

Registering with the Putative Father Registry is only one step in protecting your rights, you must also begin legal proceedings to establish paternity within 30 days of registering.

How can I establish paternity?

You may have already established paternity if you signed a Voluntary Acknowledgement of Paternity at the hospital when the baby was born.

If you did not establish paternity at the hospital, then you must do one of the following:

- Sign a Voluntary Acknowledgement of Paternity now;
- Go to court to establish paternity with the Clerk of Circuit Court, or
- See a Healthcare and Family Services representative.

You may wish to contact an attorney to assist you. In some instances, you may be able to obtain free assistance filing a case from the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services. Contact:

The Illinois Department of
Healthcare and Family Services
Cook County Office
Division of Child Support Enforcement
32 West Randolph Street, 9th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60601

The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services Child Support Inquiry Line can be reached by calling 1-800-447-4278.

Remember that you must start legal proceedings to establish paternity within 30 days of registering with the Putative Father Registry.

What happens if I don't register with the Putative Father Registry or if I don't establish paternity?

If you do not register with the Putative Father Registry within 30 days of the child's birth, or if you do register but do not start legal proceedings to establish paternity within 30 days after that, the following may happen:

- The court may rule that you have waived your rights, and permanently terminate your parental rights without notice; and
- Your child may be permanently adopted without your consent.

Who else benefits from the Putative Father Registry?

The Putative Father Registry also serves families who want to adopt, adoption social workers and other professionals who must make sure that a child is 'legally free' for adoption. Ultimately, the Registry benefits children because it helps to determine if they are available to be adopted.



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PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS AS A FATHER

Make sure your child is not
adopted without your consent



The Illinois Putative Father Registry
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1-866-PFR-DCFS
(1-866-737-3237)

www.putativefather.org
info@putativefather.org

Protect Your Rights as a Father. Register with the Illinois Putative Father Registry

In Illinois, a father is supposed to be notified before his child can be adopted. But a father who isn't married to the child's mother may not be easy to find, or might not be legally recognized as the child's father. The Putative Father Registry is a way for such fathers to make sure that they can protect their rights.

What is a Putative Father?

A 'putative father' is a man who may be a child's father, but who was not married to the child's mother before the child was born and has not established the fact that he is the father in a legal proceeding. If the child's mother wants to place the child for adoption, the putative father must take steps to show that he is the legal father of the child if he wants to have any say in the adoption. By registering with the Illinois Putative Father Registry, a father takes one step toward proving he is the child's father.

Who should register with the Putative Father Registry?

A man who thinks he is the father of a child, and who wants to have a say in whether the child is adopted, should register with the Putative Father Registry. In fact, he should register even if he signed the child's birth certificate and even if he is under 18 years of age.

How do I register with the Putative Father Registry?

To register with the Illinois Putative Father Registry, you simply fill out a registration form. You may request a registration form by calling the phone number below, or if you have access to the internet, you may fill it out directly on our web site at, http://www.putativefather.org/home_father.aspx **and printing the completed form.** After you have completed the registration form, make sure to sign it, and mail the original signed registration form to the Registry at the address specified below. For your convenience, you may also register in person, and the service is absolutely free of charge.

The Illinois Putative Father Registry

3 North Old State Capitol Plaza
Springfield, IL 62701

Tel: 1-866-PFR-DCFS (1-866-737-3237)

E-mail: info@putativefather.org

Web site: www.putativefather.org

What personal information must be provided on the Registration Form?

To complete the registration form you must provide your name, address, Social Security number, date of birth, and other basic personal information about yourself. It also asks for information about your child and the child's mother. Once you register, it is very important to keep your address current with the registry.

What happens to the information that I give to the Registry?

The information that you provide to the Registry will be kept confidential. If your child is the subject of an adoption proceeding and a search is requested of the Registry, your information will be given to the requesting party so that you can be notified of the adoption proceeding. Interested parties could include the child's mother, the people who want to adopt the child, a child welfare agency, or an attorney representing any of the above.

How does the Putative Father Registry work?

After a father registers with the Putative Father Registry, the court will make sure that he is notified if the child becomes the subject of an adoption proceeding. When the father receives the "notice of pending adoption," he can then appear before the court in the adoption case to provide information regarding the child's best interests.

To protect my rights, when should I register?

If you think that you may be a Putative Father, you may register with the Putative Father Registry before or after the birth of the child. But in order to receive the notice of pending adoption, you must register no later than 30 days after the birth of the child.