3564](tel:2158603564)
Mobile: [\(919\) 357-4428](tel:9193574428)
Email: jason.gersh@gmail.com

From: Betty Wood
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Restrictive Access
Date: Monday, March 26, 2018 10:38:04 AM

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To records. This email is written to protest the increased limits on access to birth, death and marriage records. As an amateur genealogist with family in New York City I need online access. It seems cruel and extreme to place such restrictive limits on these records. I urge you to change these policies.

Thank you,

Betty Wood, LCSW
38 Rowe Ranch Way
Novato, CA 94949

Susan R. Miller
22 Mackey Avenue
Port Washington, NY 11050
Suemiller555@optonline.net

April 23, 2018

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Attn: Board of Health
Gotham Center, 42-09 28th Street, CN31
Long Island City, NY 11101-4132

Dear Department of Health and Mental Hygiene,

I am on staff at the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society (NYG&B) but am sending this as an individual, not for the NYG&B.

I would like to thank the Board of Health for their attention to this issue. Your reading of the many comments regarding changes to Article 207 is to be applauded.

I fully support implementing the greater access in the current Amendment of Provisions of Article 207. **But I do not feel it goes far enough**, and I would ask for detailed attention to Josh Taylor's comments on that.

The process for requesting a birth certificate, which I recently did in person at the Health Department for a 1921 birth, required that I provide the place of birth and the parents names. When trying to prove identity for family health or genealogical purposes, the researchers may not know those information items. They therefore may fail to receive the certificate. I ask the Board to thoroughly review procedures for implementation of the new regulations. I do not believe them to be in accord with what the Board was told in the March meeting.

When developing new rules and regulations, please reach out to the community for input before proposing new amendments to Article 207. This could be done through several of the genealogical organizations in New York City, although since New York City's population often spreads across the nation, it is not just a local issue.

Regarding genealogy, is the Board aware that *Genealogy Standards* exist? We spend time and money to find original records with information documented as close to the time of the event recorded as possible. We evaluate the information items based on who the informant was—was the informant in a position to know from first-hand knowledge what they “put down on paper.” Should any Board member wish a copy of those standards, I would be happy to provide a copy. They are published and subject to copyright law.

Susan R. Miller
22 Mackey Avenue
Port Washington, NY 11050
Suemiller555@optonline.net

When we research a person with a common name, many records must be searched and quite a few people eliminated from contention. For that we find and purchase certificates for people who may not turn out to be the subject of our search.

If the Board's reason for not making death certificates public for 75 years is the chance that they may need to be amended—and seriously how many are amended after even 25 years, please allow informational certificates—not certified ones.

Regarding death certificates, I would ask the Board to reconsider the time period before making death records public records. The stated reason regarding an infant death and thus protecting the privacy of parents does not hold weight. Closing death records for more than twenty-five years does not seem necessary.

Please open indexes to births and deaths. Birth indexes like those previously published by the Department should be open after 20 years. Death Indexes should be open after 5 years.

Again, thank you for your time in reading all the comments.

Sincerely,
Susan R. Miller

From: glanvil3@aol.com
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Date: Saturday, April 21, 2018 3:35:31 PM

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Dear NYC,

May I add my voice to those requesting that the category of Researcher be added to those allowed to obtain birth and death records before 125 / 75 years?

As a professional genealogist, I purchase several hundred dollars' worth of NYC birth, marriage, and death records each year for my clients, either directly or via a researcher I subcontract to. In addition, most amateur genealogists buy numerous certificates in the geographical area they are researching, so with genealogy now the second most popular hobby in the U.S., this constitutes a significant outlay. By denying researchers access to many birth and death records, the city is depriving itself of a significant source of revenue.

On another note, may I point you to two stories that appeared in the *NY Times* in the last year and a half? It is doubtful they could have been written if the gentleman at their heart had been denied access to civil records.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/.../a-christmas-request-answered-a-century-later.ht...> ▼

Dec 20, 2016 - **Peter Mattaliano**, who worked to get Mary McGahan's name put on her headstone, sprinkled a small bag of Irish soil in front of it. Credit Yana Paskova for **The New York Times**. When Mr. Mattaliano moved into the fourth-floor apartment at 447 West 50th Street in 1999, the fireplace had long been bricked ...

<https://www.nytimes.com/.../a-chimneys-poignant-surprise-letters-santa-missed-long-a...> ▼

Dec 21, 2015 - **Peter Mattaliano** at Third Calvary Cemetery in Queens, seeking information on two children, Mary and Alfred McGann, whose letters to Santa from a century ago he found in his apartment. Credit Yana Paskova for **The New York Times**. Last week, **Peter Mattaliano**, 66, an acting coach and screenwriter, put ...

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Patricia Phelan

Member, Assn. of Professional Genealogists (www.apgen.org)

Board Member, Irish Family History Forum

Glanvil Genealogy

237 Church St.

Freeport NY 11520

516 378 5619

From: Pat
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Sunday, April 22, 2018 10:16:22 AM

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Hello,

Having Polish background and many records were lost during wars it is very important for me as a Polish American to have access to any records of relatives that survived had families and made their way to the United States.

Please reconsider.

Thank you,
Pat Falsitta

From: Barbara Gianviti
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Sunday, April 22, 2018 11:21:26 AM

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Dear Sirs, Mesdames,

The new 2017 amendment allowing access to birth records up to 125 years and death records up to 75 years should be applauded, yet it is insufficient for those who are doing research for historical and genealogical purposes.

In this epoch of transparency the new amendment is still limited. We need to allow people to do greater research by extending access to these "vital" records.

Barbara Gianviti

Sent from my iPad

From: Renee Steinig
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 23, 2018 2:22:27 PM
Attachments: [RS signature.png](#)

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To the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene:

I was happy to hear about the proposed amendment of Article 207 of the New York City Health Code to expand access to birth and death records. I thank the Department of Health for its responsiveness to the public's concerns about the restrictions recently placed on release of records to DORIS. The new amendment is an important step in the right direction, but I urge you to add some additional provisions to meet the needs of those who rely on New York City vital records for research purposes:

- Expand **access to birth records older than 100 years** to anyone who submits a request along with proof of death, regardless of the requester's relationship to the deceased, and **access to more recent birth records** to include all direct descendants of the subject's grandparents, so long as proof of death is provided.
- Expand **access to death records of those born over 100 years ago** to anyone, regardless of the requester's relationship to the deceased, and **access to death records of those born more recently** to include all direct descendants of the subject's grandparents.
- Add a **“researcher” category**, as proposed by the New York Records Preservation and Access Coalition. Such a provision would accommodate the very important needs of those studying hereditary diseases and Holocaust history, conducting adoption and inheritance searches, and involved in other legitimate efforts that require broad access to vital records.
- If necessary, provide these additional records as **non-certified copies**.
- Expand and codify the types of documents that can be provided as **proof of death**. A certified record, which can be costly and difficult to obtain, should not be the only acceptable proof of death. An obituary with sufficient identifying information, a statement of death from a funeral director or attending physician, a copy of a coroner's report, a probate record, or a photograph of a gravestone should be other options.

These modifications of the proposed amendment would significantly help researchers while considering the privacy and security of any living people named on these records.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,



Mrs. Renee Stern Steinig
37 Westcliff Drive
Dix Hills NY 11746



Jewish Genealogy Society of Long Island
37 Westcliff Drive
Dix Hills NY 11746

April 23, 2018

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Gotham Center, 42-09 28th Street, CN 31
Long Island City, NY 11101-4132

To the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Board of Health:

The Jewish Genealogy Society of Long Island has more than 300 members dedicated to researching their Jewish family roots, almost all of whom have strong historical ties to New York City.

We were dismayed that the Board of Health did not moderate its stance on the transfer of records to DORIS. The decision to deny the public access to birth records for 125 years and to death records for 75 years seems to have been based on misconceptions about identity theft, unsupported by the facts.

On the other hand, we appreciate the Board of Health's proposed expansion of the categories of relatives able to access copies of birth and death records held by the Bureau of Vital Statistics. The proposed amendment to Article 207 of the Health Code is a wonderful step in the right direction, but we feel that the new categories for eligibility are still too restrictive. We call on the Board of Health to:

- Add a "researcher" category, as proposed by the New York Records Preservation and Access Coalition, of which we are a member. Such a provision would enable families to gain a full understanding of their histories, including hereditary diseases, the study of which requires tracing third and fourth cousins.
- Expand the definition of relatives eligible to obtain a birth or death record to include all direct descendants of the subject of the record, so that great-great-grandchildren and even great-great-great-grandchildren -- who may well reach adulthood before their ancestors' records are transferred to DORIS -- aren't denied access to their family history.
- Expand the definition of relatives eligible to obtain a birth or death record to include all direct descendants of the subject's grandparents. This broader definition would allow individuals who are not survived by close family to be memorialized and remembered.
- Expand access to birth records older than 100 years to anyone who submits a request along with proof of death, regardless of the requester's relationship to the deceased.
- Expand access to death records of those born over 100 years ago to anyone, regardless of the requester's relationship to the deceased.
- Expand and codify the types of documents that can be provided as proof of death. Certified records, which can be costly and difficult to obtain, should not be the only acceptable proof of death. An obituary with sufficient identifying information, a statement of death from a funeral

director or attending physician, a copy of a coroner's report, a probate records, or a photograph of a gravestone should be other options.

Receiving a non-certified copy of a record would be acceptable in all these instances.

Expanded access would also help to ensure that our relatives' final resting places can be located, visited and properly maintained. For a relative who died decades ago, there may be no one alive who recalls where he or she was buried. Frequently the only practical source of this information is a death certificate.

Finally, as a Jewish organization, we wish to call to your attention that access to a death certificate can be important for religious reasons -- in order to determine the person's yahrzeit (Hebrew date of death, on which family members say memorial prayers). Calculating this date depends on knowing the exact time of death, which can be found only on a death certificate.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

The Board of Directors of the Jewish Genealogy Society of Long Island

April 23, 2018

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Gotham Center
42-09 28th Street, 3rd Floor, Room 3-32
Long Island City, 11101

Re: Proposed Amendment to Article 207

The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society (NYG&B) represents thousands of individuals with an interest in researching individuals who have a connection to New York City. Members of our community include researchers, genealogists, historians, social scientists, biographers, and others who trace the lives of New Yorkers across many generations.

We support the proposal to expand the categories of those eligible to receive a copy of an individual's birth or death record, especially in light of the recently passed rules which restrict access to these records well into the future. However, we implore the Board of Health to take a more considerate and expansive look into the categories proposed. The fact that the amendment is under consideration **recognizes the need for those conducting genealogical and historical research to have access to these records.**

We reiterate our strong objections to the timeframes that are now in place. They are not aligned with other jurisdictions throughout the United States—and are even at odds with the records that have been previously released to the Municipal Archives.¹ Further, when asked about New York City's timeframes as compared to other jurisdictions, the state of Vermont was raised as an example where it was stated that vital records were no longer public. This is a misrepresentation of the facts and directly contradicts the Secretary of State's website, which states "there are no restrictions on public access to Vermont vital records," and fails to point out that the recently passed law in Vermont provides informational copies of records as needed.² **New York City is now the most restrictive jurisdiction in the nation, next to the state of Oklahoma.** Sadly, New York City's rules pale in comparison to the access afforded by California, Connecticut, Indiana, New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Vermont, Virginia – just to name a few jurisdictions.³

¹ Death records had previously been released to New York City's Municipal Archives through the year 1947, 71 years after the death occurred, rather than the stated rule of 75 years.

² See <https://www.sec.state.vt.us/archives-records/vital-records/informational-copies.aspx>.

³ See <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/Vital-Records.aspx> (California); <http://www.in.gov/isdh/index.htm> (Indiana);

We appreciate the attempt to expand and clarify the individuals entitled to access vital records, —however, **the proposed list is incomplete** and has the potential to discriminate against researchers. Those who research family health history, for example, often need to access birth and death records for third and fourth cousins, a provision that is not provided for under the proposed guidelines. Any individual who is part of a blended family, which includes at least 40 million Americans, cannot access the records of a step relative. In addition, modern tools for research, such as DNA testing, have created an immense need to access birth and death records for previously unknown relatives. What about an individual whose DNA test reveals that his or her biological great-grandfather is indeed a different man than listed within family records? These are the realities of research we face in the year 2018. Other jurisdictions have seen the need for access to these records, as the states of Oregon, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New Hampshire, and Indiana have enacted provisions for accessing records of step relatives.⁴

We reiterate that a researcher's need for a birth or death document is often to identify an individual. For a common name it is difficult to determine one's relationship. Without following all documentary evidence, including some documents that eliminate potential candidates, reaching a conclusion is impossible. Selecting the correct John Smith from an index which lists 20 or more John Smiths born in the same year is tremendously difficult. A genealogist should search each record until they find the correct entry. Thus, they must review the information contained within these records, rather than simply conduct a single transaction. We often do not know which record is correct until we receive a copy of the information provided on the record.

Our research extends far beyond these limits. We trace entire communities and repatriate fallen New York City soldiers. We research and identify relatives of Holocaust survivors, many of whom are identified as cousins. We search for those who left few written records behind—save a birth or death record.

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/BirthDeathCertificates/GetVitalRecords/Pages/index.aspx> (Oregon); <http://vr.health.ok.gov/> (Oklahoma); http://healthvermont.gov/research/records/obtain_record.aspx (Vermont); <http://www.ct.gov/dph/site/default.asp> (Connecticut); <http://www.health.pa.gov/MyRecords/Certificates/Pages/11596.aspx#.WCKDQFV0laR> (Pennsylvania); <http://vitalrecords.sd.gov/> (South Dakota); <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/> (Virginia).

⁴ <http://www.health.pa.gov/MyRecords/Certificates/Pages/11596.aspx#.WCKDQFV0laR> (Pennsylvania);

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/BirthDeathCertificates/GetVitalRecords/Pages/index.aspx> (Oregon); <http://www.in.gov/isdh/index.htm> (Indiana); <http://www.state.nj.us/health/vital> (New Jersey); <http://www.sos.nh.gov/vitalrecords> (New Hampshire).

We ask that an additional category deemed as “Researcher” be created to access these records. This would ensure that a third cousin, step-granddaughter, town historian, biographer, or genealogist could access these materials. In addition to materials which verify their identity, researchers could be required to provide their reason for requesting a copy of the materials (which could be informational rather than a certified copy), thus protecting the integrity of the records themselves. If non-certified, it could be amended later.

We would be remiss if we did not mention another area of concern regarding this amendment and procedures for accessing these records. We have heard from members of our community on numerous occasions that even when the written rules permit them to obtain copies of these materials, they are unable to do so. Our members have reported instances where they have been required to provide the exact names of an individual’s parents in order to obtain a copy of a record. Yet, this is the precise type of information they are attempting to research in requesting the record in the first place.

We have been told that a professional genealogist could access materials for a client, if the client was entitled to the record and provided their identifying information alongside authorization when requesting the record. Yet, we have evidence that this is not in fact true. **This paradox is simply not acceptable.** We are paying customers, we are citizens, and we implore the Department to apply the rules set in place fairly and universally. The lack of clarifying language within the amendment has the potential to continue these poor practices and inconsistencies.

In short, the addition of a researcher category to the proposed amendment would be the fairest pathway forward. We appreciate your consideration and again, invite the Board to open a dialogue with us regarding these issues.

Sincerely,



D. Joshua Taylor
President

**Alexander Calzareth
Long Island City, NY**

April 23, 2018

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Gotham Center, 42-09 28th Street, CN 31
Long Island City, NY 11101-4132

To the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Board of Health:

I support the proposed Amendment of Provision of Article 207 of the New York City Health Code to expand access to birth and death records to additional categories of relatives although I believe that certain provisions could be added without any of the harms feared by the Department of Health in their justification for the amendment passed on March 13, 2018.

Expand Access to Birth Records Older than 100 Years and Death Records

Through the March amendment of the Health Code the Department of Health has insured their control over the birth and death certificates for exceedingly long time periods, outside of the norms for comparable jurisdictions. However, there is no reason that a birth or death record from yesterday has to be treated the same as a birth certificate from 1912 or a death certificate from 1955.

I support the general category of “researcher” as proposed in other comments that would allow access to a death certificate or any deceased person’s birth certificate upon stating the nature of the applicant’s research. However, if the Board of Health does not entertain those recommendations, there must surely be a point at which there is no identity theft risk by releasing a deceased person’s birth certificate, say 100 years after a person’s birth.

The Board of Health’s stated reason for not transferring old birth records to the Municipal Archives until the records are 125 years old is to avoid easy public access to a handful of birth records for those who might reach an extremely high age. With average life expectancy around 80 years in the United States, this means that the Department of Health will maintain an increasingly large number of birth records that related to long-deceased individuals. The Bureau of Vital Statistics own figures show that there were about 140,000 births per year in the 1910-1917 time period, meaning that today the Department holds birth certificates for about 1,120,000 people born more than 100 years ago. The Center for Disease Control’s 2014 National Vital Statistics report shows that 2.11% of the people born 100 years ago were still alive. This would mean that 3,000 birth certificates for those born in 1917 might relate to people who are still alive. This figure would decrease rapidly as you go back towards 1910. As a reference, there are only about 50 people in the entirety of the United States aged 110 or older.

This current proposed amendment shows that the Bureau of Vital Statistics clearly has a mechanism in place to review proof of death and to issue a copy of a birth record to a relative after such review. In addition, I believe these records are marked with a stamp indicating “deceased” when they’re issued. I therefore urge the addition of language allowing copies to be provided to “any person who submits a request for a birth

certificate more than 100 years old with proof that the individual named on such certification of birth is deceased “

Similarly, the justification for keeping death records private for 75 years focused on potentially releasing an infant’s death record that might contain information on still-living parents. As acknowledged, these are a very small percentage of all death records maintained by the Bureau of Vital Statistics. In-line with the above suggestion for birth records, death records for those born more than 100 years ago, who have been deceased for more than say 25 years, should be available to anyone. I therefore urge the addition of language allowing copies to be provided to “any person who submits a request for a death certificate more than 25 years old for decedents born more than 100 years ago.”

List Other Examples of Proof of Death

In his presentation to the Board of Health for this proposed amendment, Steven Schwartz indicated that “as a matter of practice” the Department of Health has been allowing children and grandchildren to gain access to birth certificates of deceased relatives. However, my recent Freedom of Information Law Request to the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene revealed that during Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017 no birth certificates were issued relating to individuals born between 1910 and 1918. It seems unlikely that no one would request records for that period over the course of two years, leading to concerns that the Bureau of Vital Statistics has not in fact allowed for easy access to birth records for close relatives.

The current instructions provided by the Bureau of Vital Statistics (copy attached) require “an original non-NYC death certificate or a copy of a NYC death certificate.” This proposed amendment uses the language “Proof of death for this purpose may include, but is not limited to, certified copies of death certificates and letters testamentary.”

The focus on certified copies of death certificates is concerning. Certified records can sometimes only be obtained at great costs. Although they are among the clearest evidence of death, they are by no means the only proof of death. For instance, the Social Security Administration also accepts an obituary with sufficient identifying information, a statement of death from a funeral director or attending physician or a copy of a coroner's report. Other possible sources could include probate records or a photograph of a gravestone.

Although the proposal states that proof of death is not limited to certified copies of death certificates and letters testamentary I urge the Board of Health to codify the additional possible documents suggested here as acceptable proof of death.

It is commendable that the Board of Health is expanding access to additional relatives but if unwritten administrative rules add hurdles to these family members the spirit of these amended regulations will be thwarted and access will continue to be denied.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,



Alexander Calzareth

Grandparent's birth certificate

nycdohvr <nycdohvr@health.nyc.gov>
To: Alex Calzareth <alcalz@gmail.com>

Mon, Mar 12, 2018 at 9:06 AM

BIRTH CERTIFICATE OF A DECEASED RELATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Family members/entitled individuals may request the birth certificates of a deceased relative by submitting the following packet through the mail:

- A completed, signed and notarized application.
- A legible copy of your valid, unexpired, government issued photo identification
- An original non-NYC death certificate or a copy of a NYC death certificate
- Payment of \$15.00 for the record
- A utility bill or official government mail that contains your name and address and that has been received by you in the last 60 days.
- A self-addressed, stamped envelope for the return of the record.
- For entitled individuals, original documentary evidence of entitlement.

Please note that birth certificates of deceased relatives are not available for immediate issuance and can take 2-3 weeks to process. 1910-1919 birth certificates are not electronic records and an additional week is required to search for the birth certificate and then produce. Please visit www.nyc.gov/vitalrecords to download the application and instructions if the attached application is not accessible.

From: Ethan Auslander
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Friday, April 20, 2018 3:47:48 PM

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I strongly oppose the proposed additional tightening of access to NYC vital records. Professional genealogist who assists in probate searches see that this new obstacle would add to the burden those entitled to estates who must forfeit an even larger percentage of estate proceeds to attorneys who need to order multiple additional records that may be required to probate wills, and who need to establish with due diligence that there are no additional family members who could be distributes. This could be much more difficult, if not impossible, if they don't have access to records now available. They would need to order dozens or hundreds of more records for each case, petitioning the court for each, and charging clients accordingly. This is particularly unfair to those who would inherit small estates, and would also add to the burden of the court.

Thanks,

Ethan Auslander
P.O. Box 672
Hicksville, NY 11802-0672
(516) 681-3200

From: Mollys Canopy
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Friday, April 20, 2018 2:50:35 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I applaud the efforts of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to expand the range of those to whom copies of birth and death records would be accessible. The newly established categories will help many individual genealogists access these important records.

However, these expansions still unnecessarily limit the ability for individuals to access these records for research purposes. A researcher often needs to view the information on an individual's birth or death record before being able to correctly establish family relationships. Genealogists are frequently beset by research questions that involve individuals with extremely common names, inconsistencies in biographical details, and other hurdles that make a identifying a specific familial relationship difficult – if not impossible – to determine without timely access to birth and death records. Furthermore, the categories exclude important familial elements that are becoming more prevalent today and will continue to do so over the next 125 years.

The reality of New York's families today and in the immediate past no longer fits the traditional approach proposed by the New York City Department of Mental Health and Hygiene. For example, the exclusion of step-relationships from the list discriminates against thousands of families living in New York City today. These omissions, along with the inability for adoptees to access information regarding their family history, create an unfair barrier to access.

While an individual genealogist might focus on their specific family, this is not the only use of these materials for genealogical and historical research. The greatly expanded time periods (now amongst the most restrictive in the nation) prohibit local and family historians from studying an incredibly large number of topics, such as:

- Members of a community who served in World War II, the Korean Conflict, or the Vietnam War (as records pertaining to most World War II veterans fall within of the new time frames). The stories of these heroic men and women, who sacrificed their lives for our freedom, will remain hidden for up to a century.
- Survivors of the Holocaust, as the records of family members who escaped to New York in the 1940s are now inaccessible to researchers until the mid-21st century.
- Biographical, genealogical, and cultural studies of any immigrant communities and their impact on the city of New York throughout the 20th century.
- Those seeking research into family health history, as applicable information is needed from third and fourth cousins, categories not covered under the proposed expansions.

I therefore request that the Department of Health create an additional category for access – Researcher – that specifically allows researchers to access these records. The creation of this category would help to resolve the situations outlined above. This level of access could still

require an appropriate level of identification (such as a driver's license, passport, or state ID) and clarify an individual's purpose in requesting a specific record.

Sincerely,
Molly Charboneau
mollyscanopy.com

From: Teri Wetter
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Thursday, April 19, 2018 11:41:22 AM

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The average life span is less than 100 years. So to obtain birth certificates should reflect this.

Also 75 years after death is unreasonable to obtain a copy of the death certificate. This number is unreasonable as 5 years after death is long enough.

Teri

Sent from my iPhone

From: Nancy Buono
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Thursday, April 19, 2018 11:14:49 AM

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My family immigrated to New York in the early 1900s. As part of a dual citizenship application, I was required to gather all official records for all prior generations. Birth, marriage, divorce, death for parents, grandparents, great grandparents. Restricting access to these records would deny people their right to apply for dual citizenship. And there are many more who need access to these records for genealogical research.

While there is a great concern about privacy, the system which requires proper identification and proof of connection to the individual whose records are requested is adequate to provide that protection.

Please keep these records available.

Respectfully,

Nancy Buono



April 21, 2018

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Gotham Center, 42-09 28th Street, CN 31
Long Island City, NY 11101-4132

Re: Proposed Amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)

The International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) is writing to express our comments regarding the proposed amendment to the General Vital Statistics Provisions Article 207 of the NYC Health Code. Seventy-five percent of all immigrants to the United States during the turn of the century entered through Ellis Island¹. Ellis Island estimates that close to 40 percent of all current U.S. citizens can trace at least one of their ancestors to Ellis Island.² A recent report cites over 37 percent of New York City residents were born in another country—more foreign born-immigrants live in New York City than any other city in the world. For that reason, access to New York City birth and death records can be crucial for New Yorkers, for all Americans, and for those outside the United States. IAJGS has members worldwide who are interested in access to New York City birth and death records.

We are very appreciative that the Board of Health is agreeing with the over 5,000 comments it received requesting expansion of certain family member categories that would have immediate access to birth and death records in the proposed amendment to Article 207 of the New York City Health Code Regarding Proposed Transfer of Birth and Death Records to DORIS. Thank you for listening.

We suggest three categories of persons should be given access to birth and death records prior to the records becoming public: step-relations, adoptees and researchers.

Step-Relations

In the March 13, 2018 NYC Board of Health minutes, Dr. Klitzman asked about step-relations “in the era of growing blended families” being included with other family members. We agree with Dr. Klitzman that step-relations have an important familial interest and should be added to the proposed expansion of family members with immediate access to birth and death records directly from the Department of Health. Unfortunately, the New York City Department of Health Registrar said, “we do not permit that and I’m not aware of any state that does.”³ A quick Google search resulted in finding states that **do** permit step-parents the same immediate access: Indiana,⁴ New Hampshire⁵ New Jersey⁶ (with permission of the natural parent), Oregon (birth records)⁷, and Pennsylvania⁸, and open records access states⁹ to cite but a few examples.

¹ <http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-life-and-religion/246347/inside-ellis-islands-immigrant-hospital>

² <http://www.hiostory.com/topics/ellis-island>

³ NYCDoH&MH Board of Health Meeting March 13, 2018 Page 33

⁴ <https://www.in.gov/isdh/26793.htm>; <https://www.in.gov/isdh/26824.htm>

⁵ <https://lebanonnh.gov/552/Requesting-Vital-Records>

⁶ <http://www.nj.gov/health/vital/contact-us/faqs/>

⁷ <http://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/BIRTHDEATHCERTIFICATES/GETVITALRECORDS/Pages/Eligibility.aspx>

⁸ <http://www.health.pa.gov/myrecords/certificates/pages/11596.aspx#.Wtbten8h2Uk>

⁹ Connecticut (birth if the requestor belongs to a genealogy society located in Connecticut; and all death records
6052 Hackers Lane| Agoura Hills, California 91301-1410 | +1 (818) 889-6616 | iajgs.org | jan@iajgs.org

And yes, there are some states that do not permit immediate access to step-parents, but we wanted to indicate that different states have different requirements, and some do explicitly permit step-parents access.

Today's family reflects a different composition than in previous generations. The traditional family of two parents, first marriage, living in the same household with their natural children has declined from 73 percent in 1960—to 61 percent by 1980 and to 46 percent. In 2015 the Pew Research Center published a report on the *American Family Today*¹⁰ which reflects the changes in the family dynamics.

The U.S. Census Bureau reported in 2009 that one in six children are living with a blended family—living with a step-parent, step-sibling or half-sibling. In the past nine years that number may well have increased.¹¹ The 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates show the number of step-children under age 18 is in the millions.¹² Further the National Center for Health Statistics says 63 percent of women in remarriages are in blended families with half of these remarriages involving step-children who live with the remarried couple.

The Stepfamily Foundation reports that the U.S. Bureau of Census says 1,300 new step-families are forming daily. Fifty percent of the 60 million children under the age of 13 are currently living with one biological parent and that parent's current partner.¹³ Sixty-four percent of families today live in some form of divorced and/or step-family relationship.

Today, blended families are a social phenomenon that needs to be recognized by access to the birth and death records, and we respectfully request that step-relations, at least step-parents be added to the list of family granted immediate access to birth and death records.

Adoptees

There are a growing number of jurisdictions that have opened original adoption birth records to the adoptee age 18 or older and parents. This usually follows a period of time when the natural parent has the opportunity to agree or not to agree to be contacted and have their information made available to the adoptee. According to the American Adoption Congress there are nine states with unrestricted access, eleven states with access with some restrictions and nine states with partial restrictions leaving twenty-two states and District of Columbia sealed¹⁴. The trend is obvious to open original adoption birth records and we encourage New York City Department of Health to follow the trend and add adoptees and their parents to the list of immediate access to birth records.

Researchers

In the March 13, 2018 Minutes of the Board of Health, Dr. Klitzman inquired about the category of researchers. We do not agree with the response by the New York City Health Department Registrar that “the genealogical researcher does not have an authority or a right to get the record themselves”.

without belonging to a society); Massachusetts; Minnesota; Michigan (death records); Montana (death records); and Ohio.

¹⁰ <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/12/17/1-the-american-family-today/>

¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) 2009 estimates.

¹² <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>

¹³ <http://www.stepfamily.org/stepfamily-statistics.html>

¹⁴ <https://www.americanadoptioncongress.org/state.php>

The U.S. Surgeon General and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services launched a national public health campaign called the Surgeon General's Family History Initiative to encourage all American families to learn more about their family health history. To quote from the Initiative's website: "Tracing the illnesses suffered by your parents, grandparents, and other blood relatives can help your doctor predict the disorders to which you may be at risk and take action to keep you and your family healthy... A recent survey found that 96 percent of Americans believe that knowing their family history is important. Yet, the same survey found that only one-third of Americans have ever tried to gather and write down their family's health history."¹⁵ Therefore, it is imperative for the genealogist either on their own behalf or for a client to access death records to help the living and future generations take proactive measures to address any inherited diseases.

There is a governmental need for professional genealogists serving as federal, state or local government contractors or for genealogists working with law firms to assist in the identification of family members for the following purposes:

- a. Assisting the Department of Defense locate heirs for the repatriation of remains from previous wars.** There are literally tens of thousands of United States Veterans' remains left unclaimed. Sometimes decades pass while these remains are waiting to be identified as Veterans and to be given a proper military burial. Genealogists work with the military to locate relatives of soldiers who are still unaccounted for from past conflicts. By finding relatives, the military can identify soldiers using DNA, and notify the next of kin so the family can make burial decisions. This also provides family healing when the remains of a soldier are returned to his/her family for burial.
- b. Assisting county coroners in the identification of unclaimed persons.** Over 400 genealogists are now offering their volunteer services to help locate the next of kin for unclaimed persons' bodies. The identities of these people are known, but the government agencies are not always able to find the families, so they are literally unclaimed. It is a national problem with which coroners must cope.
- c. Working with attorneys in locating missing and unknown heirs** involving estates, trusts, real estate quiet title actions, oil and gas and mineral rights, and other similar needs.
- d. Tracing and tracking inheritable medical conditions** where finding collateral relatives such as third or fourth cousins is critical in facilitating early treatment and possibly preventing a premature death.
- e. Repatriation of Holocaust stolen art.** Seventy-three years after the end of World War II, we are still reading about looted art that is now being litigated to be returned to the rightful owners and their heirs. This is an active business for some genealogists who specialize in determining the rightful owners of looted art.
- f. Identifying Native American blood quantum to determine eligibility for tribal benefits.** Genealogists are involved with helping both Native American tribes and individuals who are claiming their Native American heritage to determine eligibility for tribal benefits.

Genealogists have legitimate professional and life-saving reasons to have immediate access to birth and death records. Genealogical researchers require access to various materials, of which birth and death records are part of the arsenal used to verify one's family history. Genealogical researchers need access to the vital records to help affirm that one is actually related to a specific individual. For the reasons stated above IAJGS respectfully encourages the NYC Department of

¹⁵ <https://www.hhs.gov/programs/prevention-and-wellness/family-health-history/about-family-health-history/index.html>

Health and Mental Hygiene to expand the list of persons eligible for immediate access to the records to include genealogical researchers.

Comments on the March 13, 2018 Board of Health Minutes

In reading the March 13, 2018 Board of Health minutes, we found several other points to which we would like to provide comments.

Vermont

The NYC Department of Health Registrar stated that Vermont was an open state and now is closed. What was not mentioned was that the law enacted last year which becomes effective July 1, 2018 provides for non-certified or informational copies of birth, marriage and death records, available immediately—no embargo periods.¹⁶ The non-certified copies are marked “not for purposes of identity.” With this new law, Vermont joins the growing number of states providing informational or non-certified copies of records, We respectfully request that informational copies of NYC records be made available without embargo periods.

Embargo Periods of 125 Years for Birth and 75 Years for Death Records

Dr. Bassett asked if any jurisdictions use the 125/75 embargo dates. The answer is NO!. Only one state -Oklahoma- adopted that provision of the 2011 Model Vital Statistics Act but Oklahoma found that it was not workable and later amended the law. Today, the death record embargo period is 50 years, not 75 years. That same amendatory legislation opened up birth and death indexes to the public: 20 years after date of birth and 5 years after date of death. To our knowledge, no other state has been successful either by legislation or regulation in adopting these 125/75 year embargo periods , even though the various Vital Records Officers belong to the National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS) which has been advocating adoption of the 2011 Model Vital Statistics Act.

Adoption of the Model Vital Statistics Act

There are provisions other than embargo periods for birth, marriage and death records in the non-federally-approved 2011 Model Vital Statistics Act to which IAJGS agrees. Since the adoption of the previous Model Vital Statistics Act in 1977 there are many technological changes that we agree should be revised. It is only the embargo period of the 2011 Model Vital Records Act that IAJGS and the general genealogical community opposes.

US Department of Health and Human Services HIPAA 50-Year Rule for Death Records

Ms. Redlener asked about the U.S. Department of Health 2013 adoption of HIPAA regulations which calls for a 50-year embargo on release of death records. While it is included in statements provided for the earlier hearing, the Registrar of the NYC Department of Health said he was not aware of them.¹⁷ Therefore, we would like to provide the reference for this federal determination that 50-years is the death record embargo. It is under the definition of “protected health information”.¹⁸

¹⁶ <https://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2018/Docs/ACTS/ACT046/ACT046%20As%20Enacted.pdf>
Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 5000 (c)(1) page 4

¹⁷ NYC DOH&MH Department of Health Meeting March 13, 2018 page 38-39

¹⁸ <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/guidance/health-information-of-deceased-individuals/index.html>; <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2013-title45-vol1/pdf/CFR-2013-title45-vol1-sec160-103.pdf> see: Protected health information section 2(iv) pages 983-984

Identity Theft

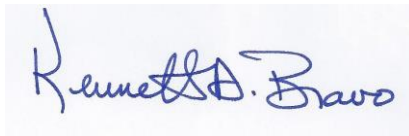
The issue of identity theft was mentioned as one reason not to expand access to the birth and death records in the March 13 minutes. Genealogists are not the cause of identity theft. There has been proof that identity theft occurs from large data breaches from government, finance, health care and other businesses. As the IAJGS statement submitted for the October 2017 hearing commented, there is no evidence that states with open records experience have greater identity theft than those in states with more limited access. In fact, the recent report by New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman listed the over 1,500 data breaches reported to his office, and none were related to vital records theft.¹⁹

The IAJGS is a sponsoring member of the Records Preservation and Access Committee (RPAC) and we support their comments on this proposed amendment. IAJGS is also a member of the NY-RPAC Coalition, and we support their comments as well.

The International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies is the umbrella organization of 78 genealogical societies and Jewish historical societies worldwide whose approximately 9,000 members are actively researching their Jewish roots. In the New York City- Long Island region, we have five member societies who collectively represent approximately 1,400 genealogists with interest in the New York City area records. The IAJGS was formed in 1988 to advance genealogical study, to elevate research standards and to provide a common voice for issues of significance to its members. Our societies' members include both professional and hobbyist genealogists. In 2018, we will hold our 38th consecutive annual International Conference on Jewish Genealogy (www.iajgs.org). One of our primary objectives is to promote public access to genealogically relevant records.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at the email address listed below.

Sincerely,



Ken Bravo,
President, IAJGS
president@IAJGS.org



Jan Meisels Allen
Chairperson, IAJGS Public Records Access
Monitoring Committee
Jan@IAJGS.org

¹⁹ https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/data_breach_report_2017.pdf



Records Preservation & Access Committee

Federation of Genealogical Societies, National Genealogical Society,
International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies

c/o Janet A. Alpert, 137 Victoria Dr., Hilton Head Island, SC 29926

April 20, 2018

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Gotham Center
42-09 28th St., 3rd Floor, Room 3-32
Long Island, NY 11101-4132

RE: Amendment to Article 207
Hearing April 23, 2018

To NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene:

We appreciate the willingness of the department to propose a new Amendment to the Health Code "to expand the categories of qualified applicants who may access birth and death records before the records are transferred to the Department of Records and Information services (Doris) and become public." As mentioned at the meeting of the department on March 13, 2018, step-children and adoptees, should be provided access to the same vital records as biological family members. As heirs at law, they have legal rights and often have contact with extended family. As stated in our earlier letter to you October 21, 2017, we strongly support access to death records which could help identify an inheritable disease that runs in a family. An early warning could prevent premature deaths in those who are still living which should be a priority for any health department.

Since 2004, the Surgeon General and the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services have publicized the importance of knowing a family's health history. Genealogists need access to the full death record, including cause of death, for grand aunts and uncles and great-grand aunts and uncles, to determine which branch of a family carries a genetic disease. In addition to the relatives and relationships mentioned in the Amendment on March 13, second and third cousins need access to these death records, especially including the cause of death.

We understand that NAPHSIS and other vital records jurisdictions need to replace the 1992 Model Act to reflect changes in electronic records, legal requirements, and cultural shifts. However, Records Preservation and Access Committee (RPAC) takes issue with most of the points in your Notice of Adoption of Article 207, section 1043(b) of the New York City Health Code, dated March 13, 2018. There is no evidence that the states with open public records experience any greater occurrence of identity theft than states with more limited access. Most

cases of identity theft occur when large electronic databases are hacked, not because someone walks into a court house or archive and copies a vital record. A recent report from New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman stated 1,583 data breaches were reported to his office in 2017 and the largest number were caused by the hacking of the Equifax database.¹ Theft of vital records was not an identified cause of identity theft in New York.

We are disappointed that last October the department chose to disregard 1,300 pages of comments made by family historians and genealogists and more than 3,800 signatures on a petition against longer embargo periods. Closing death records for long periods of time does not prevent identity theft. In fact, the reverse is true. Having death records readily available prevents someone else from using that person's identity. The genealogical community is willing to help protect against identity theft by providing genealogical credentials and/or proof of membership from a local or national genealogical organization to gain access to embargoed records. We would be happy to meet with the department to recommend access requirements.

We accept the fact that people are living longer, however, closing birth records beyond 100 years to protect a few, denies access to several million family historians whose ancestors were born in New York City. The records in New York City are often the missing link to identifying birth origins and parents' names overseas. By closing vital records for 125 years, you are denying access to the information for five generations or more of living Americans. Women live longer than men and most women have married. Therefore, the current identity of a woman 100 years old is not closely linked to her name on her birth record. Genealogists believe the problem can be easily solved by issuing "informational copies of records" which cannot be used to establish anyone's identity as is done in California.

The Death Master File (DMF) and its resulting Social Security Death Index (SSDI) were developed in the 1980's so that lenders, merchants, and creditors could know when someone was deceased. The problem is that not all entities who need access to the SSDI have it and identity theft occurs when government agencies who have access do not use the DMF. In addition, many vital records registrars are no longer contributing information to the SSDI, thus making the database incomplete and less reliable. RPAC is on record with NAPHSIS of supporting the EVVE Fact of Death system, and any other database that makes death records more available, not less. The benefits of open public records far outweigh the minimal benefits of closing public records. For all the above reasons, we strongly object to death records being closed for more than twenty-five years. Vital records have been public records in America since the founding of the first colonies in New England in the 1620's.

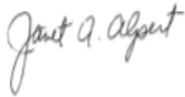
RPAC is sponsored by the Federation of Genealogical Societies, the International Society of Jewish Genealogical Societies, the National Genealogical Society, and supported by the Association of Professional Genealogists, the Board for Certification of Genealogists, the American Society of Genealogists, and the International Commission for the Certification of

¹ https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/data_breach_report_2017.pdf

Accreditation of Professional Genealogists. The genealogical societies and professional organizations listed above represent several thousand local, state, and regional societies, more than 400,000 members researching family history, and over 2,000 professional and forensic genealogists whose important work includes tracking relatives with possible inheritable diseases; working with coroners to identify unclaimed persons; finding next of kin of unclaimed persons for repatriation of military remains; and heir research.

For more information see <http://www.fgs.org/rpac>. I may be contacted at janalpert@aol.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janet A. Alpert".

Janet A. Alpert, Chair

From: Joshua Hornick
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Article 207 amendment
Date: Thursday, April 19, 2018 11:39:42 AM

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails. If it looks suspicious, send it as an attachment to spamemail@health.nyc.gov<<mailto:spamemail@health.nyc.gov>>

Please do not limit access to records more than is standard in other states or in Europe. It's, well, limiting. Please adopt the amendment and, if possible, open up the records more for researchers and family.

Thank you.

Joshua Hornick
jhornick@mac.com

From: Karen Franklin
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: change in law would be discriminatory
Date: Thursday, April 19, 2018 5:49:02 PM

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails. If it looks suspicious, send it as an attachment to spamemail@health.nyc.gov

To the DOH:

I strongly oppose the proposed additional tightening of access to NYC vital records. As a professional genealogist who assists in probate searches, I see that this new obstacle would add to the burden those entitled to estates who must forfeit an even larger percentage of estate proceeds to attorneys who need to order multiple additional records that may be required to probate wills, and who need to establish with due diligence that there are no additional family members who could be distributed. This could be much more difficult, if not impossible, if they don't have access to records now available. They would need to order dozens or hundreds of more records for each case, petitioning the court for each, and charging clients accordingly. This is particularly unfair to those who would inherit small estates, and would also add to the burden of the court.

Sincerely,

Karen S Franklin
104 Franklin Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10705

Past President,
International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies

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Karen S. Franklin
917-969-9014

April 23, 2018

RE: Amendment to Article 207

We applaud the efforts of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to expand the range of those to whom copies of birth and death records would be accessible. The newly established categories will help many individual genealogists access these important records.

However, these expansions still **unnecessarily limit** the ability for individuals to access these records for research purposes. A researcher often needs to view the information on an individual's birth or death record **before** being able to correctly assert their relationship to that individual. Genealogists are frequently beset by research questions that involve individuals with extremely common names, inconsistencies in biographical details, and other hurdles that make identifying a specific familial relationship difficult – if not impossible – to determine *without access to birth and death records*.

Furthermore, the categories exclude important familial elements that are becoming more prevalent today and will continue to do so over the next 125 years. The reality of New York's families today and in the immediate past is incongruent with the traditional approach proposed by the New York City Department of Mental Health and Hygiene. For example, the exclusion of step-relationships from the list discriminates against thousands of families living in New York City today. These omissions, alongside the inability for adoptees to access information regarding their family history, create an unfair barrier to access.

While an individual genealogist might focus on their specific family, this is not the only use of these materials for genealogical and historical research. The greatly expanded time periods (which are now amongst the most restrictive in the nation) **prohibit local and family historians from studying an incredibly large number of topics, such as:**

- Members of a community who served in World War II, the Korean Conflict, or the Vietnam War (as records pertaining to most World War II veterans fall within of the new timeframes). The stories of these heroic men and women, who sacrificed their lives for our freedom, will remain hidden for up to a century.
- Survivors of the Holocaust, as the records of family members who escaped to New York in the 1940s are now inaccessible to researchers until the mid-21st century.
- Biographical, genealogical, and cultural studies of any immigrant communities and their impact on the city of New York throughout the 20th century.
- Those seeking research into family health history, as applicable information is needed from third and fourth cousins, categories not covered under the proposed expansions.

Therefore we ask that the Department of Health create an additional category for access – Researcher – that specifically allows researchers to access these records. The creation of this category would help to resolve the situations outlined above. This level of access could still require an appropriate level of identification (such as a driver's license, passport, or state ID) and clarify an individual's purpose in requesting a specific record.

Sincerely,

Frederick Wertz 4/5/2018 17:05

Noel Gessner 4/6/2018 14:28

Graceanne Bowe	4/7/2018 9:09
Richard Boedicker	4/7/2018 13:13
Judd Kramarcik	4/7/2018 13:26
Brenda Hayward	4/7/2018 18:31
Mary Ann Hollen	4/7/2018 19:32
James Wigand	4/8/2018 9:19
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State of NY Society	
Daughters of 1812	
Sterling-Affinati,	
NY State President	4/10/2018 7:29
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John Harland	4/10/2018 7:57
Michael Quirion	4/10/2018 7:59
Randel Mott Cobb	4/10/2018 8:04
Lauren Brockman	4/10/2018 8:04
Mary Bartkowski	4/10/2018 8:05

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Susan Palma	4/10/2018 8:11
Elbert Davis	4/10/2018 8:21
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Marian Wood	4/10/2018 8:26
Jane Dooley	4/10/2018 8:26
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Kim Worrall	4/10/2018 10:34
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Natalie Webb	4/17/2018 15:34
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Colleen Parish	4/17/2018 18:21

Scott Morrison	4/17/2018 20:38
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Janet Blake	4/19/2018 9:34
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Laura McDonald	4/19/2018 9:59
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Kathleen Lloyd	4/20/2018 12:58
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Denise Conte	4/20/2018 13:20
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Sharon Francis	4/22/2018 17:00
rosina fiore	4/22/2018 17:55
Gillian Gail	4/22/2018 19:08
ZYPPORA GOLDBERG	4/22/2018 20:16
Judi Missel	4/22/2018 21:10
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Miriam Soule	4/22/2018 22:24
Kathi Galvin	4/22/2018 22:36
Rhoda Miller	4/22/2018 22:43
Barbara Sontz	4/22/2018 22:53

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Janice Peterson	4/23/2018 11:37
Michael Cassara	4/23/2018 11:50
Randi Patrick	4/23/2018 12:15
Ron Cohen	4/23/2018 12:41
Harriet Mayer	4/23/2018 12:50
L. Vincent	4/23/2018 14:02
Diandra Patrick	4/23/2018 14:55
David Decker	4/23/2018 15:43

New York Records Preservation and Access Coalition

www.nyrpac.org

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Gotham Center
42-09 28th Street, 3rd Floor, Room 3-32
Long Island City, 11101

April 23, 2018

To Whom it May Concern:

Our coalition represents thousands of genealogists and researchers with an interest in the preservation of and access to New York's records. The coalition represents individuals who conduct a wide variety of research using birth and death records—many of which extend beyond genealogical research—and include research into communities, family health history, immigration, biography, military service, and numerous other research topics.

We appreciate that the proposed amendment expands the categories and circumstances under which certain individuals can access information related to their relatives. However, the amendment does not fully recognize the concerns raised by the 5,000+ individuals who objected to the timeframes now in place for access to birth and death records under the care of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. The rules now in place are unnecessarily restrictive.

The amendment assumes a researcher only needs to access to birth and death records for a narrowly defined sphere of a biological family. This is a misunderstanding of the methods undertaken by those tracing family history:

1. For those tracing hereditary diseases, research into third and fourth cousins is critical. The amendment does not provide for this in any form, thereby unfairly blocking access to those wishing to trace inherited diseases, such as the BRCA2 gene.
2. The amendment assumes that genealogical researchers only access birth and death records when they have a known relationship to someone who falls within the specified categories. This, as stated, in statements made to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, is simply not the case. **Properly conducted genealogical research requires the use of multiple materials—including birth and death records—to verify one's ancestry. For example, the purpose of obtaining the birth record of a hypothesized great-grandparent is to verify that an individual might in fact be the individual's great-grandchild.** Research often leads to a question or hypothesis, and many times death records are required to prove or disprove the hypothesis. If we knew the relationship beforehand, accessing a death record might be less of a priority.
3. The study of one's family often extends into step-relationships, adoptions, and other areas that require access to records not provided for in the amendment.
4. Learning the identity of an informant allows researchers to better understand the accuracy of provided information.

New York Records Preservation and Access Coalition

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Birth and death records are essential for genealogical research to obtain this information in the first place. They are, in some cases, the only documentation that exists naming the parents of an individual, an individual's birthplace, and other important details.

Our research projects often extend beyond an individual's biological family history. We often research broader subjects as part of local history projects. The amendment does not provide, for example, the ability for a researcher to examine the stories of men and women who served in the World Wars (as even those veterans of World War I lived beyond the newly established guidelines).

We are increasingly concerned with examples provided by our members of inconsistencies in obtaining access to records they were **already entitled to** under the previous rule. Even after providing the necessary documentation, applicants are often not allowed access to a record unless they can provide a precise accounting of information (such as parent's names) that would be on the record. When asked about this issue at public hearings, responses indicated that applicants are taken at their word regarding their relationships, however this is not the case based upon the experiences of our members.

We thus implore the Department to add an additional category to those eligible to receive copies of birth and death records—a researcher. The addition of this category would allow those researchers access without necessarily restricting their relationship to the individual(s) named on the record. This would allow a step-grandson to access the record of the individual who they identified as their grandfather and a third cousin to discover the potential that she is carrying a hereditary disease that could—with early detection—be treated more effectively. Those accessing records as a researcher could still be required to submit their own identification, alongside a specific reason for accessing the materials. In addition, we would be willing to work with the Department of Health in identifying requirements for a researcher card.

Further, we also encourage the Department of Health to engage in conversations with NY-RPAC and its member organizations regarding the proper preservation of New York City's birth and death records.

Sincerely,

New York Records Preservation and Access Coalition

Members of the New York Records Preservation and Access Coalition include:

*Guild of One-Name Studies
International Association of Jewish
Genealogical Societies
Irish Family History Forum
Italian Genealogical Group
Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc. (New York)
Jewish Genealogy Society of Long Island*

*New York Genealogical & Biographical Society
Reclaim the Records
Records Preservation and Access Committee, a
joint committee of the Federation of
Genealogical Societies, the National
Genealogical Society, and the International
Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies*

From: Alec Ferretti
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Amendment 207
Date: Monday, April 23, 2018 4:50:12 PM
Attachments: [Vital Records Graph.pdf](#)

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Regarding the proposal to amend article 207:

I will keep this brief, as I have had plenty of opportunities to speak in the past, and they have mostly fallen on deaf ears. There is no correlation between identity theft and restrictedness of vital records. States with more liberal laws regarding the matter actually have lower rates of identity theft.

I believe this proposal is an effort by the DOH to exert control over something they believe to be their ward, just like a neurotic helicopter mom. The truth is, the children to whom you are so protective, are 100 years old, and nearly all dead. Their records deserve to be made accessible to the public, but the DOH is like Norman Bates, allowing these records to mummify in their cellar.

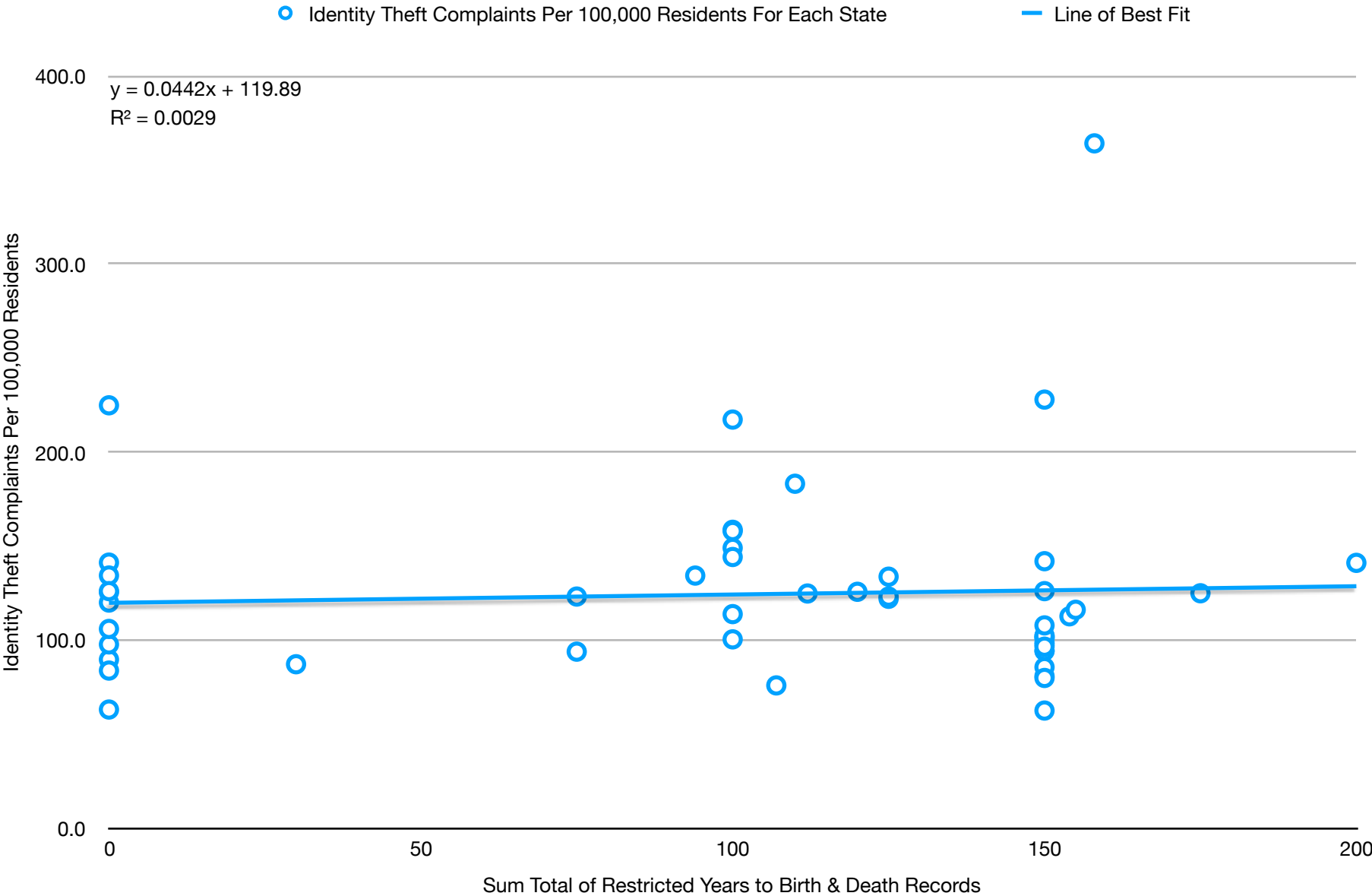
I implore you to fall in line with all the other progressive states who have decided to publish their vital records. Through transparency, it is possible to actually combat identity theft. If a simple public database contains every deceased persons' info, how can any self respecting financial institution give a loan out in their name?

Stop this nonsensical Hitchcock movie, set aside your inflamed egos, and do the right thing for once in this department's wretched history. This sentiment of restrictiveness was opposed by thousands of parties, and supported by only two, each with a vested interest in the matter, might I add. What kind of dysfunctional democracy is this, where the government actively goes forward with rules that are opposed by virtually 100% of the population who bothered to acknowledge the issue? It isn't one. It is a dictatorship run by self-obsessed bureaucrats who put their own self-importance over the dissemination of history and the truth. These bureaucrats elect instead to deprive their agency of revenue, just so they can walk around as the all-powerful Oz, the "keeper of records".

My 3rd great aunt Yetta would be rolling over in her grave if she knew how difficult it were for me to do her genealogy- I can't be sure though, because I don't know where she is buried because your office won't give me her death certificate.

Alec Ferretti

Correlation of Restricted Years of Birth & Death Records with Rate of Identity Theft in Each State



From: Gillian Gail
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 23, 2018 4:43:39 PM

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Dear Department of Health and Mental Hygiene,

While this new amendment is an improvement on your previous proposal it does not cover enough. I am in my 20s and the family historian for my family. With this new rule my parents would have some access to records that I would not have access to at all. I have been the one maintaining all of the family information since I was in Girl Scouts working on an my Gold Award.

I am a member of a genealogy website where I was lucky enough to talk to someone I believe to be my mother's 3rd cousin. Unfortunately, with the new restrictions I cannot go and look at the birth and death records for the generation that we are unsure of. I know the older generation; she knows the younger one but the one in the middle the two of us do not know much about. While she is more closely related to them than I am she is in Oklahoma and unable to get to NYC. On the other hand I am next to NYC and able to get to various parts easily but not old enough or closely related enough to look at the records. The new rules have blocked us from being able to truly determine our relation. I have gone to the municipal archives and looked at records on her behalf as well as mine to determine our relation but I was only able to access a small fraction of what we needed to look at to determine our relation by myself.

Additionally; birth certificates have one little box that is incredibly important for family research; birth certificates list how many previous children the mother had. This is needed to determine if there is a child you did not know about existed between children you did know about. My family happens to have a history of twins that I did not realize was so wide spread until I started doing genealogy research. I am in my 20s so someday I want to get married and have children; knowing how likely I am to have twins is a current important health information that I could only get from vital records. One hundred years ago, children died of things that are routinely treatable now and even if a one twin survived then the other could have easily been forgotten to time if they were not mentioned to the next generation that never knew them.

2018 marks 100 years since the 1918 flu pandemic that killed million of people. Not all of those people had the chance to have children and/or get married. I was lucky enough to know my grandfather's aunt. She told be about how when she was a girl in 1918 her cousin and uncle died within a few days of each other. She did not remember the names and exact ages when she was in her 90s this makes me the last person left to know those people even existed otherwise they are lost to time. Since they have no direct living descendants I would need the birth and death records to know if they are indeed the correct person.

Often time due to common names; I have to look at records that are NOT my relatives to determine if they ARE my relative. The process of elimination is used on states test in schools and in genealogy research.

It has also been noted that step relations are not able to access records my 2x great-grandparents and great-grandparents on both side have been widowed or divorced and remarried without having children with their 2nd spouse. Once even raised my great-grandmother as her child and never had kids of her own, she was my grandmother's grandmother and I have only heard wonderful things about her and would love to know what happened to her and were she was burred to one day pay my respects to her for showing my grandmother to be the perfect grandparent. Since she is a step-grandparent to me not by birth I currently have no access to her information.

I am hoping to still to family research on my fmaily but at this time my research has been stopped by The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. I am in my 20s and I am hoping this is not the end of genealogy research in my lifetime.

Sincerely,

Gillian Gail

From: Suzanne and Clyde Goodrich
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: [From Vwall: Suspected SPAM]: Comments
Date: Sunday, April 15, 2018 9:25:38 PM

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Upon reading the expanded list of those who may obtain birth and death records from the NYC Dept. of Health, a few thoughts cross my mind as a family genealogist and a member of a historical society:

- (1) As the descendant of immigrants whose records may be found in the archives of this department, it may be impossible to obtain such information from any other resource but there, especially going back further in generations other than suggested.
- (2) As a member of our local historical society, members, especially our Town Historian, are often called upon to assist researchers in gathering pertinent family information. Even if we do not personally apply for these records, we would like to be able to direct them to this resource.
- (3) If fear of identity theft is a supposed reason for such restrictions, it cannot escape anyone's attention that the Internet is the biggest abettor in this problem. The fact that applying to get such records from these archives would cost money and then require research to be sure that the identity is useful would seem to be a deterrent to use this avenue for fraud.
- (4) As it is, New York State has the most stringent rules concerning public access to family research such as birth and death records. The proposed resolution does nothing to help genuine research but being restrictive.

I sincerely hope that concerns such as those that I have expressed will be taken into consideration during the debate over restrictions to the access to records in the NYC Department of Health.

Suzanne Goodrich

From: Eva Dahlberg
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Regarding access to NYC Vital records
Date: Monday, April 23, 2018 4:56:22 PM

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Regarding access to NYC Vital records

My name is Eva Dahlberg and I live in Sweden. I've been doing my own family history since the late 1970s when I was a teenager. My ancestors are all in Sweden – but my relatives are not only in Sweden and in several other European countries, but also in the US and many of them lived in NYC from 1880s onwards.

For me as a family historian and genealogist, following the principles of the world wide genealogical principles formed also for us as amateurs – the genealogical proof standard (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genealogical_Proof_Standard) - having access to vital records is a necessity.

Several of my relatives that lived in NYC in 1880-1940 and many of those family members don't have living descendants – neither children nor grandchildren – that could ask for documents to prove facts. So for me there is no family member to ask to get the records. And why should we want to only research people that have living descendants today? I don't make any profit on my research, this is strictly a personal research on my own family members, distant as they may be.

If I want to write scholarly about a family that lived in NYC in the 1930-1940s I need the documents to prove dates, names and relationships. I can get that from many other states in the US, but not for my NYC relatives. If your policy isn't changed, the list of sources would for NYC say "proof cannot be presented due to privacy laws".

I know it's not a fair comparison, but in Sweden the act of privacy says at the utmost 70 years, then all access is open – to anyone who would like to see a document (and they are not entitled to ask why I want to see it), for marriages it's a shorter statute of privacy.

Identity theft is not stopped by this – you are just creating a very restricted research environment. And other reasons for such strict timelines and restricted group of entitled people are hard to imagine.

For the sake of amateur genealogists, I ask you to consider opening access beyond your proposed time lines and family groups.

Thank you!

Eva Dahlberg

Brunnsgatan 28, 55317 Jönköping, Sweden

Email evadahlberg176@gmail.com

From: Elizabeth Handler
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Friday, April 13, 2018 4:27:24 PM

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This amendment does not go far enough. It does not solve the true issues caused by the new, restrictive access rules.

You often can't prove relation in the first place without a birth or death record

The fact is, a researcher often needs to view the information on an individual's birth or death record before being able to correctly assert their relationship to that individual. Genealogists often ask research questions that make identifying a specific family relationship difficult – if not impossible – to determine without access to birth and death records.

The rules exclude modern family relationships

The categories listed above exclude important family relationships that are common today and will become more common in the future. Many families simply don't fit the traditional approach proposed. For example, the exclusion of step-relationships from the list discriminates against thousands of families living in New York City today. These omissions, alongside the inability for adoptees to access information regarding their family history, create an unfair barrier to access.

The amendment discriminates against non-family research

What about researchers seeking to learn and educate others about families outside of their personal ethnicity or community? These rules may exclude entire groups and communities from having their history preserved. Additionally, the greatly expanded time periods (which are now amongst the most restrictive in the nation) prevent individuals from researching and educating others about important historical information such as military veterans, Holocaust survivors, and immigrant communities.

As a genealogist with ancestors, recent ancestors, in New York City, I ask that you continue to open access, in a reasonable way, to vital records.

Thank you,
Elizabeth Handler
Needham, Massachusetts

From: carole356@aol.com
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comments from a genealogist
Date: Friday, April 13, 2018 4:21:04 PM

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Hello,

I have been a genealogist for 40 years and I think restricting the records to family members only and permitting public research access after 1893 (if this is true) will basically defeat your purpose. Many of our ancestors have common names like Smith, Jones, Brown, etc. and you can easily find 3-15 people with the same name who are born or die within a close range of years.

Most descendants cannot get to the Municipal Archives and often records cannot be found by writing to the MA simply because they do not know the year of their great-grandparent's birth/death. It's a busy place and I promise you the clerks haven't the time to spend hours sifting through records. That's my job and I'm very good at it.

Most states have recognized the important benefit of genealogy research and they simply stamp "For genealogical purposes only" on the record.

NYC already had one of the most restrictive laws in the U.S., refusing to permit examination of birth records after 1907 and if you are now refusing researchers to search for records until *after* 1893, that is ridiculous and you will simply make it much harder for descendants to find information on their ancestors.

You will not make more money off this dumb idea, if that was your plan. All you will do is gouge a lot of good, honest and well meaning descendants who simply want to find connections to their past.

Mrs. Murray
New York, NY

From: Jan Slabaugh
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Thursday, April 12, 2018 11:42:27 AM

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One records need to remain open to the public!!!!

Sent from my iPhone

From: Marie Thatcher
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 6:15:41 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am a professional probate researcher and also do a lot of family history research for family and friends with ancestry in New York. Access to vital records is crucial for this research, and while I understand fears about identity theft, I feel that these restrictions are far too severe and misapprehend what are the best ways of stalling criminals. Death certificates in particular should be more freely available than this allows, as presenting a death record is the best way to prove that a deceased person whose identity has been stolen is indeed dead. Offering an informational copy for research purposes but not identity purposes would be another solution--many other states offer this option, for this purpose.

If these restrictions must stand, then I would like to register my support for the amendment that would expand the list of relatives entitled to obtain birth and death records. While this level of restriction will still hinder much of my research (as proving these relationships is often impossible to do without access to birth and death records of other still other relatives--creating a cycle of unprovability), it is still better than the original restriction level.

Sincerely,
Marie Thatcher

American Research Bureau
Salt Lake City, UT

From: Kathleen Litwin
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 4:16:42 PM

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I totally agree with the amendment, and the inclusion of specific family members who would be allowed to receive the info.....the real problem with how to get a record without really knowing whether the individual's record you're requesting info on is, in fact, the individual you need (and are related directly to) dictates a lengthier and more detailed index being written, so we researchers can get it right the first time (there are so many times I've had to collect 2 or 3 separate records before I stumbled on the correct one).

Regards, K. Litwin

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: McKelden Smith
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 1:19:47 PM

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I am strongly in favor of maintaining public access to the vital records of New York City, for all of the reasons that have been put forward by others so clearly and persuasively. The bias should be to make records available as soon as possible, including birth and death records. Records should be moved to the municipal archives where they can be accessed by researchers without restriction.

McKelden Smith
162 East 80th Street
New York, NY 10075

From: Maura
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 23, 2018 5:18:20 PM

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Please support members of the genealogy community who need access to vital records for various legitimate reasons including family research, family health history, documenting lineage for membership in lineage societies and tracing ancestors.

Thank you for your consideration and help,
Maura McLeod

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: Suzanne and Clyde Goodrich
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: [From Vwall: Suspected SPAM]: Comments
Date: Sunday, April 15, 2018 9:25:38 PM

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Upon reading the expanded list of those who may obtain birth and death records from the NYC Dept. of Health, a few thoughts cross my mind as a family genealogist and a member of a historical society:

- (1) As the descendant of immigrants whose records may be found in the archives of this department, it may be impossible to obtain such information from any other resource but there, especially going back further in generations other than suggested.
- (2) As a member of our local historical society, members, especially our Town Historian, are often called upon to assist researchers in gathering pertinent family information. Even if we do not personally apply for these records, we would like to be able to direct them to this resource.
- (3) If fear of identity theft is a supposed reason for such restrictions, it cannot escape anyone's attention that the Internet is the biggest abettor in this problem. The fact that applying to get such records from these archives would cost money and then require research to be sure that the identity is useful would seem to be a deterrent to use this avenue for fraud.
- (4) As it is, New York State has the most stringent rules concerning public access to family research such as birth and death records. The proposed resolution does nothing to help genuine research but being restrictive.

I sincerely hope that concerns such as those that I have expressed will be taken into consideration during the debate over restrictions to the access to records in the NYC Department of Health.

Suzanne Goodrich

From: nycdoitt@srv-307.devcloud.hosting.acquia.com [<mailto:nycdoitt@srv-307.devcloud.hosting.acquia.com>] **On Behalf Of** NYC Rules
Sent: Monday, April 09, 2018 9:08 PM
To: NYCrules
Subject: Form submission from: Contact NYC Rules Form

Submitted on Monday, April 9, 2018 - 9:08pm

First Name: Christopher
Last Name: Sands
Company Name: genealogy
Street Address: 44 Roger Ave, 44 Roger Ave
Apartment/Suite #: 44 Roger Ave
City: Cranford
State: New Jersey
Zip/Postal Code: 07016
Country: United States
Phone (including area code): 9088681347
Email: rex44roger@aol.com

Message

My comment concerns Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code). I have many family ancestors who lived in NYC and have been doing genealogy for many years. This rule would help offset the last rule change which was very bad for all genealogists. I am still trying to find what we call brick walls. Records for a second or third Great Grandmother in NYC. Your rule change has hindered me. This will help balance it out.

Please pass it.

Thank you for your consideration.

From: bella
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 16, 2018 2:56:28 PM

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I think this is a disgrace what NY is doing where family members cannot get access to another family members birth/death/marriage records. Someone like me who has family that died over 100 years ago, I cannot get access to their records. Jeez, these people are dead, help us family member out and the genealogists of the world!

Thank you,
Karen

From: Lisa Ertel
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Sunday, April 15, 2018 2:00:04 AM

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I have ancestors who lived in New York and limiting access to vital records severely inhibits my search for more information on these family members. I live in the western United States and cannot visit local archives, etc. to further my search. I have to rely on easily accessible record collections and indexes to make my search remotely possible. Please keep access to these records available. Other states like Illinois, West Virginia, and Missouri have opted to have many of their vital records from the same time period (and forward) available without detriment to people's privacy. So many people throughout the US have roots in the state of New York that keeping these records available would have far reaching effects.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lisa Ertel

From: Suzanne Malek
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Thursday, April 12, 2018 12:22:17 PM

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Dear Sir or Madame:

I am a family historian/genealogist. Since much of my ancestry (like so much of the nation) stems from New York, having access to historical vital records is very important to my research. I am asking the Department of Health to create an additional category for access – Researcher – that specifically allows researchers to access these records. The creation of this category would allow vital family research to continue. I support a requirement to provide you with an appropriate level of identification (such as a driver’s license, passport, or state ID) and clarify an individual’s purpose in requesting a specific record, this seems fair and logical. Please don’t prevent families from discovering their history by blocking us out. Family research is vital for so many reasons.

Thank you.

Suzanne Malek
1026 Eagle Court
Carson City, NV 89701

From: Teresa Scott
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Tuesday, April 10, 2018 12:58:01 PM

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The recent restrictions imposed on vital records in New York are unnecessarily restrictive. Although the proposed amendments improve the situation, and I therefore support them, the restrictions are still unduly burdensome. My husband's family lived and worked in New York City throughout the 20th Century. If we had not been able to obtain various birth and death records, several family mysteries would not have been untangled and the reunion of various members would not have occurred. Please consider the proposed amendments favorably.

Teresa Scott

From: ZOE STOUT
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Tuesday, April 10, 2018 9:20:58 AM

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I support public access to vital records.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: F18235
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Tuesday, April 10, 2018 5:36:55 AM

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I am writing in support of the proposed amendment indicated above. While we all appreciate the concern for privacy, the amendment is quite restrictive and significantly limits the ability to discover pertinent genealogical information. I hope that you will consider the above amendment and pass it in order to improve access to critical documents. Thank you
Colleen Fay

From: J San
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 09, 2018 10:12:42 PM

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Dear Sir/Madam:

I appreciate the privacy which your decision affords everyone. However, allowing descendants to be given access to the correct dates and places of Official Records is very important to me. One of my personal goals is to pray for the soul of each of my Ancestors, privately. I need to accurately know who they are from Official Documents from New York State and City.

Recently, a researcher from Italy surprised me with news that my great-grandmother had many children in New York who died in early childhood. No one ever talked about them. I need to pray for them, clear the pain from the family lines.

Please allow researchers and family members to access records, as you have proposed. I was born in NY, as was all my family. I am in my 60s and wish to have birth, death and marriage certificate copies for grandparents and (childless) great-aunts and great-uncles, who passed between 1973 and 1991.

The last of these passed 27 years ago, and she had given to me all the family stories she had, with the desire that I would continue her research to preserve our family history. She had no children and this was her legacy to her grand-nieces and a sign of respect to her Ancestors, who she did not want to be forgotten.

It is just at this point in my life that I have time to do this--what bad timing for me and my family! Please amend your Decision so that I can obtain Official Documents regarding my family who have passed, so that I may know for whom to pray, To keep good records, I should be able to confirm information so that I can accurately document this for my family, and privately pray to clear the pain from the family blood lines.

Respectfully,

Jeane Sandow

;

From: Margaret Gonzalez
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 09, 2018 7:45:18 PM

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I think to allow everyone to research lost generations of family is very important please. Please consider voting yes to this proposed amendment it will introduce present generation to past generation and perhaps reveal genetic medical problems that may be revealed.

Thank You
Margaret Gonzalez

From: Michael v
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 09, 2018 6:50:47 PM

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I believe the 125/75 year restriction window can be narrowed somewhat. Perhaps to 100/50. Thank you for your consideration.

Michael Sullivan

From: Barbara Swift
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 09, 2018 6:50:46 PM

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Keep the records available. Genealogy societies rely on them for proof of descent from our patriotic ancestors.

Barbara Swift
Registrar Mojave,
DAR

From: Peggy Walrath
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 09, 2018 6:03:19 PM

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Limiting access to birth and death records cuts off people from our roots—sharing genealogical records has been an important part of bringing our widespread family together. We started out as a New York family, but after the disruptions of World War II, family members now live in many different states. Many families arrived and settled in New York; our roots are here, the history of who we are begins here. We're not looking for great inheritances, just to know our story, who we are.

This is an important goal at a time when Americans seem to want to forget that they started out as immigrants, or as laborers and tenement dwellers.

Limiting birth records for 125 years seems ridiculously out of proportion, making it virtually impossible to trace a family. Limiting death records for any length of time is equally harsh—family members may have no other way of learning that someone has passed away.

I urge you to eliminate these provisions.

From: Margaret R. Fortier
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 09, 2018 6:01:43 PM

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While I support the amendment, it does not address the true issues caused by the new, restrictive access rules.

You often can't prove relation in the first place without a birth or death record. A researcher often needs to view the information on an individual's birth or death record **before** being able to correctly assert their relationship to that individual. Genealogists often ask research questions that make identifying a specific family relationship difficult – if not impossible – to determine without access to birth and death records.

Modern family relationships are excluded. The categories listed for the rule exclude important family relationships that are common today and will become more common in the future. Many families just don't fit the traditional approach proposed. For example, the exclusion of step-relationships from the list discriminates against thousands of families living in New York City today. These omissions, alongside the inability for adoptees to access information regarding their family history, create an unfair barrier to access.

The amendment discriminates against non-family research. What about researchers seeking to learn about families outside of their personal ethnicity or community? These rules may exclude entire groups and communities from having their history preserved. Additionally, the greatly expanded time periods (which are now amongst the most restrictive in the nation) prevent individuals from researching and educating others about important historical information such as military veterans, Holocaust survivors, and immigrant communities.

Sincerely,
Margaret R. Fortier

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: brian brennan
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 09, 2018 5:42:52 PM

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To whom it may concern:

I feel the new regulations being put in place to access records are extreme . It will hurt all NYC genealogists. I understand putting some restrictions on records for privacy reasons , but 125 years for births is extreme. 100 years is for births and 50 years for deaths is far more reasonable

Sincerely .
Brian O. Brennan

Sent from my iPhone

From: Ellen Jacobs
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 09, 2018 5:38:06 PM

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Please allow open access to records for genealogical purposes! I am trying to find out more about my grandparents (all I know is name and birthdate) and if you retract access it could prevent me from ever finding out more about my ancestors.

Sent from my iPad

From: Debby Wylie
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Monday, April 09, 2018 3:44:55 PM

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I have been trying to get a birth certificate for my father who was born in 1932 in Manhattan, and have been unable to because I don't know his parents names. I have a copy of his Certification of Birth with a number for his birth record, but it doesn't show his parents names and not even a first name for him. When applying for the birth certificate I included his original death certificate, his certification of birth, my birth certificate, my baptism record naming his as my father, and copies of my drivers license and passport. He was raised in foster homes and never adopted. He deserted my mother when I was about 2 months old and I never saw or heard from him again. When he died in 1985, he was a homeless, alcoholic, and had never remarried or had any other children. I have so little to go on, I had hoped his birth certificate would at least give me my paternal grandparents names. There is no way I know of to find out his parents names, so the way the law is now, I won't be able to get his birth certificate until I'm in my 80's! This is unacceptable and needs to be changed.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: Elbrun Kimmelman
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Tuesday, April 10, 2018 2:50:11 PM

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Dear Sir,

As a long time user of birth and death records in order to learn about my own family history , I feel you are unnecessarily limiting access to such records because you are excluding the more difficult to include family members such as adoptees and step children. Also it is detrimental to studying records for health reasons to prohibit genealogists who are doing research. I urge you to loosen your limits on access.

Thank you,

Mrs. Peter Kimmelman
998 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10028

From: L Levy
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Birth and death records
Date: Tuesday, April 10, 2018 1:50:30 PM

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Hi.

I'm the grand niece of a woman who died in NY State around 1950. Currently I'm not able to get her records, therefore I'm not able to find out what happened to her body, her life has basically disappeared. She deserves better. I want to know what happened to my aunt Ida. There's not a "identity theft" issue, she's been gone for years.

These records should be more open and accessible. There's no real reason not to let relatives have access to them. I do genealogy and this part of my family tree is very difficult to track. Without the records I can't find her mother's maiden name, and confirm this information.

Please let us see the records.

Laura Levy

From: orlandoone-name-study@gmail.com
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Cc: [<julie.goucher@one-name.org>](mailto:julie.goucher@one-name.org)
Subject: Comment on Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 7:53:58 AM

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I live in England and have Sicilian ancestors. They left Sicily in search of a better life and migrated to the US with some settling in New York City.

I am vehemently opposed to the restrictions you have outlined.

Here in England and Wales it is possible to order certificates and pay for them the price of £9.25. It is also possible to order a PDF of the certificate which has no identification value, and is only of use to researchers for the price of £6.00

There is no reason why adopting a similar approach could not work for NYC. The cheaper certificates can not be used of identity purposes, therefore you would be able to restrict access if the issue of identity fraud is a genuine one, whilst able to provide the certificates for the genealogical community and generate an income, provided those fees are not unrealistic.

Please do consider the option outlined here. Sadly I am unable to be at the meeting.

Best wishes,

Julie Goucher
Secretary, Guild of One-Name Studies (3925)
www.one-name.org
Butcher & Orlando One-Name Studies

From: Jim
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Reclaim the Records
Date: Saturday, April 07, 2018 11:27:43 AM

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Broaden the availability to get our genealogy records.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10



Virus-free. www.avast.com

From: Thomas G. Hawkins Jr.
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Proposed amendment to General Vital Statistics Provisions (Article 207 of the NYC Health Code)
Date: Thursday, April 05, 2018 10:54:37 PM

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My name is Thomas Hawkins, I am a genealogist/family historian and would like to comment on this proposed amendment.

It would be a great honor and privilege to be able to obtain birth certificates and death certificates of family members, mainly direct ancestors but especially granduncles, grandaunts, grandparents, great grandparents, great great grandparents, and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd cousins of those grandparents, great grandparents, great great grandparents.

I have been trying for 7 years to get a birth certificate for my grandmother, she was born in 1930 (I have another 12 years to go before 100 years have gone by), when I sent for a birth certificate back in 2010 (I believe it was the NY State archives) I was told I had to contact the NYC archives, when I contacted the NYC archives I was told I had to contact the NY State archives. And ever since thing NYC has become more and more seclusive when dealing with the public and it has been hard to obtain a birth or death certificate. My goal in obtaining my grandmother's birth certificate was to find out my great grandmother's name and birthplace and possible birth date to trace her family lineage. If I myself have to wait 125 years after my grandmothers birth, that would be in 2055 and I would be 75 years old, I have to wait another 37 years, that would be tragic, especially if I don't even make it that long. I also would like to know if my great grandmother was born in N.Y.C. and if she did, to obtain her birth certificate and learn who her parents are, as I have two sets of names for her parentage, and it 's confusing. I would have to wait another 27...? years before I can learn that, that pushes my research back too many years and provides a stumbling block and an unnecessary lost in time.

Allowing grandchildren, great grandchildren, and grandnephews to obtain birth and death certificates would be awesome and would do wonders and help me in discovering my paternal family history that I never knew. It is very difficult in searching for my grandmother's maternal family, and a rule restricting me to obtain records makes that task difficult, please allow for an expanded host of family members and descendants to obtain birth and death certificates, so people like myself can discover their heritage without worrying about restrictions.

One measure of security I can propose is the use of some identification like photo

identification to ensure a trusted individual is requesting the record and the department would have a visual idea of who is requesting the record.

Thank You for your time.

From: Karen Silver Catania
To: [Resolution Comments](#)
Subject: Oppose finding records after 125 years
Date: Wednesday, March 28, 2018 8:37:14 PM

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I am in California. I have been researching a cousin who was born in 1915. He passed away in the 80's. I only look for reasons to confirm birthdate. Social Security puts out a death index. And it is easy to get those numbers. I do not understand what harm it would be to find a birthdate. Not looking for official birth certificate. You should be able to get unofficial.

I myself will probably not be around if this law stays.

Thank you for listening

Karen Catania

Sent from my iPhone

**COMMENTS ON THE AMENDMENT OF PROVISIONS OF
ARTICLE 207 OF THE NEW YORK CITY HEALTH CODE**

David Bushman
davebushman43@gmail.com
914-391-7664

Received by
DOHMH

APR 23 2018

Office of the Secretary

I want to thank the Board of Health for its willingness to review and revise the proposed Amendment to Article 207 of the Public Health Law and for giving me and others the opportunity to comment on the proposed revisions.

Ancestors on both sides of my family emigrated from Russia and from Austria/Hungary to New York in the late 1890's and early 1900s. They came through Castle Garden and Ellis Island, settled in New York City, raised their families here and died here. So did many of their descendants.

My mother died of breast and ovarian cancer at age 42. She had a sister who died of breast cancer at age 34 and another sister who died of ovarian cancer at age 35. However, it was not until 2010 that I learned that the cancer in my family was hereditary. I learned that I carry the BRCA1 genetic mutation that greatly increases the risk of developing various forms of cancer, especially for those people like me who are of Ashkenazi Jewish/Eastern European ancestry. My genetic counselor urged me to get as much information as possible about my family and their medical history.

Since then I have availed myself of the records at the NYC Municipal Archives. With the limited information I was able to obtain there, I was able to inform some relatives of the health risk they faced. I would like to be able to do the same for all my relatives.

However, while the public records available at the Municipal Archives have helped me to find some other family members who died of cancer, those records are woefully incomplete. The records that are available are birth certificates only up to 1909, marriage certificates only up to 1938 and death certificates only up to 1947. Requests for more recent records must go through the Department of Health.

For that reason, it is extremely important to me [and to others doing genealogical research] to have the GREATEST possible access to these more recent records. The proposed Amendment to Article 207 of the New York City Health Code to allow certain direct descendants and other family members to access the birth and death records of their deceased relatives prior to those records becoming public is an important change. However, I would urge the Department to include cousins in the expanded list of those family members allowed to have this increased access. There are times when the knowledge about or records of aunts and uncles is not available so that cousins can be the key to uncovering a branch of the family tree. In addition, cousins are not immune from inheriting a genetic mutation, so for me, including cousins is crucial to my ability to do accurate research.

It is equally important that access to these records by the expanded group of descendants and family members should not be restricted or limited to any number of years after the birth or death of the subject of the inquiry. ALL records should be available.

Moreover, alternative provisions should be made for people requesting records to obtain an uncertified copy for a reduced fee, stamped "UNCERTIFIED - FOR GENEALOGY RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY. I for one do not need a certified copy of the records I seek and yet I currently have no choice.

Thank you.

Received by
DOHMH

APR 23 2018

REMARKS PRESENTED BY D. JOSHUA TAYLOR

Office of the Secretary
PRESIDENT, NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

APRIL 23, 2018

With New York City now having nearly the most restrictive access in the nation to birth and death records, we appreciate the efforts of the Department to include additional categories for accessing these important materials. However, these expansions do not meet the needs of researchers. One important factor raised is in regard to family health history. When pursuing family health history, research into third and fourth cousins is critical and not provided for in the proposed amendment.

Genealogical and biographical research encompasses a wide range of individuals and relationships within the definition of a family. In the past and in the strictest sense, genealogical research only traces the biological ancestry of an individual. However, at the present time – and in the future – genealogical research has expanded far beyond this strict definition. Many genealogists are family historians – taking into account an array of interactions and individuals important to a family's history. For example, who are we to say that the individual who – on paper – might be a child's step-grandfather, but in reality, was never viewed as anything but that child's grandfather. What do we say to the individual's whose DNA test revealed that his or her biological great-grandfather is indeed a different man than listed within family records. These are the realities of research in the year 2018.

The world of genealogy and family history has evolved considerably, as has the definition of family itself. More than 40% of the nation is made up of blended families or those consisting of a step relationship. Millions of individuals identifying within the LGBTQ community are starting families of their own, through a variety of methods. By limiting access to only those categories outlined, the Department is following an outdated, out-of-touch approach to the actual needs of genealogists and general researchers.

A researcher's need for a birth or death document is often to identify an individual. For a common name it is difficult to determine one's relationship. Without following all documentary evidence, including some documents that eliminate potential candidates, reaching a conclusion is impossible. Selecting the correct John Smith from an index which lists 20 or more John Smiths born in the same year is tremendously difficult. A genealogist should search each record until they find the correct entry. Thus, they must review the information contained within these records, rather than simply conduct a one-off transaction.

However, our research extends far beyond these limits. We, alongside local historians and social scientists, trace entire communities. We trace the lives of those who served our country, those who built businesses. We trace those who survived the Holocaust. We trace immigrants who made New York City their home. We trace those who left few written records behind – save a birth or death record. These are the stories of New York City. The recently passed restrictions utterly destroys our ability to tell these stories – even with the proposed expanded categories of access.

We ask the Department create a category deemed as "Researcher" to access these records. This would ensure that a third cousin, step-granddaughter, town historian, biographer, or genealogist could access these materials. In addition to materials which verify their identity, researchers could be required to provide their reason for requesting a copy of the materials (which could be informational rather than a certified copy), thus protecting the integrity of the records themselves. If non-certified, it could be amended later.

I would also be remiss if I did not mention another area of concern regarding this amendment and procedures for accessing these records. We have heard from members of our community on numerous occasions that even when the written rules permit them to obtain copies of these materials, they are unable to do so. The assurance made during the Department's board meeting that the amendment follows the current Department processes when fulfilling document requests --that relationships are taken at face value-- is simply not the reality researchers face when requesting these materials.

An additional step taken by staff goes beyond the regulations. Our members have reported instances where they have been required to provide the exact names of an individual's parents in order to obtain a copy of a record. Yet, this is the precise type of information they are attempting to research in requesting the record in the first place.

We were told at the Department's board meeting that a professional genealogist could access materials for a client, if the client was entitled to the record and provided their identifying information alongside authorization when requesting the record. Yet... we have evidence that this is not in fact true. This paradox is simply not acceptable. We are paying customers, we are citizens, and we implore the Department to apply the rules set in place fairly and universally.

The addition of a researcher category to the proposed amendment would be the fairest pathway forward.

We appreciate your consideration and again, invite the Department to open a dialogue with us regarding these issues.

Received by
DOHMH

APR 16 2018

Office of the Secretary

Marian Wood
823A Heritage Village
Southbury, CT 06488

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Gotham Center
42-09 28th Street, CN 31
Long Island City, NY 11101-4132

Re: Amendment to expand access to New York City birth and death records

Greetings,

As an avid genealogist, a Bronx native, and the daughter and granddaughter of families that lived for decades in New York City, I'm writing to strongly urge further expansion of access to NYC birth and death records.

Despite the recently-proposed expansion to allow some relatives to have some access to documentation for births and deaths, the expansion is still far too limited.

For example, I'm a step-parent doing research into my young grandchildren's ancestors—and I would have no access to many documents under the proposed expansion guidelines. This cripples my ability to share their family history. More important, it prevents me from informing the family about potential medical problems that contributed to ancestors' deaths.

Birth and death documents are, in fact, public records, and therefore city government should allow access in order that genealogists, historians, scholars, and others can undertake research. Also, access should be allowed for step-relatives and others related by marriage, for adoptees, and for distant descendants who need to understand their extended family's long-term medical history.

Please reconsider and expand access to NYC birth and death records. With proper access, I can continue to add branches and leaves to my step-family's tree by ordering appropriate official documentation.

Thank you for the opportunity to tell my story as an example of why record access must be expanded rather than unnecessarily limiting who can see or copy birth and death records.

Sincerely,
Marian Wood

Received by
DOHMH

April 6, 2018

APR 16 2018

Office of the Secretary

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Gotham Center, 42-09 28th St, CN 31
Long Island City, NY 11101-4132

Re: Comments on the Amendment of Provisions of Article 207 of the New York City Health Code

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is regarding the proposed amendment by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to the New York City Health Code, Article 207, to allow certain direct descendants and other family members to access the birth and death records of their deceased relatives prior to the records becoming public. I am in support of those changes, but would like to voice my support for more expansive changes and improved information and assistance to people requesting records.

My father was born in 1929 and died in Yonkers in 1968, leaving behind a widow and four young children. I was born in the Bronx and lived in Yonkers until 1971, when my mother moved us closer to her hometown in Pennsylvania. I have a doctorate in Public Health and worked for the federal government in health care administration before retiring a few years ago. I am telling you this so that you understand that I have a pretty good grasp of the complexities of public health policy and the challenges in implementing them. My experience in trying to access my father's birth record from the City of New York has been exasperating at best, and I mention it here because it so clearly illustrates the need for change in the way that such requests are handled today.

I started to become interested in genealogy about ten years ago, in part to learn as much as I could about my father's family since he died at such a young age, taking much of the family history with him. A few years after building our family tree solely with the records I found online, my husband and I were fortunate to have the opportunity to travel to Sicily to the mountain towns near Messina where his parents were born. We identified the towns purely from my genealogical research and not by word of mouth through the family, providing yet another example of the importance of access to birth, death, marriage and other records to those trying to learn about their family history. In Sicily, we met family and were energized to continue to search, and I tried to do that upon returning home.

Part of that search involved obtaining as many records as possible to try to verify facts and provide clues to other relationships. I had my father's death certificate but

not his birth record, and I wasn't entirely sure if he was born in New York City or State. An older cousin told me that he had been born during a snowstorm in 1928 and that his birth was recorded a few days later, and therefore we were not sure of the date either. We thought his parents were living outside of NY City at the time, so in 2011 I requested his birth record from NY State, paying \$22 plus postage, but they were unable to locate the record. Figuring he must have been born in NY City after all, I then sent a request for his birth record to New York City. My request was rejected on 4 April 2011 along with an unsigned and incomplete note card that included some very cryptic language that, unfortunately, made it impossible for me understand what I needed to do to obtain the record, if the City even 'had' the record, which was not clear to me either. I was just starting a new job and I gave up at that point, having wasted another \$37 plus postage. I have attached a copy of that notecard to this letter, and I think you can see why I was left scratching my head.

Fast forward to fall of 2017 when I stumbled upon what I believe was a newly available birth index for NY City, and there he was – with his Italian first name of Giuseppe instead of the Joseph that I knew, a birth location of Queens (new information!), and a birth date a day or two after what we thought was his birth date. I began the process once again to submit my request for the full birth record, and after I thought I had everything in order on the application (check, notarized application, copies of records, etc.) I decided that I better ask online in a New York City genealogy group on Facebook to make sure that I had the correct information so that my application wasn't rejected again. I learned there that I probably needed an 'original' certified copy of his death certificate since he died outside of the city, but there were different opinions about whether his birth record would even be available to me, and what documentation I had to provide to obtain it. In essence, no one really knew what the rules were or how they were currently being interpreted. It was recommended that I send an email to the city to request clarification, and I did that, receiving a prompt but, again, not personalized response with a bulleted list of things that were required. The full text of the email I received from the Vital Records department on 12 February 2018 follows.

"BIRTH CERTIFICATE OF A DECEASED RELATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Family members/entitled individuals may request the birth certificates of a deceased relative by submitting the following packet through the mail:

- A completed, signed and notarized application.*
- A legible copy of your valid, unexpired, government issued photo identification*
- An original non-NYC death certificate or a copy of a NYC death certificate*
- Payment of \$15.00 for the record*
- A utility bill or official government mail that contains your name and address and that has been received by you in the last 60 days.*
- A self-addressed, stamped envelope for the return of the record.*
- For entitled individuals, original documentary evidence of entitlement.*

Please note that birth certificates of deceased relatives are not available for immediate issuance and can take 2-3 weeks to process. 1910-1919 birth

certificates are not electronic records and an additional week is required to search for the birth certificate and then produce. Please visit www.nyc.gov/vitalrecords to download the application and instructions if the attached application is not accessible."

I didn't fully understand the bulleted list, but it was certainly clear that I needed to obtain an 'original' death certificate since he died outside of the City and therefore the 50 year old funeral home photocopy that I had in hand would not suffice, so I set my birth certificate application aside and sent an application to NY state for an original certified copy of his death record. I submitted that request on 15 Feb 2018 at a cost of \$45 plus \$6.70 postage.

I received the certified copy of my father's death record from NY State on 2 April 2018 and the same day started working on the NY City application once again, using the email that I received from the city a few months earlier to try to figure out what information I needed to include with the application. I still had questions, as the email was not clear to me. For example, I didn't understand what other type of record would qualify as a utility bill (referenced in the bulleted list) since our heat and electric bills are in my husband's name and not my own, and I didn't understand what an 'entitled individual' (language used in the email) was or what type of documentary evidence was required. I went online to Facebook again, and it was suggested that I call the city and ask, so I did that same day.

The person I reached that day at the NY Department of Health and Mental Hygiene told me that birth certificates were NOT available for genealogy purposes and when I asked for clarification, she told me that vital records staff did not take phone calls and could only be reached by email. I was shocked and distraught. Understand that I had been seeking this record since 2011, at not inconsiderable expense to me, and this was the very first time that I was told that the record might not be available to me AT ALL.

Worse than these infuriating logistics, I ask that you think about this for a minute. This is my father we are talking about. He died in our home when I was a child, and the imprint of that experience has molded my life view in a deep way that I have never been able to shake. I have been on a life long quest to try to understand who he was as a person, and who his family was, and I was making significant progress with older records from Italy. I was diagnosed with cancer last year, and my genealogy work has taken on a new sense of urgency as I strive to tie up as many loose ends as possible before I turn this work over to future generations. This is my FATHER. Have I not suffered enough as a fatherless child all of those years that you won't even let me see the record of his birth? I have some memories of him, but not many. I have some photos, but only a few with the two of us together. I want to see his birth record. I want that connection with him through that record. That record is part of him, and I should be able to get a copy.

After that deeply disturbing conversation, with tears literally streaming down my face, I returned to my friends on Facebook and they advised that I email Vital Records once again to get the answer to my questions and clarify my ability to obtain the record. I did email Vital Records on the same day (2 April 2018), but as of the date of this letter, I have not received a response.

In summary, I believe there are areas for improvement – not only in the public policy but in the way in which it is implemented. My specific recommendations follow.

- 1) I support the expanded access to vital records proposed by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.
- 2) I believe that NY city should be able to obtain certification/verification of death, for those born in the city, directly from NY state when the person died within the state. The public should not have to go through the additional expense and waiting period to get a certified death record copy from the State before they can submit an application to the City. If the applicant provides a photocopy of the death certification with the birth record application, the City should have a way to confirm that it is valid by contacting the state directly.
- 3) The New York City website should be more user friendly so that the public can clearly understand what records can be obtained and by whom, what documentation is needed to support the application, and what the application process is. There should also be improved telephone support or an electronic help system to track requests for information and assistance, and it should be staffed by people who know the policy and process.
- 4) In addition to the above, I want to go on record in support of expanded access to vital records, including:
 - a. Access for all direct descendants, regardless of their age and how far down the ancestral line they are.
 - b. Access for nieces/nephews and all of their direct descendants. I have not stated above in my personal story, but I am helping my older cousin, who also has serious health issues, to obtain her family history information, and she is approaching the age where she soon will be unable to handle this work and complete applications on her own. I should be able to access this information about her ancestors on her behalf, and so should my descendants.
 - c. There should be access to vital records for first and second cousins and their descendants.
 - d. There should be access for professional genealogists. Enhanced access for genealogists credentialed by the Board for Certification of Genealogists would facilitate research by professionals working on behalf of clients, and the code of ethics to which credentialed genealogists are bound would provide the Board of Health and the public with assurance that records and research would be handled with the utmost of integrity.

Thank you for listening to my experience. I think it illustrates both why people like me are so compelled to see these records, and how cumbersome and unfriendly the current process is. I also understand how difficult public administration is, and I mean no ill will toward any of the people who tried to process my requests along the way. I just think the policy is unclear and the tools are unavailable for City personnel to do the job they want to do to serve the public and help them obtain these records for their family members. I trust and hope that you will do what you can to remedy this situation and improve access to these critical records for me and others, whose stories are likely equally or more compelling than my own.

Sincerely,

Nancy Klimon

Nancy Interdonato Klimon

Cc: Jason Gersh
Brooke Schreier Ganz



Health

Office of Vital Records
125 Worth Street, CN-4, Room 133
New York, NY 10013

Date: April 4, 2011

Dear Sir or Madam:

We are unable to process your application for a certified copy of a Birth Death certificate for the reason(s) indicated below. The payment you enclosed with your application is attached to this letter. Please note that you can order a certificate online at www.nyc.gov/vitalrecords. This is a much faster and convenient process. Using a credit card, debit card, or electronic check, your order will be processed by the Office of Vital Records within 2-3 business days.

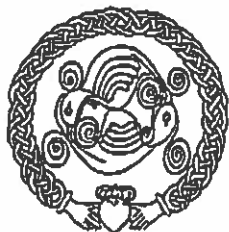
- One or more of the required fields was not filled out (see original application for the missing information).
- Certified copies of birth certificates may only be issued to the person named on the certificate or the parent/guardian if the individual is less than 18 years of age. Please review additional requirements on the back of the attached application.
- Applications must be submitted with a copy of your valid photo identification including signature or two proofs of address such as a utility bill or a letter from a government agency received within the last 60 days. For more details please see the back of the attached application.
- The payment submitted with the application was either insufficient or not properly completed. Please send a check or money order for \$15 for each copy you are requesting made payable to the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to the above address (note: ordering online at www.nyc.gov/vitalrecords is a much faster and convenient process).

- You applied for a certificate that is issued by the New York State Department of Health. For additional information, please visit www.health.state.ny.us or call 877-854-4481.
- Birth certificates issued prior to 1910 and death certificates issued prior to 1949 are not available through the Office of Vital Records. For these documents, please contact the Municipal Archives by calling 311 (or 212-639-9675 outside New York City) or visiting www.nyc.gov/records.
- Generally, relatives of the deceased are entitled to receive certified death certificates. Individuals not related to the deceased must establish a right to the death certificate by providing appropriate documentation such as an insurance policy, bank statement, property deed, or will.
- If you would like the birth certificate of someone who has died, please submit his/her death certificate and the reason you are making such a request.
- If your name has been legally changed, you must submit a corrections application (enclosed with this letter) and the original name change order that bears the raised seal.

If you have additional questions, please visit www.nyc.gov/vitalrecords or call 311 (or 212-639-9675 outside New York City).

Thank you for your cooperation.

Staff: _____



Irish Family History Forum, Inc.

IFHF, P.O. Box 67, Plainview, N.Y. 11803-0067 www.ifhf.org

Received by
DOHMH

APR 23 2018

Office of the Secretary

To: NCY Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene

Re: Proposed amendments to expand vital records access to certain family members.

Enclosed please find a petition , 6 pages total.

*Jeanne Bayer
President - Irish Family History Forum*

Received by
DOHMH

APR 23 2018

To the Board of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Office of the Secretary

Statement by Jeanne Bayer, President of the Irish Family History Forum

Public Hearing Monday, Apr 23, 2018 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Location: NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene, Gotham Center, 42-09 28th Street, 3rd Floor, Room 3-32, Long Island City, NY 11101

Hello, my name is Jeanne Bayer. I am President of the Irish Family History Forum. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

For twenty-six years the Irish Family History Forum has been teaching its members how to search for their Irish immigrant ancestors, many of whom settled in New York City. The Forum has been and will continue to be a voice for the preservation of genealogical records in the U.S., Ireland, and Canada, working for the open availability of civil and church genealogical resources here and abroad.

The strategy for genealogical research is the same for all ethnic groups: start with U.S. records and work backwards. This concept is doubly important when your ancestor is Irish. Numerous records in Ireland were lost, some pulped for paper during the first World War, others burned during the Irish Civil War in 1922. So, what an Irish researcher must do is patch together clues from as many U.S. records as possible. These include census records, church registers, interment records and gravestone inscriptions, newspaper mortuary notices, and *most essentially*, civil vital records. Finding and analyzing all these records can be a time-consuming, difficult task, which is just one reason our members may turn to a professional genealogist for help.

The proposed new amendment of the NY Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene would allow direct descendants and other relatives the opportunity to access birth and death records of deceased relatives prior to the records becoming public. However, the amendment is unnecessarily restrictive.

The IFHF agrees with the New York Genealogical & Biographical Society and the New York Records Preservation and Access Coalition's recommendations that the Department of Health create an additional category for access: Researcher. A researcher should be broadly interpreted to include genealogists, historians, social scientists, and more.

As the Society and Coalition point out, the newly proposed "rules exclude modern family relationships, step relatives, and adoptees; discriminate against non-family research; and hamper research into family health history, as applicable information is needed from third and fourth cousins, categories not covered under the proposed expansions."

The IFHF requests that the Board listen and hear our petition to broaden access to NYC birth and death records.

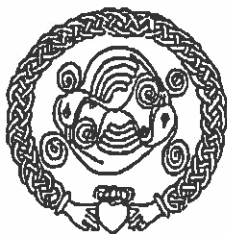
Thank you.



Jeanne Bayer

President

Irish Family History Forum



Irish Family History Forum, Inc.

PO Box 67, Plainview, NY 11808-0067 / ifhf.org
 Received by
 DOHMH

PETITION

APR 23 2018

To: NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene

Office of the Secretary

Re: Proposed amendments to expand vital records access to certain family members.

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The IFHF requests that the Board listen and hear our petition to broaden access to NYC birth and death records.

	Name	Address: Street, Town and zip code	Signature
1	Kathleen McBee	282 N. Syracuse Ave N. Massapequa NY	Kathleen McBee
2	Sarah R. Duffin	2627 Cedar St Sudbury NY 11783	Sarah R. Duffin
3	Joan Sprangel	120 Woodval Dr Westbury NY 11590-1033	Joan Sprangel



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2	Barbara Murphy	17 CLIFFORD BLVD HAUPPANGE	Barbara Murphy
3	MARY KREBS	76 SECOND AVE MASS. PK	Mary Krebs
4	MARY P. KIRBY	3199 LINCOLN AVE OCEANSIDE 11572	Mary P. Kirby
5	Rosemary Enright	Oceanside, N.Y. 11572 2606 Clovermere Rd.	Rosemary Enright
6	Sileen Buckley	45 Prince Ln Westbury 11590	Sileen Buckley
7	Joyce Kowpak	3547 160 th St. 11358	Joyce Kowpak
8	JOHN GOODMAN	32-12 160 St 11358	John Goodman
9	Diane McDonnell	399 Mineral Blvd Mineral 11501	Diane McDonnell
10	Patricia Conway	39 Mallard Rd Levittown 11756	Patricia Conway
11	R. Haberstroh	17 Locust Av. Oakdale 11769	R. Haberstroh
12	Carolyn White	305 Marton Dr. W. Islip	Carolyn White
13	Jeanne Hewitt	22 SAMMIS ST. HUNTINGTON NY	Jeanne Hewitt
14	James Regan	2 JEFFERSON ST. GARDEN CITY NY	James Regan



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2	BARBARA LIEBECK	546 3RD ST E. HAZARD PARK NY 11731	
3	THOMAS MUEENCH	24 LAFAYETTE AV LAKE GROVE NY 11755	
4	Brian Mergen	66 CHRISTABEL ST. LYNKBROOK, NY 11563	
5	MARGARET CAREY	218 GARFIELD AVE MINERAL NY 11501	
6	JAMES JAVIT	14 PINE AVE MALVERNE, NY 11565	
7	JOSEPH DALY	8 CENTER CT ROCKY POINT NY	
8	KAREN S. Mc LOUGHLIN	39 COLLIER LA WESTBURY, NY 11590	
9	Ann Cassani	14 Springtime Ln Levittown NY 11756	
10	MARILYN MORITZ	644 Meadow Court Westbury, NY 11590	
11	Maureen Schellhorn	67 S. Carll Ave Babylon NY 11705	
12	William Brochu	21 Clinton Ave Farminedale, NY 11735	
13	ROBERT O'NEILL	121 SMITH LA LK. RONKONKOMA NY 11775	
14	THOMAS GALLIGAN	503 LAFAYETTE BLVD LONG BRANCH NY 11561	
15	THOMAS RISINGER	98 STONE LA LEVITTOWN NY 11756	



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1	ROBERT KELLY	116 Mt. St. Bay Shore, NY	Robert Kelly
2	John Reynolds	31 Mt. McKinley Ave Farmingville NY 11738	John Reynolds
3	Eileen Lambert	58 Argle Road West Hempstead NY 11552	Eileen Lambert
4	KATHI GALVIN	55 Block Island Dr. Sand Beach NY 11789	Kathi Galvin
5	Carol Poulos	3443 Heather Lane Wantagh, NY 11793	Carol Poulos
6	Eleanor O'Reilly	503 Lafayette Blvd. Long Beach, NY 11501	Eleanor O'Reilly
7	JANICE TRUE	132 MAPLE AVE Bethpage NY 11714	Janice M True
8	Maureen Winski	50 Erie St Middletown NJ 07748	Maureen Winski
9	LYNNE R. BERGE	19 Lee Ct. MASSAPEQUA, NY 11758	Lynne R. Berge
10	Richard F. Berge	" "	Richard F. Berge
11	Jean Daly	8 Center Court Rochester, NY 11754	Jean M. Daly
12	Kathleen McEath	10 Leroy Rd, Apt 211 Rockville Center, NY 11576	Kathleen McEath
13	Jean M. Heath	411 Shelter Rd. Ronkonkoma, NY 11779	Jean M. Heath
14	Margaret Gordon	28 Florske Rd Fdale 11735	Margaret Gordon
15	Kathleen Lloyd	16 South Ave Smithtown	Kathleen Lloyd



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4	Veronica Adler	195 Wilson Bl. Islip NY 11737	<i>Veronica Adler</i>
5	MARY LEONARD	44 WINGAN RD. ISLIP, NY	<i>Mary Ann Leonard</i>
6	Marie Scalisi	23 Valleywood Dr Huntington Sta NY 11746	<i>Marie Scalisi</i>
7	MARYAN MASSEY	1558 E. 19 St, Bklyn 7, NY	<i>M. Massey</i>
8	Patricia Pheasant	237 Church St Freeport NY 1152	<i>Patricia Pheasant</i>
9	Mary Lawlor	12 Dawson & Garden City Jamaica NY 11558	<i>MARY LAULOR</i>
10	Geraldine King	27 Belmont Ave Plainview NY	<i>Geraldine King</i>
11	Mary McDonnell	4 James Rd. Amityville NY	<i>Mary McDonnell</i>
12	Jeanne Bayer	85 Gridley St, West Islip NY 11795	<i>Jeanne Bayer</i>
13			
14			
15			