

What if the Other Parent is Unavailable at the Time of Birth?

If the other parent is unavailable at the time of birth:

- A Voluntary Declaration of Parentage may be completed any time after the birth of the child
- Parents who live outside of California must have their signature on the Declaration witnessed by a notary public
- Each parent must have an authorized witness
 - Signature dates of the witness and parents must correspond
- Parents may sign the Declaration on different dates
- Parents may sign the Declaration separately

Birth Certificate:

When parents are unmarried, California law prohibits the other parent's name from being added to the birth certificate when legal parentage has not been established. For many families there are only two ways to establish parentage:

1. by filing the Declaration or
2. through the California court system

When parents are unmarried and the other parent is unavailable at the time of birth, their name will not be added to the birth certificate. To add the other parent's name to the birth certificate, the parents must establish legal parentage through one of the two ways mentioned above.

Once legal parentage is established, the parents will need to contact the California Department of Public Health, Office of Vital Records (OVR) to amend the birth certificate to include the other parent's name. OVR may be reached by calling 916.445.8494 or by emailing 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

AskPOP@dcss.ca.gov

916.464.1982

Hours of Service

Monday - Friday: 8 AM - 5 PM

Saturday - Sunday: Closed