

**1. What is the difference between a “certified” and an “uncertified” copy of a declaration of domestic partnership?**

A **certified** copy of a declaration of domestic partnership issued by the State Vital Records Office will have a raised seal, will show the signature of the State Registrar, and will be printed on security paper. A certified copy may be required to assert legal rights that apply to domestic partners.

State law restricts who may obtain a **certified** copy of a declaration of domestic partnership certificate. A **certified** copy can only be issued to those people with a “direct and tangible interest” (section II, categories A – E) which means the following people:

- One of the partners named on the declaration of domestic partnership (section II, category A).
- An immediate family member, defined as domestic partner (current partner of one of the partners), current spouse, child, parent (whose name is on one of the domestic partner’s birth certificates and whose parental rights have not been terminated), brother/sister, or grandparent of a subject of the record (section II, category B).
- NOTE: Grandchildren, step-parents, and step-children can only obtain certified copies as C – E.
- The legal guardian of a partner named on the declaration of domestic partnership. Legal proof, *e.g.*, a court order of guardianship, is required. (section II, category C).
- A person authorized in writing by one of the above. Written authorization with NOTARIZED signatures must accompany the application and the authorization must clearly state the relationship of the authorizing party to the subject of the record (section II, category D).
- A person who can demonstrate that the declaration of domestic partnership is required to determine or to protect a personal or property right (section II, category E). Proof is required.

If you do not meet one of the above criteria, you cannot receive a **certified** copy of a declaration of domestic partnership.

An **uncertified** copy will contain the same information as a certified copy but it is **not** acceptable for legal purposes, such as claiming insurance benefits (section II, category F).

**2. How long will it take to process my request?**

Copies of declarations of domestic partnership are available from the State Vital Records Office no less than three weeks from the date of filing the declaration of domestic partnership at the Register of Deeds Office.

• **Applying in Person**

In-person requests for **certified** copies of declarations of domestic partnership are usually completed within two business hours of application, if the declaration of domestic partnership is on file.

In-person requests for **uncertified** copies of declarations of domestic partnership are not completed on the same schedule as requests for certified copies. In-person requests for uncertified copies may take up to six months to complete.

• **Applying by Mail**

Requests for **certified** copies of declarations of domestic partnership may take up to one month to complete.

Requests for **uncertified** copies of declarations of domestic partnership are not completed on the same schedule as certified copies. Mail requests for uncertified copies may take up to six months to complete.

**3. How will the certificate be sent?**

Declarations of domestic partnership are mailed in one of three ways:

- a self-addressed, stamped envelope provided by the applicant
- a pre-paid carrier envelope provided by the applicant (*e.g.*, express carriers)
- first-class mail

NOTE: It is illegal to FAX declarations of domestic partnership.

**4. What identification is required when applying for a certified or uncertified copy of a declaration of domestic partnership?**

A current valid photo ID (*e.g.*, Wisconsin Driver’s License, Wisconsin State Identification Card, passport, Military Identification Card) is required when applying in person.) A photocopy of the applicant’s current valid photo ID must accompany all mail applications.

**If you have questions regarding this form, please call 608-266-1373  
or visit our website at [www.dhs.wi.gov/vitalrecords](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/vitalrecords).**