



Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fearr
á Forbairt

Building a
Better Health
Service



sexualwellbeing.ie

treoir

informing unmarried parents

Registration of Births of Children

Whose parents are not married to each other



Tel: 01 670 0120

If at all possible it is important to have the names of both parents on your child's birth certificate.

Why is it important to have a father's name on a child's birth cert?

Children need to know as much as possible about both their parents, so that they will have a good sense of their own identity and personal history. Having the father's name on your child's birth certificate helps to establish your child's sense of identity as s/he grows up.

3 important things to remember:

1. Having the father's name on the birth certificate does not give the father any rights in respect of his child.
2. Having the father's name on the birth certificate does not prevent the mother from getting One-Parent Family Payment.
3. A child has a right to be financially maintained by both parents and to inherit from them once paternity of the child has been established. This applies whether or not the father's name is on the birth certificate.

When should a birth be registered?

The birth of a child should be registered within 3 months of the birth

How can the father's name be registered?

- Both parents can register the birth together by going to the registrar in the hospital or local registrar's office or
- Either parent can present to the registrar a form signed by the other parent, and correctly witnessed, called a **Statutory Declaration** (available from the registrar's office) swearing that he is the father, or
- Either parent can bring to the registrar a copy of any court order naming the father in respect of the child, e.g. access, maintenance or guardianship and have the father's name entered on the birth certificate, without the consent of the other parent. The other parent will be notified. The consent of both parents is required to change the child's surname.

Re-Registration

If the child has been registered in the mother's name alone, it is possible to re-register the birth at any future date in order to have the father's details included using any of the methods outlined above for registration.

Choosing a surname

Parents can choose:

- Mother's surname or Father's surname (but only if the father's name is going on the birth certificate and he agrees)
- Both parents' surnames - a double-barreled surname - in any order (but again, only if the father's name is going on the birth certificate and he agrees).

Changing a child's surname in the Birth Register

It is possible to change a child's surname on his/her birth cert by:

- Marriage - where the parents marry each other following the birth of their child and they both agree to the change.
- Re-registration - the birth is being re-registered to add the father's details and both parents agree to the change.

Other ways of changing a child's surname

It is possible to change a child's surname in the following ways:

- Deed Poll- the Deed Poll is an official document that shows a person has changed his/her name. The Deed Poll can be used with the birth certificate as proof of name change.
- Common Usage - A new name is 'commonly used'. It is possible to use this name on a passport if you can show two forms of formal proof that you are using this name for at least two years.

NOTE: Legal Guardians must consent to any name changes. If the father is NOT a Legal Guardian but his name appears in the Birth Certificate then his consent is generally required. Contact the Deed Poll section of the Four Courts - details overleaf.

If you are/were married to a man who is NOT the father of your baby and you want to put the birth father's name on the birth certificate.

In order to proceed you must have a sworn statement from the father swearing he is the father and have either:

a sworn statement from your husband saying he is not the father

or

deed of separation and a sworn statement from you saying you were living apart from your husband for more than 10 months before the birth of your child

or

an Irish divorce dated, or stating that you were living apart from your husband, at least 10 months before your child was born. (To make sure a foreign divorce is valid it must be referred to the General Register Office.)

or

any court order which names the father as father.

See 'registration of births' at www.treoir.ie

Useful Addresses

General Register Office
Lo Call 1890 25 20 76
www.groireland.ie

Deed Poll Section
The Four Courts
01 - 888 6870

01 - 888 650 701 - 888 6508
www.courts.ie

NOTE: The Civil Registration (Amendment) Act 2014 will change much of the information in this leaflet.

To keep up-to-date with these changes, visit www.treoir.ie, and follow us on social media

If you would like to talk through your individual situation, call Treoir on our confidential helpline at: **01 670 0120**

See www.treoir.ie for more information



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