PARENTAGE OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM

Establishing Legal Parentage for Unmarried Parents

The State of California defines "parentage" as a parent's legal relationship to a child.

When a birth parent and other parent are not married to each other, the law says the birth parent and other parent must complete a Voluntary Declaration of Parentage or get a court order BEFORE the other parent's name can be added to the birth certificate.

A name on a birth certificate does NOT legally establish parentage. Only a court order or the Voluntary Declaration of Parentage establishes legal parentage.

Establishing legal parentage is easy and FREE, and helps a child in many ways:

- Identifying the legal parents of the child
- Providing parents the right to seek custody or visitation with their child
- Protecting the child's right to inherit from the parents
- Allows the other parent's name to be added to the child's birth certificate
- Could allow the child to be added to the other parent's health insurance plan

For questions about birth certificates, contact the California Department of Public Health Office of Vital Records at 916.445.2684 or vrmail@cdph.ca.gov

It's easy to establish legal parentage without going to court — *and it's free!*

For more information visit
CalParentage.org

Contact Us
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Hours of Service
Monday-Friday | 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday | Closed