

Vital Statistics by Occurrence

1. General Definition and Background Information:

Vital statistics reported by place of occurrence are those events that occurred in a particular geographic area (state, county, municipality), regardless of the residence of the decedent (for deaths) or the mother (for live births and fetal deaths). For example, there were 124 deaths due to motor vehicle accidents that occurred in County A in 2007.

2. Common Usage (Purposes) in Vital Statistics:

Most vital statistics are reported by place of residence (the decedent's place of residence for deaths and the mother's residence for births and fetal deaths). For more information, see Vital Statistics by Residence. However, reporting of vital statistics by place of occurrence may be more appropriate for certain types of events, analysis or reports. For example, deaths due to motor vehicle accidents by place of occurrence can help target traffic problem areas. The number of live births by hospital or county of occurrence provides information on where mothers prefer or are directed or transferred to deliver. The major needs and applications of the data users should drive the decision as to whether vital statistics by occurrence are more appropriate to report.

3. Examples of Use (NCHS):

[Live Births by State of Occurrence Distributed According to Resident Status: United States and Each State, 2003](#)

4. References and Links:

[US. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. *Technical Appendix from Vital Statistics of the United States 2003 Natality*; Hyattsville, Maryland: September 2005](#) (see pages 11-12 and 60)

5. Technical Notes:

- Resident occurrences are also sometimes used to report vital statistics. These are events that occurred in a particular geographic area to residents of the same geographic area. For example, there were 445 births in 2007 that occurred in County B to mothers who were also residents of County B. This type of information can be used for special public health program needs, such as a statewide breastfeeding effort that targets only residents who delivered in a hospital located in-state. The initial program contact is made in the hospital immediately after birth and follow-up is conducted at the mother's residence after discharge.
- Non-resident occurrences of vital events are also used (particularly for births) to show patterns of intra and inter state mobility for health care needs. For example, a major birthing hospital located in a large city near a state's border will attract mothers from other areas of the state as well as from the neighboring state.