

## Why is it important for my child to have a legal father?

Establishing paternity may allow your child to receive many benefits, including legal, social, and psychological:

- child support
- Social Security
- disability insurance
- inheritance
- pensions
- medical information
- visitation rights
- sense of identity
- psychological bonds between father and child
- may have better emotional performance
- may have fewer behavior problems



## Questions?

### Paternity Affidavit Program

[pataff@iastate.edu](mailto:pataff@iastate.edu)

[childwelfareproject.hs.iastate.edu/  
vpa/](http://childwelfareproject.hs.iastate.edu/vpa/)

515-294-7343

This information is provided under the partnership between Iowa State University's Child Welfare and Research Training Project and the Iowa Department of Human Services Child Support Recovery Unit.



## Unmarried Parents:



What you need to know about legal fathers

**VPA**  
Voluntary Paternity Affidavit

## Who can be listed on the birth certificate?

In addition to your child's mother, the legal father can be listed.

## How can I establish my child's legal father?

1. If a mother is married at some time during the pregnancy or at birth.
2. If a court enters an order naming the father.
3. If both parents fill out and sign the paternity affidavit form.

**One of these criteria must be met for your child's father to be on the birth certificate.**

## What is a paternity affidavit?

It's a free and easy legal document that both parents complete so their child can have a legal father.

**This is a FREE document!**

## Where can I get one?

The paternity affidavit can be completed anywhere, but it must be signed in the presence of a notary public.



**You can get a paternity affidavit at:**

- hospital at time of birth
- local Iowa Child Support office  
[www.childsupport.ia.gov](http://www.childsupport.ia.gov)
- local County Recorder office  
[bit.ly/iarecorders](http://bit.ly/iarecorders)

## Send to Bureau of Health Statistics (with copies of IDs)

Iowa Dept. of Public Health  
Bureau of Health Statistics  
Lucas Office Building  
321 East 12th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319



## What do I need to complete the paternity affidavit?

**Both parents need to bring:**

One current U.S. government-issued ID:

- driver's license
- state photo ID
- United States passport/visa
- military ID
- permanent residence card
- employment authorization card
- current school photo ID

**— OR —**

Two to three of the following:  
(names and current addresses must match)

- income tax return
- court documents
- expired driver's license plus one other document in the same name
- criminal record
- hospital bill
- Medicaid/Medicare card
- rent or mortgage receipt
- car title
- insurance policy
- medical card
- find more here, including international documents: [bit.ly/paternityidlist](http://bit.ly/paternityidlist)

**For more information, visit**

[bit.ly/aboutvpa](http://bit.ly/aboutvpa)

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