

To be fair, one exception that SC DHEC does allow is that a parent of an applicant, provided they themselves have a valid photo ID, may submit a request on their child's behalf. This can be beneficial to some but does not make allowance for those who no longer have a living parent or who are unable get the co-operation of a parent.

In addition, over the course of several telephone conversations with staff at the SC DHEC one of our counselors has been reliably informed that on-line applications through VitalCheck.com will be accepted without a valid photo ID but to date all applications submitted by us via this route have been returned because there was no valid photo ID attached.

As a result of these constraints, GAP Ministries, and no doubt many other South Carolinians not affiliated to GAP, who have encountered the same problem, would be appreciative of any assistance you may be able to give to work towards arriving at a solution to these problems that would be acceptable to the SC DHEC.

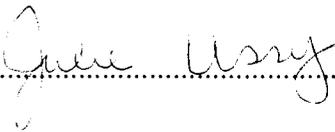
If it would be of any help we offer you examples of some options that many other states within the US accept as sufficient evidence of identity in order to process a request for a copy of a birth certificate: –

1. Siblings with an unexpired valid photo ID can submit a request on behalf of an applicant.
2. An applicant may tender two pieces of official mail, not more than 6 months old, from a government agency, hospital, utility company or similar with their name and address clearly displayed.

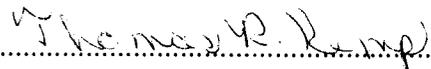
Thank you for your attention and we would really welcome your input on this conundrum.

Yours faithfully

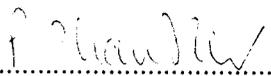
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The Honorable Nikki R. Haley,
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02/19/2015

Your Excellency

This letter is being sent to you to request the legislature of South Carolina to ask the South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control (SC DHEC) Vital Records (certificates) to consider reviewing and possibly amending some of its requirements with regard to the process of obtaining a birth certificate for someone born within your state.

By way of explanation, GAP Ministries is a voluntary funded church-based organization located in Augusta, Georgia that provides practical as well as spiritual aid for the homeless and less fortunate who currently find themselves within the surrounding area but who may originate from any state in the US. One of our most successful endeavors is to help people obtain a copy of their birth certificate enabling them to apply for a picture ID, driving license etc. which can then be used as a forward step to seeking employment and/or housing as well as giving them a sense of identity and some self-esteem. Many of our clientele were born in South Carolina and, when helping them, we are obliged to follow the current process as defined by the SC DHEC. However, major problems arise within this process because the application has an absolute requirement for an unexpired photo ID of the applicant. SC DHEC Vital Records (certificates) states

“Note: If you are applying for a copy of a vital record, you must submit a valid government, school or employer issued photo ID (or photocopy of one). When we receive applications without proper identification, we reject them automatically; we do not process them.”

Unfortunately, for many reasons, including expiration, theft and loss, many of our clientele do not possess a current valid photo ID but need to obtain a copy of their birth certificate in order for them to acquire a valid photo ID. As a result of this “Catch-22” situation there is currently very little we can do to help them move forward with the process of getting them a copy of their birth certificate.