

DEFINITIONS

Some definitions used in this publication may vary in meaning among states or nations. In addition, some definitions change over time. Center for Health Statistics definitions are consistent for all publications within a given year and are generally the same definitions used by the National Center for Health Statistics. However, a data-user should always compare definitions across geographical areas and times.

ABORTION - See INDUCED TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY. In this publication, the terms abortion and induced termination of pregnancy are used synonymously.

AGE SPECIFIC BIRTH RATE – The number of births to women in a specific age group, divided by the estimated number of women in that age group multiplied by 1,000.

ANNULMENT - "To nullify, to abolish, to make void by competent authority. An annulment differs from a divorce in that a divorce terminates a legal status, whereas an annulment establishes that a marital status never existed" from Black's Law Dictionary, Sixth Edition. In this publication, annulments are included with divorces for rate calculation purposes and are available only by place of occurrence.

BIRTH - See LIVE BIRTH. In this publication, the terms live birth and birth are used synonymously.

CAUSE OF DEATH - The cause of death presented in this publication is the "underlying cause" which is defined as the cause deemed responsible for the sequence of morbid events leading directly to death or the circumstances of the accident or violence that produced the fatal injury. Deaths, by cause, are classified according to the International Classification of Diseases (ICD), Tenth Revision, following instructions established by the National Center for Health Statistics. See Appendix C for the compilation lists and ICD 10 codes used for the leading cause of death.

DEATH - Death is defined in Black's Law Dictionary, Sixth Edition as "The cessation of life; permanent cessations of all vital functions and signs." For definitions of the determination of death under other than general circumstances, the Code of Alabama should be consulted.

DIVORCE - A court decree dissolving a marital relationship. A divorce from bed and board is a separation from cohabitation which does not otherwise affect the marriage and is not included in this publication. See Code of Alabama for additional information. For rate calculation purposes in this publication, divorces include annulments and are reported by the county where the divorce occurred.

ESTIMATED PREGNANCIES - The sum of births, induced terminations of pregnancy, and estimated total fetal losses.

ESTIMATED TOTAL FETAL LOSSES - This term, which is a component used in determining the number of estimated pregnancies, is an estimate of the total number of fetal losses regardless of the gestational age of the fetus. Estimated total fetal

losses is equal to the sum of 20 percent of births and 10 percent of induced terminations of pregnancy. This formula was developed by The Alan Guttmacher Institute and is widely accepted and used. Estimated total fetal losses should be distinguished from the term fetal deaths as used in this publication. While Alabama law defines fetal death to include all gestations (see definition of FETAL DEATH), only fetal deaths of at least 20 weeks in gestation are required to be reported by Alabama law and are the only ones counted as fetal deaths in this publication.

FETAL DEATH - "Death prior to the complete expulsion or extraction from the mother of a product of human conception, irrespective of the duration of pregnancy and which is not an induced termination of pregnancy. The death is indicated by the fact that after the expulsion or extraction 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. Heartbeats are to be distinguished from transient cardiac contractions; respirations are to be distinguished from fleeting respiratory efforts or gasps." Code of Alabama, 1975, Section 22-9A-1. While the definition of fetal death includes all gestations, only fetal deaths that have advanced to or are beyond the twentieth week of uterogestation are required to be reported under Alabama law and they are the only ones counted as fetal deaths in this publication. (Also see ESTIMATED TOTAL FETAL LOSSES.)

INDUCED TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY - "The purposeful interruption of an intrauterine pregnancy with the intention other than to produce a liveborn infant and which does not result in a live birth. This definition excludes management of prolonged retention of products of conception following fetal death." Code of Alabama, 1975, Section 22-9A-1. In these publications, the terms induced termination of pregnancy and abortion are used synonymously.

INFANT DEATH - Death of a liveborn infant under one year of age. The term excludes fetal death.

INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF DISEASES (ICD) - A publication of the World Health Organization (WHO) that provides the essential ground rules for the coding and classification of cause-of-death data. The purpose of the ICD and of WHO sponsorship is to promote international comparability in the collection, classification, processing and presentation of health statistics. In addition to being a classification system, the rules provide for identification of a single condition on the death certificate that is considered most informative from a public health point of view, called the underlying cause of death.

LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH – Average years of years a newborn infant would be expected to live if health and living conditions at the time of its birth remained the same throughout its life.

LIVE BIRTH - "The complete expulsion or extraction from the mother of a product of human conception, irrespective of the duration of the pregnancy, which, after such expulsion or extraction, breathes or shows any other evidence of life such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles, whether or not the umbilical cord has been cut or the placenta is attached.

Heartbeats are to be distinguished from transient cardiac contractions; respirations are to be distinguished from fleeting respiratory efforts or gasps." Code of Alabama, 1975, Section 22-9A-1. In these publications, the terms live birth and birth are used synonymously.

LOW BIRTH WEIGHT - A weight at birth of under 2,500 grams or under 5 pounds and 8 ounces.

MARRIAGE - The legal union of a man and a woman that establishes their relationship as husband and wife. See Code of Alabama for additional information. Marriage data are reported by the county where the marriage occurred.

MEDIAN AGE- The median age is the age that divides the age distribution of a given population into two equal groups, one that is younger than the median and one that is older than the median age.

NEONATAL DEATH - Death of a liveborn infant occurring within the first 27 days of life.

OCCURRENCE DATA - Data compiled as to the geographical place where the event occurred.

POSTNEONATAL DEATH - Death of a liveborn infant after the first 27 days of age, but before one year of age.

RESIDENT DATA - Data compiled as to the place of residence without regard to the geographical place where the event occurred. For births and fetal deaths, place of residence of mother is used.

TEENAGE - In this publication, persons aged 10 years through 19 years.

TOTAL FERTILITY RATE - An estimate of the average number of children that 1,000 women would bear if the current age-specific birth rates remained constant.