



Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice

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P A T E R N I T Y

Legally, **who** is the baby's dad?

This seems like a silly question, but it's not! Legally, the baby's dad is the person listed as the father on the baby's birth certificate **EVEN if that person is not biologically the dad.** If no one is listed, the baby does not legally have a dad.

How does a dad get on the birth certificate?

If you're not married, there are two ways the dad can get on the birth certificate:

- **BOTH** parents sign a form at the hospital or any other time, or
- **The court makes an order** saying he is the father.

I'm the **MOM** and I have some questions....

Do I have to put my baby's dad on the birth certificate?

No. You don't have to put your baby's dad on the birth certificate. No one should force you to sign the form to put him on there. **BUT,** if your baby's dad takes you to court and he is really the dad, he can get added to the birth certificate even if you don't agree.

What if there is **no dad** on the birth certificate?

If there is no dad on the birth certificate, the mom is the only legal parent.

What if I put my **new boyfriend** on the birth certificate?

If you put your new boyfriend on the birth certificate instead of putting the biological dad on there, your new boyfriend is legally the baby's dad. This means that he has the **right to custody** and the **responsibility to pay support** – **even if you break up.**

I'm the **DAD** and I have some questions....

I'm the dad – **what rights do I have?**

If you're on your baby's birth certificate or a court said you were the dad, you have the [exact same rights](#) as your baby's mom has. You have the right to see the baby, have the baby live with you, and make decisions about the baby.

Can my baby's mom **keep me from seeing** my baby?

Yes and no. Moms and dads have the same right to custody, but the parent who physically has the child with them often decides who the child sees when there is no court order. If you don't agree with what the other parent is doing, you might want to go to Family Court.

What if **I'm not sure** I'm biologically the dad?

If you're not sure you're the dad, you [should not sign anything](#) saying that you are the dad. If you already signed something, you should go to court and ask the court to order blood tests.

***You only have until the **baby's second birthday** to ask the court for blood tests!!!

What if blood tests show that **I'm not the dad?**

Even if blood tests show you are not the dad, you **may still legally be the dad**. If you are on the birth certificate, you may have to go to Court and ask the Court to accept your blood tests or order new ones. **Remember**, you only have until the child's second birthday to do this!!

Want to speak with a lawyer?

Contact Teen/LA at (323) 980-3500

Who we serve:

People ages 13-24 living in Los Angeles County

What we do:

Answer your legal questions, help you with paperwork, even represent you in Court.

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