

**EVERY
DAY 2+**
**Illinois families
must endure the
death of a child
by STILLBIRTH**



Liam's Law "Corrects deficiencies in the implementation of Public Act 93-578, such that all families affected by stillbirth are treated with dignity and respect by this State."

As of January 2023, 45 states, including Illinois, have enacted laws that grant bereaved parents of a stillborn child the option to request and receive a certificate recognizing the stillbirth that is separate from a fetal death certificate.

Illinois was among the earliest states to enact legislation creating an optional certificate of stillbirth after the General Assembly passed Public Act 93-578 in 2003.

Unfortunately, implementation of Public Act 93-578 was unsuccessful and most bereaved parents were not informed that this option was available to them. Only 71 certificates were issued in the first 10 years. Liam was stillborn in Cook County at 40 weeks gestation. Liam's birth was in 2016, 13 years after P.A. 93-578 became law [410 ILCS 535/20.5]. His mother was only given a fetal death certificate and not informed that she could also receive a certificate of stillbirth.

Liam's Law adds clarifying language to Sections 20 and 20.5 of the Vital Records Act [410 ILCS 535/20.5] so that Illinois statute is more consistent with the recommendations of the National Center for Health Statistics. Furthermore, Liam's Law adds a new section to the Hospital Licensing Act [210 ILCS 85] requiring hospitals to provide written notification to patients who have suffered a stillbirth of their right to request and receive a certificate of birth resulting in stillbirth. The form for this written notice shall be developed by the Department of Public Health, in consultation with each Community Action Team for the two Illinois-based Fetal Infant and Mortality Review projects.

*HBC is proud
to partner
with Gifts
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on this very
important
initiative!*

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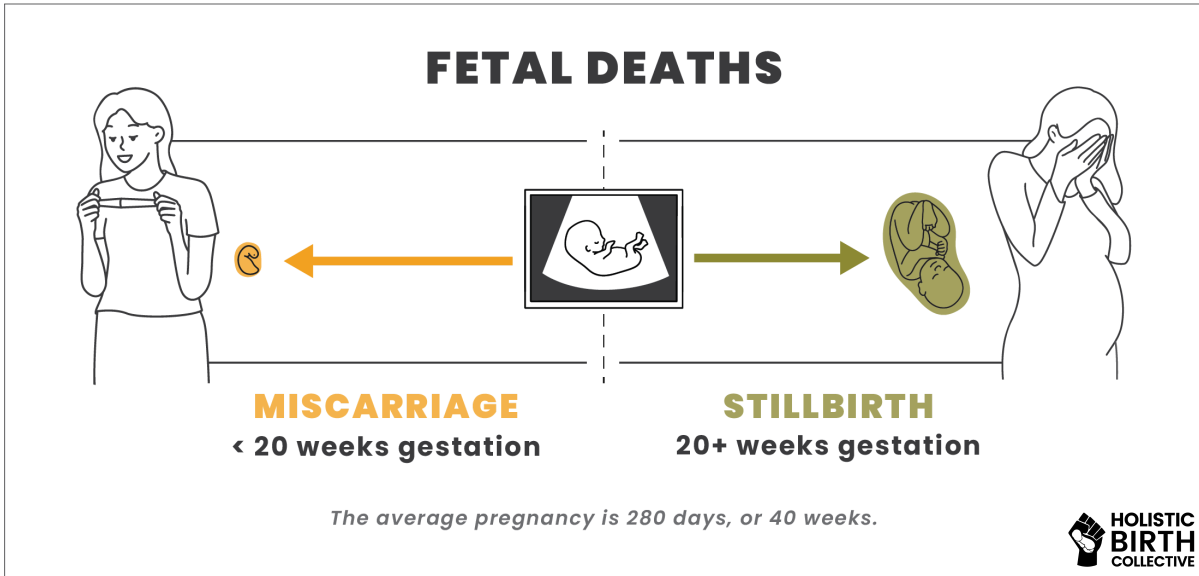


DEFINITIONS

- **Stillbirth** means a **fetal death**[i] occurring at 20 weeks or greater of gestation, or a weight greater than or equal to 350 grams if the gestational age is not known. The cutoff of 350 grams is the 50th percentile for weight at 20 weeks gestation[ii].
- **The Certificate of Birth Resulting in Stillbirth** provides a formal acknowledgment of the birth of the child. The certificate contains information on the child and their parent(s).
- **The Fetal Death Certificate** contains cause of death and disposition* information.

*Disposition refers to how a dead body is handled after death. This can include traditional funeral options like cremation and burial but can also include events associated with these, such as interment or ash scattering.

[i] "Fetal death" means death prior to the complete expulsion or extraction from the uterus of a product of human conception, irrespective of the duration of pregnancy, and which is not due to an [induced termination of pregnancy] as defined in Section 1-10 of the Reproductive Health Act. The death is indicated by the fact that after such separation the fetus does not breathe or show any other evidence of life such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles [410 ILCS 535/1 (6)]. **Stillbirth refers to fetal deaths occurring at 20 or more weeks of gestation.**



[ii] American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists & Society for Maternal Fetal Medicine. (March 2010). "Obstetric Care Consensus: Management of Stillbirth." *Obstetrics & Gynecology* 135(3): e110-e132. <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/obstetric-care-consensus/articles/2020/03/management-of-stillbirth>

Stillbirths Reported by Illinois to the National Vital Statistics System

Year	# Stillbirths in Illinois	Stillbirth Rate per 1,000 births
2017	911	6.1
2018	890	6.1
2019	829	5.9
2020	754	5.6

Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. National Vital Statistics System, Fetal Deaths and Births on CDC WONDER Online Database. <https://wonder.cdc.gov/>