

## PREFACE

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 19<sup>th</sup> 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.

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 healthcare. Vital records and vital statistics impact our lives every day. 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.

This report presents the final tabulation of statistical data relating to vital events in Missouri during 2018. Records of live births received through February 22, 2019, death, fetal death, abortion, and marriage records through April 15, 2019, and dissolutions received through April 25, 2019, are included in the tables, allowing information on 2018 events to be as complete as possible.

Missouri Vital Statistics 2018 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 [health.mo.gov](http://health.mo.gov) under “Data and Statistics.”

For complete printer friendly version:

<https://health.mo.gov/data/vitalstatistics/mvs18/2018MissouriVitalStatistics.pdf>

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