



## Can a child have a legal father if the parents are unmarried?



*If the parents are not married when the child is born, the child does not have a legal father.*

Unless the father becomes the legal father, the child may miss out on many things that children of married couples take for granted. The benefits that children of married couples receive such as financial support, social security benefits, health insurance, and inheritance rights, may be denied a child born to unmarried parents.

The father's name will not appear on the child's birth certificate unless he has been established to be the legal father of the child.

## How can the father become the legal father of a child?

*Fortunately, there is an easy way for unmarried parents to provide a legal father for their child and that is by acknowledging paternity.*

The word paternity means the relationship of a father. To acknowledge paternity means to establish a legal relationship with the father of a child.

## Who should acknowledge paternity?

*All unmarried parents should consider acknowledging paternity.*

Establishing paternity is important regardless of whether the parents stay together or not. Every child deserves to be supported by both parents and has a right to both parents' social security benefits or veterans benefits in the unlikely event that one parent dies or becomes disabled. Health insurance can only be obtained by the legal mother or father of a child.

## What if we would like to have genetic testing before establishing paternity?

*If unmarried parents wish to have paternity established through genetic testing, they may complete the Application for IV-D Services/Genetic Testing Agreement form at the hospital. That form will be sent to the local child support office who will contact you about genetic testing.*

If you wish more information on paternity, child support or genetic testing, please call 1-800-485-6908.



## How can we acknowledge paternity?

*You can complete a form at the hospital or you can contact the local child support office at a later date.*

Paternity acknowledgement will be explained to you in the hospital when your child is born. The paternity form will be signed by both parents when you complete your child's birth certificate.

If you do not complete the acknowledgement at the hospital, you may take it with you and complete at a later date and return it to the Hospital Paternity Program.



# Unmarried Parents ask yourself

Is it important  
for your child  
to know  
both parents?

What are my  
responsibilities  
as a parent?

*Single parents have the  
responsibility for the  
care and welfare of  
their child.*

*Establishing paternity  
gives the father  
all the legal rights  
and responsibilities  
afforded to a father  
of a child that is born  
within a marriage.*

*By establishing a legal  
father for a child, the  
parents have taken a  
first step in securing  
their child's future and  
well being.*

If you have questions about  
paternity, blood or genetic testing  
Call the Hospital Paternity Program at:  
**1-800-485-6908**

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program • Under Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI & VII), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) of 2008; the Department prohibits discrimination in admissions, programs, services, activities, or employment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetics and retaliation. The Department must make a reasonable accommodation to allow a person with a disability to take part in a program, service or activity. For example, this means if necessary, the Department must provide sign language interpreters for people who are deaf, a wheelchair accessible location, or enlarged print materials. It also means that the Department will take any other reasonable action that allows you to take part in and understand a program or activity, including making reasonable changes to an activity. If you believe that you will not be able to understand or take part in a program or activity because of your disability, please let us know of your disability needs in advance if at all possible. To request this document in alternative format or for further information about this policy, contact the Division of Child Support Services at (602) 252-4045; TTY/TDD Services: 7-1-1. • Free language assistance for DES services is available upon request. • Disponible en español en línea o en la oficina local. CSE-1067APAMPD (4-14)

Do you want the  
father's name  
on your child's  
birth certificate?

If you said YES to these questions, you  
should consider paternity acknowledgment.

Arizona Department of Economic Security  
Division of Child Support Services  
Hospital Paternity Program