

# Researching El Paso County, CO



Manitou Springs ca. 1901 (PPLD Digital Collections)

Birth and death records are officially registered with the state of Colorado, not individual counties, starting in 1908. Compliance was often delayed.

## Birth Records

### Early - ~1907

- If recorded, kept by the county
- Request 1890 to present from [El Paso County Health Department](#)

### ~1902-1910 - Present

- Records registered with the state
- Request from [Colorado Dept. of Public Health and Environment](#)

### Alternatives:

- Local newspapers ([PPLD Index](#))
- Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936-200 ([Ancestry](#))

## Death Records

### Early - 1908

- Official record may not exist
- May be kept with the [El Paso County Health Department](#) (death certificates 1893-present) or the [Colorado State Archives](#) (death records 1882-1967)

### 1908 (some earlier) - Present

- Records kept by the state
- Request from [Colorado Dept. of Public Health and Environment](#)

### Alternatives:

- Probate
- Local newspapers

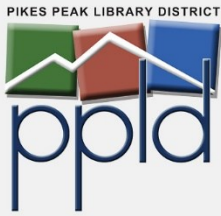
Colorado vital records are confidential per state statute and are generally not searchable online. However, with appropriate ID and cause, they can be requested through various agencies.

## Marriage Records

Marriage records are generally recorded by counties upon their establishment.

### Places to look:

- *Databases & Indexes*
  - ✓ FamilySearch: [Colorado Statewide Marriage Index, 1853-2006](#)
  - ✓ Ancestry: [Colorado, U.S., Select County Marriages, 1863-2018](#) and [Colorado, County Marriage Records and State Index, 1862-2006](#)
  - ✓ BYU: [Western State Marriages Index](#) (El Paso County 1876-1939)
  - ✓ Denver Public Library: [Colorado Marriages 1858-1939](#) (El Paso County 1870-1939)
- [Colorado State Archives](#) - Search their Statewide Marriage Index (El Paso 1883-1939). This archive holds numerous El Paso County marriage records.
- [Colorado Dept. of Public Health and Environment](#) - Provides verification (not copies) of marriages/divorces (1900-1939 and 1975-Present).
- [El Paso County Clerk & Recorder](#) - Keeps marriage records from the 1870s to present.



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## Additional Records

**Cemetery and Church Records** - Recordkeeping varied by location, time period, and denomination. Start with [Find A Grave](#) and [BillionGraves](#) to search for burials or local cemeteries. PPLD has several [local cemetery indexes](#). Also check with local churches, which often recorded vital events prior to standardized government records.

**Military** - Service records and veteran benefit records. Most are kept at the federal level (the [National Archives](#) and genealogical databases – [Ancestry](#), [FamilySearch](#), [Fold3](#), etc.), but the [Colorado State Archives](#) does have Colorado Volunteer and National Guard records.

**Land** - Deeds, land grants, tax records. The U.S. acquired Colorado land in 1848 and records documenting the initial transfers of this land from the government to individuals are kept with the [Bureau of Land Management](#). Subsequent private sales between individuals (1861-present) are managed by the [El Paso County Clerk & Recorder](#).

**Legal** - Court (crime, licenses, lawsuits, etc.), probate (wills, petitions, etc.), divorce. These records are usually kept by the court that handled the case. The [Colorado State Archives](#) and the [El Paso County Combined Court Records Department](#) are good places to start.

**Immigration** - Passenger lists, ship manifests. If your ancestor immigrated to the U.S., research the location or port of their arrival. These records are generally not held by Colorado agencies.

**Naturalization** - Declarations of Intention, Petitions for Citizenship, etc. If your ancestor obtained citizenship before 1906, check with the [Colorado State Archives](#). Naturalization is typically handled by the federal government after 1906 ([National Archives](#)), but some naturalizations were still applied for and recorded locally. Also try searching these database collections: Colorado, U.S., State and Federal Naturalization Records Collection ([1868-1990 on Ancestry](#) and [1876-1900 on FamilySearch](#)).

## Colorado Census Records

Colorado became a territory 1861 and was granted statehood in 1876. This impacted how the region was counted in various censuses.

**Federal Census** - Listed as the Colorado, Kansas, or Nebraska territory, parts of Colorado were enumerated in the federal census as early as 1850.

**State Census** - The state of Colorado enumerated just one state census in 1885.

**Other Census Records** - Colorado is included in mortality schedules for 1860, 1870, 1880, and 1885 as well as various Native American census rolls (1848-1970).

**Tip!** Check [FamilySearch](#) and [Ancestry](#) for census records of all types.

## Colorado Newspapers

Newspapers can include obituaries, birth, marriage, and social announcements, local news, and legal postings.

**[Pikes Peak NewsFinder](#)** - PPLD's free local newspaper index and database

**[Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection](#)** - Index and database of Colorado newspapers

**[Chronicling America](#)** - A newspaper database and directory offered by the Library of Congress

**[Newspaper Archives](#)** - Newspaper database available remotely with your PPLD library card

## Additional Resources

- [PPLD Regional History and Genealogy, Special Collections](#)
- [PPLD Genealogy Databases](#)
- [PPLD Genealogy Class Calendar](#)
- [Pikes Peak Genealogical Society's \(PPGS\) El Paso County Genealogical Resources page](#)
- [FamilySearch Research Wiki](#)
- [Cyndi's List](#)

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