

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS Standard Operating Procedures		
Functional Area: Facilities Operations	Reference Number: IIA16-0001 (214.03)	Revises Previous Effective Date: 5/15/2007
Subject: Inmate/Probationer Request of Vital Records		
Authority: Bryson/Jacobs	Effective Date: 04/23/15	Page 1 of 3

I. POLICY:

This Standard Operating Procedure will serve as a guideline for the legitimate request of any vital record of an inmate/probationer under the jurisdiction of the Georgia Department of Corrections. **This standard operating procedure does not govern or in any way have any impact on an inmate's/probationer's ability to obtain a birth certificate through the TOPPSTEP standard operating procedure (VB01-0009) free of charge as a participant in the TOPPSTEP procedure.**

II. APPLICABILITY:

All incarcerate facilities housing inmates/probationers under the jurisdiction of the Georgia Department of Corrections including Private Prisons.

III. RELATED DIRECTIVES:

- A. O.C.G.A. 31-10-1 through 31-10-32.
- B. GDC-SOP:VB01-0009 TOPPSTEP.

IV. DEFINITIONS:

- A. **Vital Records:** for the purposes of this Standard Operating Procedure the term vital records will be defined in accordance with O.C.G.A. 31-10-1 (17) as means certificates or reports of birth, death, marriage, divorce, dissolution of marriage, or annulment and data related thereto.
- B. **Legitimate Request:** for the purposes of this Standard Operating Procedure a legitimate request means to comply or be in compliance with the law.

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V. ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Inmate/Probationer Request for a Vital Record

VI. PROCEDURES:

A. Whenever an inmate/probationer has a legitimate request for a vital record as defined in the definitions section of this standard operating procedure the following procedures will be adhered to by the inmate/probationer:

1. The inmate/probationer will clearly explain in writing to the Warden/Superintendent the circumstances for a legitimate request for a vital record.
2. The inmate/probationer will provide verifiable information (i.e. name, ID number, reason (s) etc.) that necessitates the request for a vital record.
3. The inmate will send the letter through their assigned counselor, who will authenticate the validity of this request.
4. If the Warden/Superintendent deems the request appropriate the inmate will be notified by the assigned counselor that a \$10.00 fee is required to be deducted from their inmate/probationer account for each type of vital record document requested in accordance with Georgia Law. Also a \$5.00 fee is required for any additional copy of the same type of vital record document requested by the inmate/probationer. This fee will accompany the request when forwarded to the Vital Records Branch of the Georgia Department of Human Resources.
5. If the Warden/Superintendent or his/her designee cannot determine that the inmate request is legitimate the request will be denied, the inmate will be notified and the reason (s) for denial will be **CLEARLY** documented in the inmate/probationer administrative/case history file.
6. If the request for a Vital Record is forwarded to the Vital Records Branch of the Department of Human

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Resources and the request is denied by the Vital Records Branch in accordance with Georgia Law, then the reason for denial will be sent to the Warden/Superintendent or his/her designee. This information will be placed in the inmate/probationer administrative/case history file and a copy will be given to the inmate/probationer. The \$10.00 fee (and any additional \$5.00 fee [s]) will also be returned to the facility from the Vital Records Branch and appropriately credited to the inmate's account.

7. This process for the request for a vital record is not grievable, as the Department of Human Resources is the official repository of Vital Records in the State of Georgia.

VII. RETENTION SCHEDULE:

A copy of attachment one of this SOP will be placed in the inmate/probationer administrative/case history file and will be retained according to the official records retention schedule for that file.