



Northeast Georgia Medical Center, Inc.

CRITICAL INFORMATION FOR UNMARRIED PARENTS

According to the State of Georgia requirements, if the mother is not married to the father, the baby will receive the mother's legal last name, unless a Paternity Acknowledgement (PA) is completed and notarized pursuant to DHHR, Section 290-1-1-1. There are specific State of Georgia requirements and documents required to complete a PA.

Parents' Responsibilities:

- **Both parents must sign the Paternity Acknowledgment (PA) form.**
- **The State of Georgia requires that both parents must present a valid photo identification (ID) card* that is NOT expired.**

***Examples of valid photo ID** are a state issued driver's license, state issued ID, passport, and consular cards. There may be other IDs we can accept from other countries, but the identification card must have a photo, legal full name, date of birth, date of issue and date of expiration. **Copies of ID cards cannot be accepted. You must present the actual ID Card.**

A PA is provided by the Vital Records Clerk once they have received your written Birth Certificate Worksheet. For the parents' convenience, the PA form may be completed and notarized during the hospital stay.

Notary services are provided as a courtesy at no cost to parents Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

It is very important that you proofread the typed Paternity Acknowledgement before signing it.

Hospitals must submit the birth registration to the state within five (5) days of the baby's birth. Day one starts as soon as the baby is delivered. Therefore, parents are strongly encouraged to complete and submit the Birth Certificate Worksheet to the Vital Records Clerk before discharge. If the mother is discharged without completing a PA, the birth certificate will be submitted to the state with the mother's legal last name. The father can be added to the birth certificate after discharge by scheduling an appointment with the Hall County (or other county) Vital Records' office to complete the PA and to update the birth certificate. There is no cost for the change if the child is under one (1) year.

Completing the Paternity Acknowledgement (PA)

The PA must be completed in BLACK or BLUE unfading ink. The Vital Records Clerk will type up a formal Paternity Acknowledgement (PA) form once they have received your Birth Certificate Worksheet. When the formal PA is returned to parents, both parents must sign after presenting valid photo identification to the Vital Records Clerk. There can NO cross-outs and NO correction fluid (White-Out) on the formal Paternity Acknowledgment form. After signing, the PA must be notarized.

If the PA cannot be completed during the above days and hours, then the parents can go to the Hall County Vital Records Office (or other County Vital Records' Office) by appointment only. There is no cost for the change if the child is under one (1) year.

MINOR PARENT An unwed parent under the age of 18 may sign the PA form without parental consent; however, parental consent is recommended.

Paternity Acknowledgment (PA) is a voluntary agreement between the mother and the biological father to add the father's name to the birth record. The PA helps establish the father and child relationship. The child's name can also be changed within the first year of birth if agreed upon by both the mother and father. **According to the State of Georgia, a PA cannot be used if the mother was married to anyone within 10 months before the birth of this child or if, for any reason, there is another father of this child listed on the child's birth certificate.**

The PA, once completed and signed in the presence of a notary public, will be forwarded to the State Office of Vital Records where it will be entered into the State Putative Father Registry and considered a Vital Record. If both parents do not sign a PA before leaving the hospital or birthing facility, only the mother's name and the child's name will be entered on the birth certificate. The PA may be signed before a notary later and mailed to the State Office of Vital Records. Upon receipt of an acceptable PA form, the certificate of birth will be amended to add the name of the father and to change the child's name, if requested. For information on how to rescind a signed PA, contact either the State Office or a local County Vital Records Office. Notice: Establishment of paternity does not entitle the father to custody, visitation, or rights of inheritance from or to a child. Those rights must be established by the filing of a petition for legitimation with the court.

RESCISSION Either the mother or biological father has 60 days from the date of his/her signature to request to rescind this PA. After the 60-day rescission period has ended, this signed document may constitute a legal determination of paternity and can only be challenged in a court of law based on fraud, duress, or material mistake of fact, with the burden of proof on the person challenging the acknowledgment. See Rescission Form 3956 <https://dph.georgia.gov/document/document/rescission-statement-form-pdf/download>. Notice: The Rescission Form does not remove the father. To have the father's name removed or other amendment made to the birth certificate, a determination of paternity must be made by a court of competent jurisdiction pursuant to OCGA 31-10-23. A certified copy of the court order that determines paternity and directs the amendment of the birth certificate of the child named above must be furnished to the State Office of Vital Records before this action can occur.

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES 1. Signing the PA is strictly voluntary. 2. The mother should not sign the PA unless she is confident that the father signing is the biological father of this child. 3. The father should not sign the PA unless he is confident that he is the biological father of this child. 4. By signing this document, it will be presumed by law that the male signer is the biological father of this child, and the child's birth certificate will reflect this fact. 5. Any change made to the birth record in the future regarding the child's information, mother's information, or father's information will require a court order. 6. The PA must be notarized and filed with the State Office of Vital Records within 30 days of execution. 7. Each parent is entitled to a copy of the PA after it has been signed and notarized.

When the Paternity Acknowledgement form is completed, the Vital Records Clerk should give both parents a notarized copy. For future copies, parents must obtain copies from the State Office of Vital Records at 1680 Phoenix Boulevard, Suite 100, Atlanta, GA 30349 (office number 404-679-3640).

Any change(s) that needs to be made or to add the baby's legal name after the Paternity Acknowledgement has been submitted to the state will require a court order.