

HOW TO REGISTER YOUR NEWBORN

Information for refugees

Your newborn child's rights in Germany

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is applicable law in Germany. Germany has committed itself to register every child immediately after birth (Art 7 Abs 1 UN-KRK [UNCRC]). Your child must be entered into the **Birth Registry** (Geburtenregister) in order for you to register your newborn child at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) and so that it can have access to medical examinations and other services in Germany. Children will need a **birth certificate** (Geburtsurkunde) or an **"extract from the Birth Registry"** (Auszug aus dem Geburtenregister) later on in their lives in order to prove their identity to public authorities.

How can you obtain a birth certificate for your child?

The clinic will report the birth to the local civil registry office, which is called the **Standesamt**. You must go to the Standesamt in the district in which your child was born within 4 weeks of its birth. If necessary, an interpreter should accompany you. Ask the staff at the maternity clinic for the address of the Standesamt. Some maternity clinics actually have a Standesamt on the premises.

Here is what you will need to take to the Standesamt:

- Your identity document(s) – your preliminary **residency permit** (Aufenthaltsgestattung) or your **refugee identity card** (Flüchtlingsausweis)
- Your **birth certificate(s)** (Geburtsurkunde) – both the original document and an officially certified translation
- If you are married: your **marriage certificate** (Heiratsurkunde) or **marriage contract** (Ehevertrag) – both the original document and an officially certified translation.

If possible, you should make an appointment at the Standesamt and ask which other documents you may need. Official documents that you present must always be accompanied by an officially certified translation. You will receive the birth certificate within 2 to 6 weeks after presenting your documents.

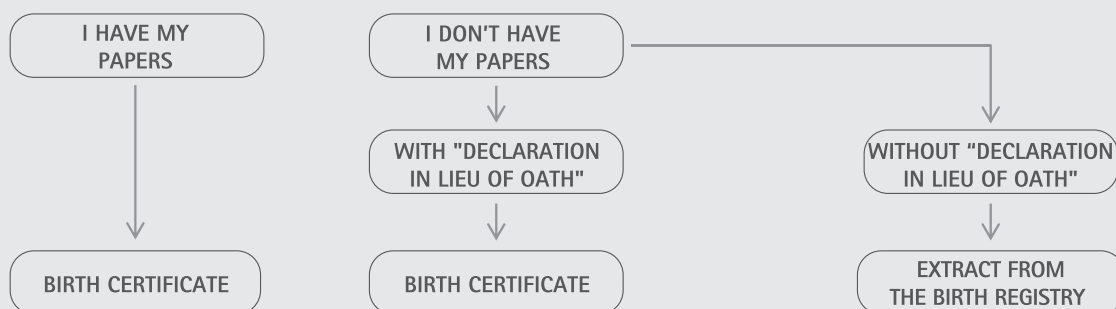
What if you do not have the necessary papers?

Even if you do not have the papers necessary to obtain a birth certificate, you should still go to the Standesamt of the district where your child was born. Your child has a right to obtain a birth certificate or an extract from the birth registry.

If you do not have your official documents, it is possible that a birth certificate can be still issued for your child on the basis of a **"declaration in lieu of oath"** (Eidesstattliche Erklärung) (§ 9 Abs. 2 PStG [German Civil Status Act]). If a birth certificate cannot be issued on that basis either, then you and your child are nonetheless entitled to obtain an **"extract from the Birth Registry"** (Auszug aus dem Geburtenregister). Although it is provisional, an extract from the Birth Registry is an official document, not less so than a birth certificate (cf. § 55 Abs. 1 Nr. 1 and Nr. 4 PStG, § 54 Abs. 1 and 2 PStG [German Civil Status Act]) and § 35 (1) PStV [Ordinance on Civil Status]).

Please note: If you do not have your official documents, the mother's family name will be entered as the child's family name in the Birth Registry for the time being. Your child's family name can be changed to match the father's later, when you are able to present the official documents to the Standesamt.

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Talk to your midwives and request them to put you in contact with the social service staff at the clinic. They can help you.

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