

New design for birth and death certificates

Birth, death and still-birth certificates issued in England and Wales are to have a new background design. The changes will affect some four million certificates issued each year for a wide range of purposes, from genealogy to passport applications.

The traditional red tint background for birth certificates and grey for deaths are both to be replaced by a blue tint with a central design incorporating the rose and daffodil emblems of England and Wales.

Although there have been minor changes to certificates in recent years, the new look is the first major design change since the existing background tints were introduced about 50 years ago.

Register offices in England and Wales will begin to issue the new certificates from late spring onwards. For certificates issued centrally by the Office for National Statistics, the new style certificates will be used when stocks of the existing design are exhausted.

The existing certificate design will be phased out with a view to all birth, death and still-birth certificates from 1 January 2000 being issued in the new design. Certificates which have been issued in the current design before the 1 January 2000 will remain valid.

Another design feature will be to standardise the majority of certificates, including short birth certificates, to A4 size. The only exceptions are the full bilingual (English and Welsh) certificates relating to events in Wales. Certificates are printed by the security arm of The Stationery Office.

Organisations such as government departments, insurance companies and banks that often need to see birth and death certificates have been informed of the changes.

Issued by
Office for National Statistics
1 Drummond Gate
London SW1V 2QQ

Telephone
Press Office 0171-533 5702
Public Enquiries 0171-533 6262

Internet
[Http://www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk)

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Marriage certificates are not included in this round of design changes.
2. The Office for National Statistics works in partnership with others in the Government Statistical Service to provide Parliament, government and the wider community with the statistical information, analysis and advice needed to improve decision-making, stimulate research and inform debate. It also administers the registration of key life events. It aims to provide an authoritative and impartial picture of society and a window on the work and performance of government, allowing the impact of government policies and actions to be assessed.