

If the Husband Is Not the Father

According to New Jersey law, if the mother is married at the time of conception, birth or during the 300 days before giving birth, the husband is presumed to be the father of the child and the husband's name will automatically be placed on the child's birth certificate.

If the husband is not the biological father of the child, the husband and the mother can fill out an Affidavit of Denial of Paternity (AOD). The mother and the biological father must then complete a Certificate of Parentage. When both forms are completed, paternity is established for the biological father and the biological father's name may be added to the birth certificate.

Changing Your Mind

If either parent changes their mind, they have 60 days from the date of the last signature to rescind (cancel) the Certificate of Parentage.

Custody and Parenting Time

Paternity establishment and custody are two separate issues. The New Jersey Paternity Opportunity Program has no authority in custody and parenting time matters. After a Certificate of Parentage has been completed, the father has the right to petition the court for custody or parenting time.

Child Support

Any parent or person with custody of a child may apply for child support. You can apply online at njchildsupport.org or contact your local child support office. If the custodial parent and child are receiving assistance benefits, the non-custodial parent may be required to pay child support.

Establishing Paternity

800-POP-6607 (800-767-6607)

888-910-3456 (Text)

nj-paternity.com



Genetic Testing and Child Support Services

877-NJKIDS1

(877-655-4371)

njchildsupport.org



Birth Certificates

877-622-7549

nj.gov/health/vital



What a Difference Both Parents Make!



Establishing paternity can make a world of difference for fathers, mothers, and their children.

Learn more:

nj-paternity.com



A program of the New Jersey Department of Human Services
Division of Family Development - Office of Child Support Services

Paternity gives children two legal parents.

Paternity means legal fatherhood. Paternity establishment is how a biological father becomes the legal father of their child if they are not married to their child's mother.

If the biological father and mother are not married, they must establish paternity before the biological father's name can be placed on their child's birth certificate.

Paternity benefits everyone.

Establishing paternity gives both parents and their child the rights and opportunities they need and deserve.

For parents, establishing paternity:

- Facilitates parenting time and custody rights for both parents.
- Allows the father to be notified of any plans to have the child adopted by someone else.
- Ensures access to child support.

For children, establishing paternity:

- Provides the opportunity to form a relationship with both parents.
- Helps develop a sense of identity.
- Provides access to both parents' medical histories.
- Provides access to health insurance and other financial benefits.

There are two ways to establish paternity in New Jersey.

1. Certificate of Parentage

Both parents can complete and sign a voluntary Certificate of Parentage (COP) form – it's free!

You can sign this form:

- At the hospital when your child is born.
- After you leave the hospital at the State of New Jersey Office of Vital Statistics and Registry, local registrar in the municipality in which your child was born, or local child support office.

2. Court Proceedings

- You can file a complaint for paternity establishment with the Family Court or apply for paternity establishment services online at njchildsupport.org. You can also call 877-NJKIDS1 with any questions or contact a private attorney for assistance.



Other Important Details

Required ID and Notarization

When completing a COP, each parent must show a valid government-issued photo ID and sign the form in the presence of a licensed notary or approved witness. In New Jersey, approved witnesses are only available at hospitals, local registrar offices, the State office of Vital Statistics and Registry and child support offices. To learn what types of ID are acceptable, contact the facility where you plan to complete the COP or visit nj-paternity.com.

Genetic Testing

If you're not sure who the father of your child is, a genetic test, also called a DNA test, can help determine who the biological father is. Your local child support office can assist with genetic testing, or you can apply for paternity establishment services online at njchildsupport.org. You can also make private arrangements with the hospital or a paternity testing laboratory.

Parents Who Are Not U.S. Citizens

If the child is a U.S. citizen, but the child's parents are not U.S. citizens, paternity can still be established by signing a Certificate of Parentage or filing a complaint with the court.