

PREFACE

For more than 100 years, Missouri vital records have captured a piece of the life story of every person who was born or died in Missouri. Legislation passed by the Missouri General Assembly and approved on May 6, 1909, provided for the “immediate registration of all births and deaths” by the State Board of Health. Improved sanitation and hygiene for the people of the state were anticipated as a result of centralizing these duties. With the passage of the legislation, Missouri became the 19th state to enact a comprehensive vital statistics law, and acceptance into the death registration area of the U.S. Census Bureau soon followed. The 1909 law was implemented by February of 1910, and the first vital statistics report using a full year of Missouri birth and death records was for 1911.

Vital records and vital statistics impact our lives every day. Birth and death certificates are permanent legal records that contain valuable health and medical information. As legal documents, birth and death certificates provide proof of age, parentage, and citizenship. They are used to obtain passports and driver’s licenses, enroll in benefits programs, settle estates, obtain life insurance payouts, and terminate Social Security benefits. Health and medical information from birth and death records is transformed into data to calculate population growth, identify health risk factors, measure health outcomes, plan and evaluate health programs, and conduct research. Vital statistics help drive public health programs that keep people healthy, and they influence our personal health care.

This report presents the final tabulation of statistical data relating to vital events in Missouri during 2023. Live births were accepted through February 22, 2024, death, fetal death, and abortion records through April 15, 2024, dissolutions and marriages through June 24, 2024.

Missouri Vital Statistics 2023 is published for use in public health and related fields as an aid for studying births, deaths, fetal deaths, marriages, dissolutions, and abortions. This document, along with additional vital statistics data, is available on the Department of Health and Senior Services website at www.health.mo.gov under “Data and Statistics.”

In 2023, total Missouri deaths decreased by 7.4% from 71,776 to 66,470, and COVID deaths decreased 75% from 4,316 to 1,106 as the COVID pandemic wound down. COVID deaths dropped from the fourth leading cause in 2022 to the tenth overall. Live births decreased from 68,954 to 67,065, the lowest birth count since 1945. However, with the sharper decrease in deaths than births, Missouri resident births outnumbered deaths, resulting in a natural increase for the first time since the pre-pandemic year of 2019.

For a complete printer friendly version:

<https://health.mo.gov/data/vitalstatistics/mvs23/2023MissouriVitalStatistics.pdf>

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