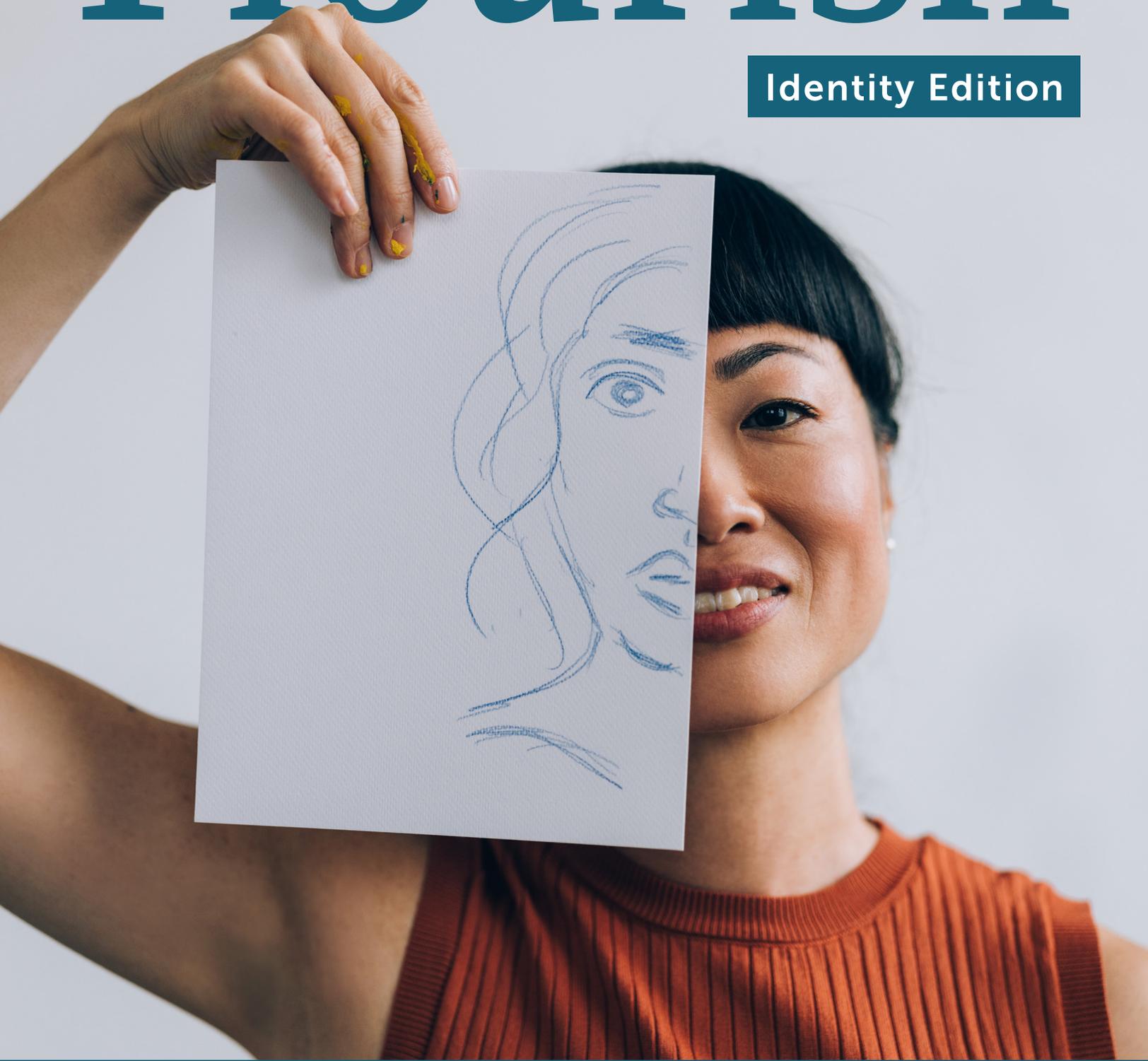


# Flourish

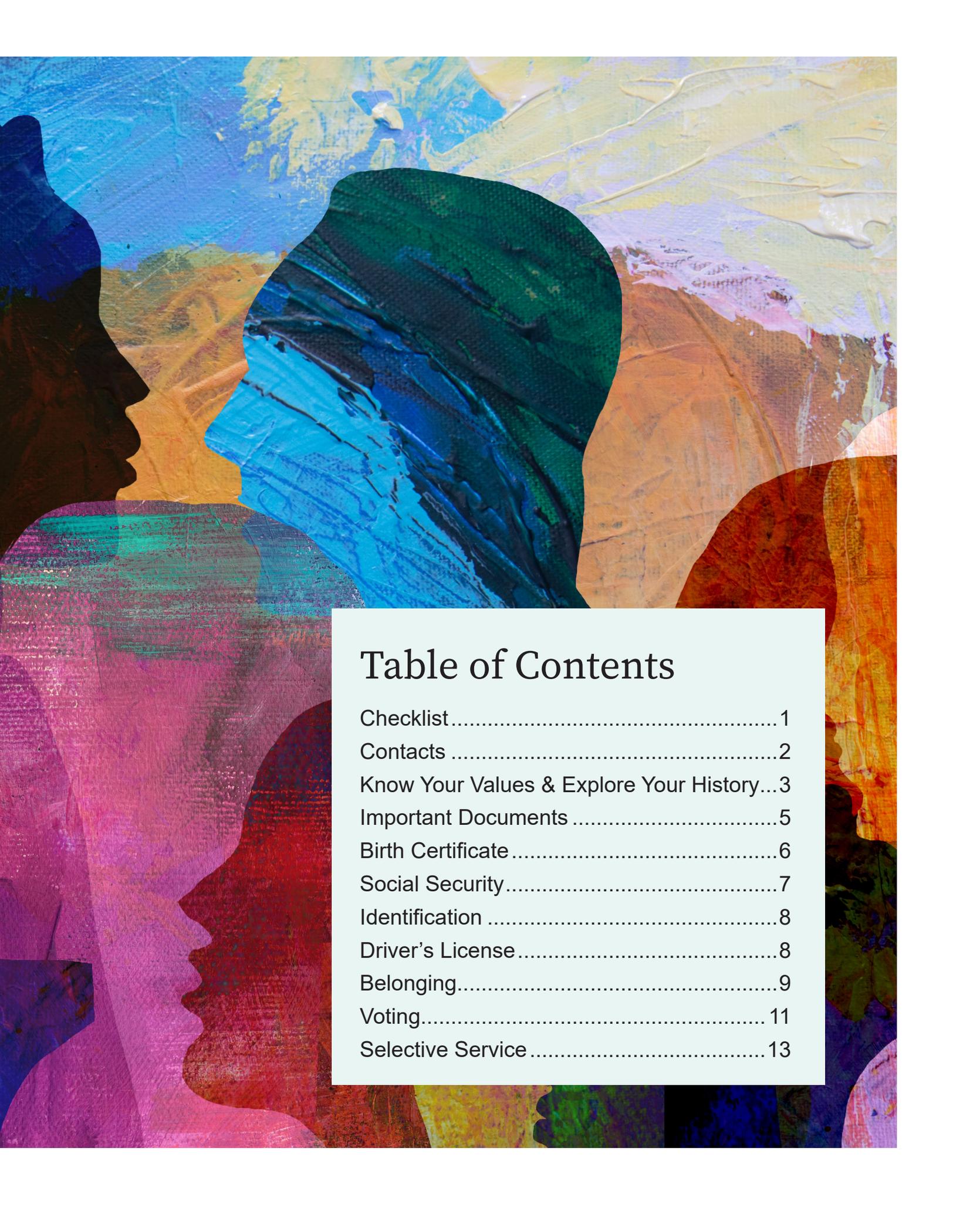
Identity Edition





Identity is often described as where you come from and who you are. In our society, identity is established legally in certain forms and documents. This volume can help make sure you have the documents you need when you need them, for example when you leave the country, get a driver's license, or even buy a home. Tips on safe storage of important documents are also included.

The Flourish Magazine series is a resource for Iowans. The series provides key information on a variety of subjects but is not meant to be all-encompassing. Refer to the Iowa HHS website for the most current version of each magazine. This material is intended to offer support and general guidance. It is not meant to direct specific actions or replace individual judgement. The included strategies may be helpful to the reader, but not all strategies will work for all individuals. Readers are encouraged to consult qualified professionals for advice specific to their individual circumstances.

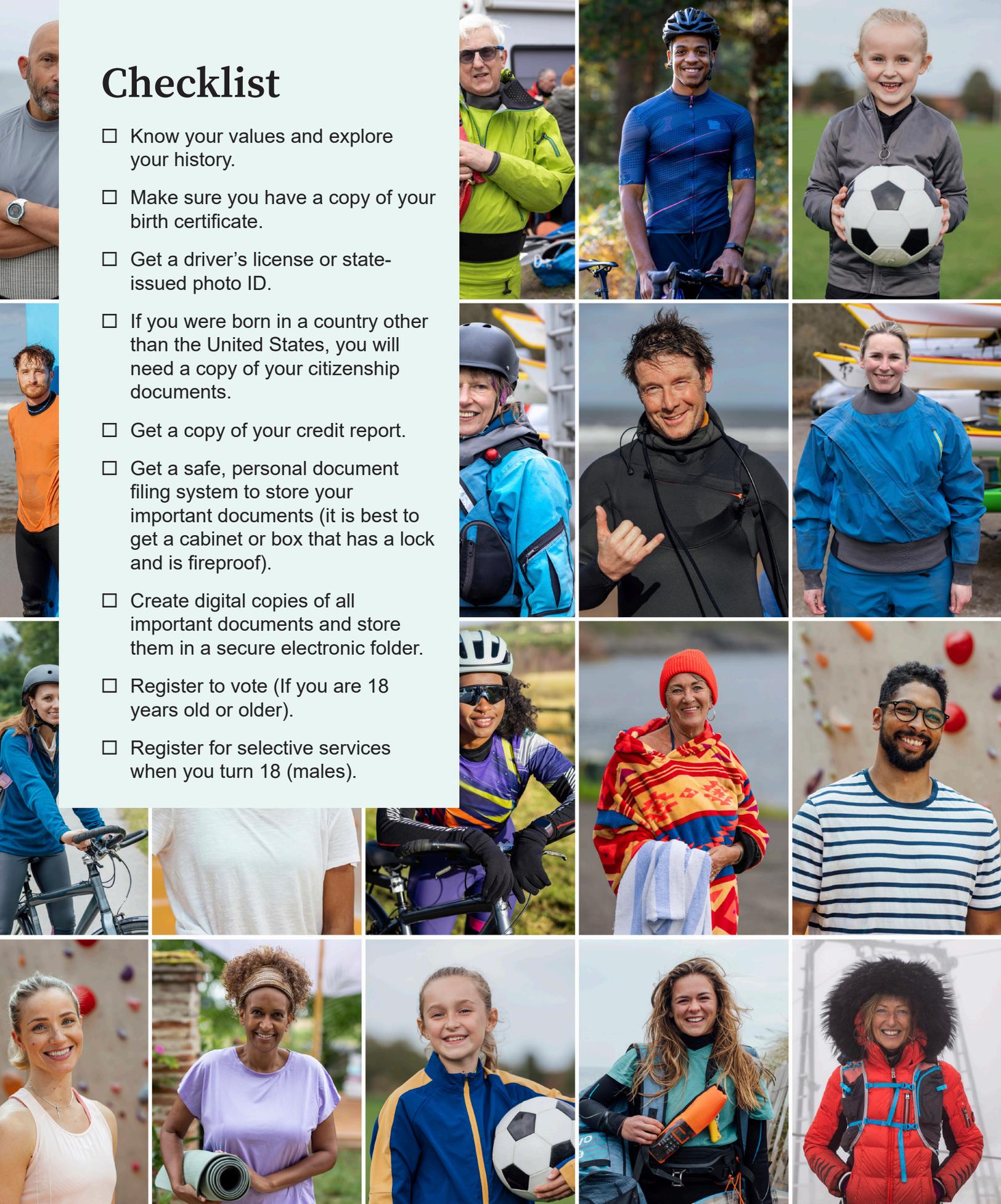


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# Checklist

- Know your values and explore your history.
- Make sure you have a copy of your birth certificate.
- Get a driver's license or state-issued photo ID.
- If you were born in a country other than the United States, you will need a copy of your citizenship documents.
- Get a copy of your credit report.
- Get a safe, personal document filing system to store your important documents (it is best to get a cabinet or box that has a lock and is fireproof).
- Create digital copies of all important documents and store them in a secure electronic folder.
- Register to vote (If you are 18 years old or older).
- Register for selective services when you turn 18 (males).





# Know Your Values & Explore Your History

You are a person of value. Getting to know who you are includes knowing where you came from and thinking hard about what you value. Here are a few good questions that you can ask yourself that will give you a better understanding of who you are and what you want to do with your life.

Good questions to ask yourself:

- What are your likes and dislikes?
- How do you interact with others?
- If you weren't afraid of anything, how would it change your life?
- What is your favorite way to spend a day?
- Would you rather be alone or in a group of people?
- Who is your hero and why?
- What kind of friend are you?
- Do you have family traditions that are important to you?





State Training School  
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## Things you can do that will help you better understand yourself and your values:

### Review your strengths.

- Come up with a list of what you like most about yourself and things you're good at.
- Ask someone to describe you and listen closely to what they say. Does it match how you feel about yourself?

### Do what makes you happy.

- Start a new hobby.
- Use your strengths and teach or share your hobby with someone else.

### Write a journal.

- A journal can be private place to relieve stress and worry.
- It can lead to well-being and help you find happiness.

### Understand your family history.

- Ask people who would know about your family history.
- Create a genogram or a family map.

Complete a free character strengths survey such as the one available on the [VIA Institute on Character's website](#).



# Important Documents

Keep in mind, whether you are a citizen, non-citizen, have been adopted or another situation and living in the United States, there are certain documents you should acquire to make it easier to vote, purchase a home, get a driver's license and any number of other normal functions.

**A basic list of the documents you should keep in a safe place includes: Birth Certificate, Social Security Card, Identification and Driver's License**



## Name Changes

Name changes can happen for a variety of reasons including:

- Marriage
- Divorce
- Adoption
- Personal choice

If you want to legally change your name, you need to update your information on your important documents.

- For guidance about modifying your original Iowa birth certificate, please call the Bureau of Health Statistics legal desk at 515-725-2566.
- To update your name on your Social Security card, visit the [Social Security Administration's website](#).





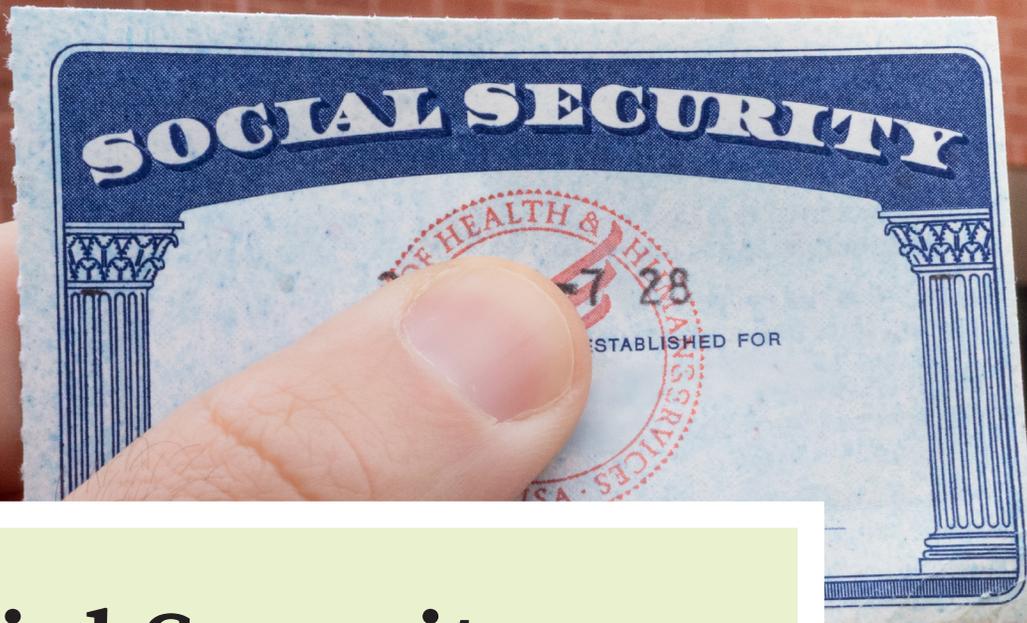
# Birth Certificate

The birth certificate is the initial identification document issued to parents shortly after the birth of their child. The birth certificate is typically issued by the county where the child is born. You need this document to get other government-issued identification documents.

If you were born in Iowa, you can request a certified copy of your birth certificate by phone, mail, online or in person. Instructions are on the Vital Records webpage on the HHS website. You can elect to receive your document in person or have it mailed to you (charges vary by method). To learn more about receiving a copy of a certificate, visit the [Vital Records webpage on the HHS website](#).



SOCIAL SECURITY ADMIN



# Social Security

The Social Security number (SSN) and card are issued by the Social Security Administration. Almost all parents voluntarily apply for a Social Security number shortly after the birth of a child.

You need your Social Security number to:

- Verify your identity
- File taxes
- Start a job
- Open a bank account
- Apply for a loan
- Get a passport

Receive government benefits When you work and pay taxes, the amount you pay to Social Security is tied to your Social Security number. The money you pay to Social Security will help you receive benefits like money and Medicare after you retire.

Visit the [Social Security Administration's website](#) to request a Social Security number.



# Identification

Identification is the proof of who someone or something is, usually in the form of documents. In the United States, it is generally expected people carry certain proof of identification, such as a state ID or driver's licenses. These are necessary to perhaps get a library card, if you get pulled over for speeding, or if you are in an accident. We also expect you to have access to, but do not carry with you, a birth certificate or social security card. These are used to enroll in school, confirm your identity to fly on a plane, or get married. You may even use one of these documents for proof of identity to get one of the others.



## Driver's License

Your driver's license needs to be updated at certain times including:

- Address change
- Name change
- Before the expiration date

Visit the Transportation magazine for additional driver's license information. Also, visit your [local Department of Transportation website](#).



# Belonging

Belonging is the feeling of being accepted by a group and wanting to be there. We feel a sense of comfort when we feel like we belong in a group.

When we feel a true sense of belonging, it can help us grow and flourish. In other words, being part of a group can:

- Make you feel closer to friends or loved ones
- Build your emotional support system
- Increase your social skills
- Help you learn to approach conversations for meaning and connection
- Expand your social group and your social capital
- Give you a chance to help others and to seek help, when needed
- Improve your professional success





When we don't feel like we belong anywhere, it can have a negative impact. It can cause your mood to change and increase sadness, depression and stress. If your body feels stress or sadness for a long time, it can make you physically sick. It is important to build connections to keep your mind and body happy and healthy.

Visit the Community & Connections magazine for additional relationship information.

# Voting

You can vote in U.S. federal, state, and local elections if you:



## Are a U.S. citizen including:

- U.S. citizens living outside of the United States. Learn more from the U.S. Department of State about [voting as a U.S. citizen abroad](#).
- Dual citizens living in the United States or abroad

## Meet your state's residency requirements

You can be experiencing homelessness and still meet [these requirements](#).

## Are 18 years old on or before Election Day

In almost every state, you can register to vote before you turn 18 if you will be 18 by Election Day.

Some states allow 17-year-olds who will be 18 by Election Day to vote in primaries.

## Are registered to vote by your state's voter registration deadline

More information about how, when and where to vote, visit [www.usa.gov/how-to-vote](http://www.usa.gov/how-to-vote).



# Selective Service

The Selective Service System, or Selective Service, is a government agency that helps register male U.S. citizens and male immigrants, so the government is prepared if there is a national emergency or crisis and additional military members are needed. If there is a crisis, all registered males will go into a random selection process. Some disabilities and circumstances may not require you to have to serve in the military or Armed Forces.

In the United States, almost all male citizens and immigrants are required to register for Selective Service within 30 days of their 18th birthday. Male citizens and immigrants between the ages of 18 and 25 are required by law to be registered for Selective Service and can still complete late registration until they turn 26. Visit the [Selective Service website](#) for a full list of who is required to register.

Women can enroll in the military, but they are not currently required to register for Selective Service.





If you are a male citizen or immigrant aged 26 or older and you did not register for Selective Service, you could be denied benefits including:

- Student loans and grants
- Federal job training under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
- Federal, state and local jobs
- Up to a 5-year delay of U.S. citizenship proceedings

Learn more or enroll on the [Selective Service System Registration website](#).

If you move, change your name or need to correct your information, submit your information on the [Selective Service System website](#).

