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FOR YOUR KIDS

Establishing Paternity in Colorado

Establishing paternity is the first step to knowing your rights as a father of a child. There are three different ways to establish paternity in Colorado:

AJ Willert, Father of One

VOLUNTARY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PATERNITY (AOP)

What is this?

The AOP is a form that unmarried parents can sign to voluntarily state that a man is the biological father of a child.

How does this work?

The mother and biological father must sign the AOP in front of a witness.

Where can I do this?

▶ Hospitals or birth facilities when a child is born.

▶ At the Office of Vital Records and Statistics (**www.cdphe.state.co.us**).

How much does this cost?

An AOP is free if it is filed by the hospital or birth facility with the child's birth certificate. If the form is filed after the hospital deadline, there is a $20 fee to add the father's name and a $17 fee for a copy of the birth certificate.

What issues can this solve?

▶ Paternity.

▶ Adds the father's name to a Colorado birth certificate.

▶ Can change a child's last name (until the child is one year old).

ADMINISTRATIVE OR JUDICIAL PATERNITY ORDER THROUGH CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

What is this?

An Administrative Paternity Order does not involve the judicial court system, but the order has the same effect as a judicial order. A Judicial Paternity Order is the result of a court action in front of a judge or magistrate.

How does this work?

One of the parents must apply for Child Support services first. Both parents will then receive a notice of the proceedings. After the parents respond to the notice, provide more information or request genetic tests, an order is issued.

Where can I do this?

▶ Contact your local county Child Support office (**www.childsupport.state.co.us**).

How much does this cost?

There is an initial $20 application fee for Child Support services. Additional fees may be charged depending on the circumstances of the case, such as genetic testing fees.

What issues can this solve?

▶ Paternity.

▶ Adds the father's name to a Colorado birth certificate.

▶ Establishes Child Support.

▶ Establishes health insurance coverage.

Larry Johnson, Father of One

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JUDICIAL PATERNITY ORDER (CHILD SUPPORT NOT INVOLVED)

What is this?

A Judicial Paternity Order is the result of a court action in front of a judge or magistrate.

How does this work?

A child's parents must first hire attorneys or represent themselves in court. Both parents will receive court documents and provide additional information to the court. After all of the issues have been resolved, an order is established.

Where can I do this?

▶ District or juvenile courts (**www.courts.state.co.us**).

How much does this cost?

Judicial Paternity Order filing fees are set by the courts and attorney fees by the attorney and client. There is also a fee for a new birth certificate that includes the father's information from the Office of Vital Records and Statistics.

Kevin Crumley, Father of Four

What issues can this solve?

▶ Paternity.

▶ Adds the father's name to a Colorado birth certificate.

▶ Establishes Child Support.

▶ Establishes health insurance coverage.

▶ Can change a child's last name.

▶ Can address physical care arrangements.

▶ Can address parenting time (visitation).

Remember, paternity establishment does not necessarily give a father physical care or visitation rights. Visitation terms can be set by a court or informally through an agreement between the mother and father of a child. Paternity action in Colorado can start at any time until a child reaches the age of 18. In some cases, paternity can be established up until a child turns 21. Paternity can also be established if you live in a different state than your child.

To learn more about the benefits of paternity establishment, Child Support resources or fatherhood tips, visit **www.coloradodads.com**.

Ja'son Wilson, Father of One