

Why is it important to establish paternity?

In California, unmarried fathers do not have legal rights or responsibilities until legal paternity is established.

Fathers play a vital role in the lives of their children. Studies have shown an undeniable link between a father's absence and childhood poverty, teenage pregnancy, and family violence.

When unmarried parents sign a Declaration of Paternity, they help establish a foundation that provides their child with emotional, social and financial support.

Over 80 percent of unmarried fathers across California have declared paternity through the California Department of Child Support Services' Paternity Opportunity Program (POP), establishing paternity for over 1.4 million children.

It's easy to establish legal paternity without going to court—and it's free.

To find out more:

- Call the POP Coordinator nearest you (see the list at right)
- E-mail askpop@dcss.ca.gov
- Click on the POP link at www.childsup.ca.gov
- Call toll-free 1-866-249-0773

Local Child Support Agency POP Coordinators

ALAMEDA 510-891-3368	MARIN 415-507-4068	SAN LUIS OBISPO 805-781-5734
ALPINE* 530-694-2235 X.236	MARIPOSA 209-966-3400	SAN MATEO 866-366-8221
AMADOR* 209-223-6318	MENDOCINO 707-463-4216	SANTA BARBARA 800-818-1386
BUTTE 530-538-7221	MERCED 209-381-1300	SANTA CLARA 408-503-5200
CALAVERAS* 209-223-6318	MODOC 800-676-9222	SANTA CRUZ 831-454-3700
COLUSA 530-458-0555	MONO 760-873-3659	SHASTA 530-225-5300
CONTRA COSTA 925-957-7395	MONTEREY 831-755-3200	SIERRA 530-271-5437
DEL NORTE 707-464-7232	NAPA 707-253-4251	SISKIYOU 800-676-9222
EL DORADO 530-621-5600	NEVADA*** 530-271-5437	SOLANO 888-823-2735
FRESNO 559-494-1000	ORANGE 714-347-8118	SONOMA 707-565-4000
GLENN 530-934-6527	PLACER 530-889-5700	STANISLAUS 209-541-2922
HUMBOLDT 707-441-3200	PLUMAS 530-283-6264	SUTTER 530-822-7338
IMPERIAL 760-482-2300	RIVERSIDE 951-955-4100	TEHAMA 530-527-3110
INYO** 760-873-3659	SACRAMENTO 916-875-7320	TRINITY 530-623-1306
KERN 661-868-6564	SAN BENITO 831-636-4130	TULARE 800-801-2500
KINGS 559-584-1425	SAN BERNARDINO 909-799-1790	TUOLUMNE 209-533-6400
LAKE 707-262-4300	SAN DIEGO 619-236-7600	VENTURA 805-654-5200
LASSEN 530-251-2630	SAN FRANCISCO 415-356-2700	YOLO 530-661-2880
LOS ANGELES 323-889-2758	SAN JOAQUIN 209-468-2601	YUBA 530-749-6000
MADERA 559-675-7885		

* Central Sierra Regional DCSS includes Alpine, Amador and Calaveras

** Inyo/Mono Regional DCSS

*** Sierra Nevada Regional DCSS



PATERNITY
OPPORTUNITY
PROGRAM

Paternity Opportunity Program POP

California Department
of Child Support Services



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Paternity Opportunity Program **POP**



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How does establishing legal paternity benefit the child?

Signing a Declaration of Paternity helps children gain the same legal rights and privileges as children born within a marriage. Establishing legal paternity helps a child in many ways, including:

- The child knows who both parents are
- The father's name can be placed on the birth certificate
- The child is entitled to support from both parents
- The father's medical history can be accessed
- Health insurance coverage may be available from the father
- The child may receive an inheritance from either parent
- The father's Social Security or veterans' benefits may be available to the child

Completing a Declaration of Paternity at the hospital is easy and free, and it's the simplest way for an unwed father to make sure his name appears on his child's birth certificate.

Does a birth certificate establish legal paternity?

A birth certificate can be used to establish the identity of the person named on it, but for a child of unmarried parents, it is **not** the document that legally establishes who the child's father is.

Legal paternity is established by voluntarily signing a Declaration of Paternity, or by obtaining a judgment in court.

For more information about birth certificates for children born in California, contact:

California Department of Health Services
Office of Vital Records (916) 445-2684

www.dhs.ca.gov/hisp/chs/ovr/birthordercert.htm

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