

# BERRIEN COUNTY GUIDE

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## ARCHIVES OF MICHIGAN



Berrien County was established by the legislature in 1831 and organized in 1835. The county coordinates are Ranges 17 West through 21 West (17W–21W) and Townships 3 South through 8 South (3S–8S). Adjacent counties include Van Buren (north/northeast), Cass (east), St. Joseph [IN] (southeast), LaPorte [IN] (south), and Porter [IN] (southwest). Lake Michigan is on the western border of Berrien County.

Original records from Berrien County are available at the Archives of Michigan. The list below is organized by record type; each record type lists specific records, the years of coverage and the record group (RG) number assigned to that collection. A more detailed list of each collection can be found in finding aids at the archives.

Some of the collections below are housed at the Western Michigan University Archives & Regional History Collections in Kalamazoo - these are indicated with a \* after the RG number. For assistance with these records, please contact the Western Michigan University Archives directly.

### BUSINESS RECORDS

- **Record of chattel mortgages**, from **1941** – RG 67-109\*

### CEMETERY RECORDS

- **Berrien County files**, from **1968 to 1976** – RG 83-53

### CENSUS RECORDS

- **Population schedules** , from **1880** – RG 67-24

## COURT RECORDS

- **Chancery rule and order book**, from **1847 to 1886** – RG 67-24\*
- **Circuit Court common rule book**, from **1843 to 1912** – RG 67-24\*
- **Circuit Court exhibits**, from **1921 to 1922** – RG 67-48\*
- **Circuit Court proceedings**, from **1839 to 1841** – RG 67-109\*
- **List of petit jury**, from **1905 to 1940** – RG 67-24\*
- **Justice and Circuit Court decisions**, from **1841 to 1864** – RG 67-24\*
- **Justice Court journals**, from **1832 to 1893** – RG 67-24\*
- **Justice Court transcripts**, from **1864 to 1929** – RG 67-24\*
- **Record of Justices of the Peace & notaries**, from **1837 to 1888** – RG 67-24\*

## LAND RECORDS

- **Index to deeds**, not dated – RG 67-109\*
- **Township plats**, from **1943 to 1945** – RG 67-109\*

## MILITARY RECORDS

- **Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) post records**, from **1876 to 1945** – RG 63-19
  - *Berrien County GAR posts: Post 14 (Benton Harbor); Post 21 (St. Joseph); Post 22 (Buchanan); Post 30 (Coloma); Post 36 (Berrien Center); Post 39 (Berrien Springs); Post 64 (Niles); Post 85 (Three Oaks); Post 208 (Galien); Post 437 (New Troy)*
- **Record of soldiers discharged from service**, from **1866 to 1899** – RG 67-24\*
- **Report of burial of indigent soldiers, sailors, and Marines**, from **1885 to 1921** – RG 67-24\*

*See also Guide No. 4: War Records, Guide No. 7: Post-War Records, Guide No. 4 c: Spanish American War, and Guide No. 4 d: World War I*

## OCCUPATIONAL RECORDS

- **Statements of medical practitioners**, from **1898 to 1899** – RG 67-24\*

## POLITICAL RECORDS

- **Bonds and oaths of office**, from **1915 to 1916** – RG 67-24\*
- **Election breakdown**, from **1936 to 1948** – RG 67-24\*
- **Election returns for village and township officers**, from **1912 to 1954** – RG 67-24\*
- **List of county officers**, from **1836 to 1839** – RG 67-24\*

- Oaths of office (New Buffalo), from 1928 to 1945 – RG 79-100

## **POOR HOME / RELIEF RECORDS**

- Journal of Board of Superintendent of the Poor, from 1847 to 1868 – RG 67-109\*

## **PRISON RECORDS**

- Reports of jail inspection, from 1897 to 1918 – RG 67-24\*

*See also Guide No. 3: Correctional Facilities Records*

## **PROBATE RECORDS**

- Proceedings of probate court, from 1832 to 1838 – RG 67-109\*
- Vouchers and receipts within case files, from 1927 to 1937 – RG 67-109\*

## **RECREATION RECORDS**

- Record of docked horses, from 1901 to 1902 – RG 67-24\*

## **SCHOOL RECORDS**

- Record of attendance in Trinity Lutheran school, from 1955 to 1959 – RG 67-109\*

*Student records are closed for 75 years unless a death certificate is provided.*

## **TAX RECORDS**

- Abstract of taxable inheritances, from 1902 to 1930 – RG 67-109\*
- Assessment roll (St. Joseph), from 1868 – RG 67-24\*
- Record of tax receipts, from 1850 to 1879 – RG 67-24\*
- Record of tax redemption notices, from 1898 to 1910 – RG 67-24\*
- Register of delinquent tax receipts countersigned by county clerk, from 1882 to 1901 – RG 67-24\*

## **VITAL RECORDS**

- Marriage records (Berrien Springs), from 1939 to 1968 – RG 79-100

*See Guide No. 19: Vital Records*

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

[Archives of Michigan](#)  
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