

Certified True Copies

For German citizenship by declaration (§5 StAG) - U.S. applicants

THE RULE

Certify the **COPY** against the **ORIGINAL** - not just the applicant's signature.

ACCEPTABLE TYPE

Notary certifies the copy

"I certify that this copy is a true, correct and complete copy of the original."

The notary makes a genuine copy certification with original signature, seal and commission-expiration date.

NOT ACCEPTABLE

Applicant certifies it

"I declare that my copy is accurate."

A notary only witnesses the applicant signing. This does not certify the copy itself.

WHERE TO GET A VALID CERTIFIED RECORD

1

GERMAN MISSION

Ask if copy certification is offered; bring the original or accepted certified original.

2

U.S. NOTARY

Only if state law permits certification of that kind of document; verify their actual wording.

3

ISSUING OFFICE

Order a fresh officially certified birth, marriage or death record from Vital Records.

CALIFORNIA & NEW YORK

The German Missions warn that the BVA does not accept copy certifications by notaries from those states. Contact your German mission or the issuing records office.

BEFORE SENDING

- [] Include front and back / every page of the document.
- [] Keep the original certification ink, stamp/seal and signature.
- [] BVA §5 guidance requires the **ORIGINAL** criminal-record certificate.
- [] Check apostille / translation rules separately before sending.

Read the official German Missions samples and BVA §5 EER guidance:

germany.info - Certified True Copies | [BVA EER instructions, section 11](#)

Guide only; not a substitute for your German mission or BVA instructions. • 31 Oct 2026