KANTON AARGAU

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**GENERAL AND LEGAL PRINCIPLES**

**for genealogical research in the Canton of Aargau, Switzerland**


**Prelude**

This leaflet offers an introduction to the principles and possibilities for genealogical research in the Canton of Aargau. The focus is on the relevant Cantonal offices and their services. For further information, please contact the addresses listed at the end of this document


**Legal principles**

The legal basis for the practice of releasing vital statistics from the birth, marriage, and death registers is the Swiss federal civil registration ordinance (ZStV) of 28 April 2004, which is a supplement to and execution decree for the Swiss Civil Code. Outlined within are the regulations for releasing data to private parties and researchers. In this way, data can be released to private parties who can prove an immediate interest worthy of protection if the individuals directly concerned are obviously no longer able to procure the data themselves (ZStV Art. 59). The same holds for researchers doing scientific research unrelated to individuals as well as to researchers doing personal research, namely genealogical research (ZStV Art. 60). Since vital statistics are considered confidential, the civic authorities take appropriate security measures (ZStV Art. 82).


**Organization of civil registry offices in Aargau**

For genealogical research in Switzerland, it is important to know the community of citizenship (Bürgerort) or hometown (Heimatort) of the individual or relatives in question. In many cases, this is not the same as where someone was born or lives. The right of citizenship to a community can be acquired through birth, marriage, or naturalization. Births, marriages, and deaths are recorded in the communities that Swiss citizens live in, but the main registry administration is in the home community. For this reason, in the Canton of Aargau the regional registry office to which the respective place of citizenship or hometown belongs is also responsible for providing information. There are 20 registry office districts in the Canton of Aargau. Each one of these districts is responsible for various municipalities.


**Information from the regional registry offices**

The regional registry offices provide written information based on register extracts and open older registers for examination. However, there is a charge for register extracts and written information. The information must be related to details concerning the vital statistics of the individual making the request, or the family and given names, the cantonal and municipal citizenship, and the vital statistics (location and date of birth, marriage, and death) of the individual's own ancestors (parents, grand-

parents, great-grandparents, and great-great-grandparents), data about the individual's own descendents (children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren), and finally data concerning the current vital statistics of the individual's spouse (but not those of former spouses).

If, in addition, lateral lineage as well as relations by marriage are to be researched in registers closed less than 100 years ago, the registry office only provides information on the basis of data protection approval from the legal authorities. Such approval can be obtained from the Citizenship and Vital Statistics Section. A fee based on time and effort required is charged for the evaluation of the request (see the comment under important links on the request form).

Upon request, the registry office opens older registers (i.e. those that were closed 100 years ago or earlier), specifically birth, death, marriage, and citizenship registers.

### Services offered by the Canton of Aargau government archives

The government archives maintains a list of birth, marriage, and death registers that can be viewed in the form of microfilm copies in the government archives. There are also data protection conditions attached to government archive services and inspection possibilities. For example, vital statistics of lateral lineage in births, marriages, and deaths registers closed less than 100 years ago can only be inspected by the individual making the request upon obtaining approval from the Citizenship and Vital Statistics Section. This also holds for commercial genealogical research.

There is no charge for inspecting the microfilms of birth, marriage, and death registers in the government archives. The government archives provides information in person or in writing about which birth, marriage, and death registers can be viewed and accepts reservations for the microfilm readers.

The government archives will not retrieve data from the birth, marriage, and death registers for private or for professional researchers. Only in exceptional cases will it provide written information about entries in the registers if it concerns a single individual and the research required takes less than a quarter of an hour. However, the government archives will provide a list of professional genealogists upon request.

### Links (in German)

General services and fees for registry offices in the Canton of Aargau
https://www.ag.ch/de/dvi/persoenliches_zivilstandswesen/weitere_angebote/familienforschung/familienforschung_1.jsp


Regional registry offices in the Canton of Aargau, including district municipalities
https://www.ag.ch/de/verwaltung/dvi/persoenliches-zivilstandswesen/zivilstandsfragen/regionale-zivilstandsaemter


Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/usa/en/home/services/genealogy/research-switzerland.html