

Submission form

Contact details

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Summary of proposals

1. The Department's proposals reflect two complementary drivers. First, users' expectations about how they access BDM information have changed since the access provisions were introduced in 2009. Second, enabling citizens to interact easily with government in a digital environment is a key Government Better Public Services target.
2. In the short to medium term, subject to existing legislative, systems, and technological constraints, the Department will investigate options for enhancing existing online services (eg, improved search functionality). Ultimately, the Department would like to facilitate access to BDM information via an all-of-BDM Internet-based search, pay-for-view, and records access and ordering facility, without compromising individual privacy and security interests.
3. Alongside the specific amendments to the access provisions detailed below, the Department wants to remove remaining legislative barriers to digital and online services (eg, by making language and delivery channels medium-neutral). This will support future enhancements for all BDM services, not just access to BDM information.

The Department proposes to—

General access rules

- Add historical and non-historical BDM indexes, but not full non-historical records, to the BDM information that can be searched online (some information may be behind a paywall);
- Authorise unedited historical register images to be made available online (behind a paywall);
- Provide online access to BDM information (beyond an initial high level search) would be subject to evidence of identity established via a RealMe ID, or through another future solution that would enable a verified identity to be asserted online; and
- Allow a user with a verified identity to order a certificate or printout for a non-historical record online.

Do you support the proposals?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Please use this space for any additional comments:</p> <p>As a bona fide genealogist I am wanting to get access to a closed 1934 adoption record. Using RealMe I have applied for a copy of the birth entry. I have supplied information that I am a paid up member of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists. I have proved that I am who I am through RealMe. I have found the individual on the records. I have supporting evidence that the individual is more than likely my half brother. Because this record is within the 100 year rule regarding non-historical birth records and I believe it is a closed adoption record the DIA will not release it. From the supporting evidence provided both the DIA and I know that it is the correct birth record that will prove the relationship between us. I have considered applying through the court system to get the documents released but this is a time consuming and expensive process. A system such as a commission or vetting group who would be responsible for the release of historical birth records of this nature would benefit not only myself but other genealogists with similar issues. As a genealogist I am aware of the privacy issues and sensitivity in a making contact with the individual or his/her adopted family and would be quite happy to involve a third party in this process. The access to non-historical birth record should be reduced to 75 years from 100 years.</p>		

Historical and non-historical information

- Reduce the time limit that defines historical marriage and civil union information from 80 years to 75 years; and
- Align rules for access to birth information (including information that could be made available through digital and online channels in future) based on when a death record becomes available.

Do you support the proposals?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Please use this space for any additional comments:</p> <p>As a genealogist this rule would be of further use because it would be another data set that genealogists would be able to use to corroborate the information from the original birth entry and the birth entry record that shows the adoption date. This should be reduce to 75 years as opposed to 100 years currently.</p>		

Source documents

- Classify Intention to Marry books as marriage registers, and authorise access in the same way, and subject to the same rules, as apply to solemnised marriage records.

Do you support the proposal?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Please use this space for any additional comments:</p> <p>Source documents for adopted birth records should also be available on request. As a genealogist this would assist in fleshing out more about events and people at the time of the adoption.</p>		

Remaining access provisions

Access register; non-disclosure directions; research purposes; disclosure of death information

The Department has no specific proposals. We consider the current rules are appropriate and are working well; the individual privacy and security protections they provide will be integral in the context of the proposed new digital and online access channels.

Do you—	Agree? <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>	Disagree? <input type="checkbox"/>
Please use this space for any additional comments:		

If you want to comment on any other matter related to the access provisions ...

... please use this space for your submission:

Have already mentioned that the release of closed adoption records should be supervised and approved by a third party. The person, company, organisation requesting the entry will need to provide sufficient satisfactory supporting evidence in order to gain access to the record. If applicable but especially in adoption cases access to source documents should also be permitted. This could be achieved either by setting up a commissioner which vets requests or permit an authorised third party such as the Salvation Army to assess requests on behalf of the DIA.