

Guide to Births, Deaths and Marriages Searching

Each jurisdiction in Australia maintains a births, deaths and marriages registry that records any births, deaths or marriages that has occurred within that state or colony. This can potentially be used to find out lots of information about offenders: the exact date and city where they were born; their parents' names and occupations; how many siblings they had; any marriages by the offender, and the names and occupations of their spouses; birth records for the offender's own children; and the date and information about their death.

Each Australian state has digitised at least some of this historical data and made it available online for family historians and other researchers. Due to privacy reasons, the information available cuts off at different dates for different registers. For this reason, information is generally more readily available for the pre-1930 period than it is for later periods.

The prison record will have provided the year that the offender was born, and either the country or the Australian colony/state in which the birth took place. This information can be used to identify which BDM register should contain their birth record. As imprisonment in Victoria implies that the offender was a resident there for at least part of their life, this can be a useful starting point for researching other events, such as marriages, deaths and the birth of the offenders' own children.

Here is a list of relevant BDM registers –

Victoria - <https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>

New South Wales - <https://www.bdm.nsw.gov.au/Pages/family-history-research/family-history-research-nsw.aspx>

Queensland - <https://www.familyhistory.bdm.qld.gov.au/>

Tasmania - <https://www.justice.tas.gov.au/bdm/researching-family-trees>

South Australia - <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/family-and-community/births-deaths-and-marriages/family-research>

Western Australia - https://www.bdm.justice.wa.gov.au/_apps/pioneersindex/default.aspx

Northern Territory - <https://nt.gov.au/law/bdm/search-births-deaths-and-marriages-records>

For offenders born overseas, simply google the country name and “births, deaths and marriages” to see what registers are available online.