

Paternity Opportunity Program (POP)

(Revised 07/20/18)

[Forms](#)

[Background](#)

[How to Request POP Verification/Certified Copies
When Parents Want to Sign the Paternity Declaration](#)

[Alignment with SET](#)

Forms

The following forms are referenced in this file:

- CS 909 Declaration of Paternity Notice, Instructions, and Sample Form (**NOTE:** The actual CS 909 form is 3-part NCR so it is not available online. [More info in English](#) | [Spanish](#))
- CS 910 How a Declaration of Paternity Can Help You and Your New Baby ([English](#) | [Armenian](#) | [Chinese](#) | [Hmong](#) | [Russian](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Vietnamese](#))
- CS 915 Declaration of Paternity Rescission ([English](#) | [Spanish](#))
- CS 918 Request for a Filed Declaration of Paternity ([English](#))
- [CS 919](#) Paternity Declaration Information Request (For Use by Public Agencies Only)
- [VS 22](#) Acknowledgement of Paternity/Parentage

Background

Determining a child's paternity as soon as possible remains critical for both case management and legal reasons.

When a child is born in a California hospital to an unmarried mother, the mother and the alleged father are given the opportunity to enter the father's name on the child's birth certificate through the Paternity Opportunity Program (POP). POP is voluntary, and if a man elects to participate, he will be given a paternity declaration to complete. If he and the mother sign it in the hospital, then the hospital forwards it to the California Department of Child Support Services for filing. If they do not sign it in the hospital, then HHS can offer the parents that opportunity.

NOTE: A married mother is not eligible to POP because her husband is legally presumed to be the father of the child.

A signed and filed Paternity Declaration has the same legal effect as a judgment of paternity, so the court needs to have a copy of it.

Only the parents, child, local child support agencies, county welfare departments (including child protective services and local public adoption departments), the California Department of Health Services, County Counsel and the courts (including Family Law Facilitators Offices) are allowed copies of paternity declarations filed with Department of Child Support Services (DCSS).

Background (cont.)

Private attorneys, private adoption agencies and others must obtain written authorization from one of the parents listed on the paternity declaration to obtain a file copy of a declaration of paternity from DCSS.

How to request POP verification/certified copies

Whenever a dependency petition has been filed on a child whose paternity has not yet been established and the mother is not married, this procedure will be followed:

Step	Who	Action
1	SW	<p>Ask the parents if they have (or think they have) ever signed a paternity declaration regarding the child.</p> <p>If yes, then go to Step 3. If no, then go to Step 2.</p>
2	SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Request an abstract or any other available verification of the child's birth certificate (see Birth Certificates) via existing procedures.Does the abstract or the other birth verification list any man as the father? <p>If yes, then immediately submit an ex parte stating that the child's birth certificate lists ____ (name of man) as the child's father. Go to Step 3, as it's likely that a paternity declaration has already been filed (otherwise his name wouldn't be on the birth certificate/abstract).</p> <p>If no, then immediately submit an ex parte (see NOTE below) stating that the child's birth certificate does not list anyone as the child's father. STOP.</p> <p>NOTE: If a hearing is already on calendar within a couple of weeks, then the SW may submit the information in a Court Report Addendum instead of in an ex parte.</p>
3	SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Print the CS 919 (Paternity Declaration Information Request).Check the "Faxed Copy" box for the Request Type, unless a certified copy is required. <p>NOTE: A certified copy is required only under special circumstances such as adoption, guardianship or emancipation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Fax the CS 919 to the number listed on the form.

**How to request POP verification/
certified copies
(cont.)**

Step	Who	Action
4	State POP staff	Upon receipt of the CS 919, search for any existing paternity declaration and return results to the SW within 10 working days.
5	SW	When the results are received from State POP staff, immediately submit an ex parte with the results attached. NOTE: If a hearing is already on calendar within a couple of weeks, then the SW may submit and attach the information to a Court Report Addendum instead of an ex parte.

When parents want to sign the paternity declaration

If the parents are interested in voluntarily signing a paternity declaration, the SW will provide them with a packet of the required documents listed below, available in English and Spanish from the Policy Analyst (PA) listed at the end of this file or from the [state website](#).

1. Declaration of Paternity (CS 909)
NOTE: The CS 909 is a quadruplicate form so it's not available online. Contact the PA listed at the end of this file for a copy.
2. How a Declaration of Paternity Can Help You and Your New Baby (CS 910)
3. [Establishing Paternity \(Fatherhood\) FAQs](#)
4. Rescission Form For the Declaration of Paternity (CS 915)
5. Request Form for a Declaration of Paternity (CS 918)
6. Acknowledgement of Paternity/Parentage (VS 22).

The forms are available in multiple languages. If the parent(s) need help filling out the forms, the SW will provide all necessary assistance. The State's [website](#) also provides links with information/instructions to:

- [Amend a birth certificate](#)
- [Contact the POP Team](#)
- [View Declaration of Paternity form \(CS 909\)](#)
- [Obtain a Declaration of Paternity Form](#)
- [Register a birth certificate](#)
- [Request a Filed Copy of a Declaration of Paternity Form](#)
- [Rescind or Cancel a Filed Declaration of Paternity](#)
- Add Dad to the Birth Certificate After a Birth Certificate Has Already Been Prepared for Unmarried Parents Birth
- Military Dads-To-Be (POP 10)
- For Unmarried Parents, a Birth Certificate DOES NOT Establish Legal Paternity (POP 11)
- Who Can Witness a Declaration of Paternity? (POP 13)
- Error-Free Paternity Declarations (POP 14)
- Paternity Opportunity Program (POP) (POP 20)
- Establish Fatherhood for Your Child (POP 30)
- Establish Paternity (Child's Father) (PUB 244).

When parents want to sign the Paternity declaration (cont.)

The following procedures must be followed to have a valid paternity declaration:

Step	Action
1	<p>Remind the parents that signing the Declaration of Paternity is voluntary. If they both want to sign, then proceed to the next step. Otherwise, STOP.</p> <p>NOTE: While the unmarried mother and alleged father do not have to sign at the same time, they must both sign the same Paternity Declaration or it cannot be filed.</p>
2	<p>Give the parents a copy of the Declaration of Paternity Rescission (CS 915).</p> <p>NOTE: The parents have 60 days (unless they are minors) to rescind the declaration until it becomes the equivalent of a legal judgment. If the parents do rescind the declaration, the father's name will NOT automatically be removed from the birth certificate. The parents must complete an Acknowledgement of Paternity/Parentage (VS 22) to remove his name.</p>
3	<p>If the parents still want to sign the declaration, then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give them both of the coversheets on the CS 909. • Ask them to read CS 909 and show them where to sign in Section B on the CS 909 (ask them to press hard as it is a quadruplicate form). • Complete and sign Section C (the witness section) after the parents have signed Section B. • Give the pink copy of the CS 909 to one parent and the yellow copy to the other parent.
4	<p>Give the parents a copy of the Acknowledgement of Paternity/Parentage (VS 22).</p> <p>Advise them that there is a filing fee if they want the birth certificate amended to include the father's name, and that they are responsible for completing the form and paying the fee.</p>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make two photocopies of the green copy of the CS 909. • File one photocopy in the case file under the Adoptions/Verifications tab. • Attach the other photocopy to the green copy, and send them to Mail Stop C77, Attn: POP Coordinator.

When parents want to sign the paternity declaration (cont.)

Step	Action
6	<p>Immediately send the original (white) CS 909 to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">California Department of Child Support Services Paternity Opportunity Program P.O. Box 419070 Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9070</p> <p>On the envelope, write “Agency code 573” under the return address.</p> <p>NOTE: The State does not automatically notify anyone that a declaration has been filed. If a SW needs such verification, the SW shall follow the procedure in the “How to request POP Verification/ Certified Copies” section above.</p>
7	<p>Included in the packet of POP documents is the Parent’s Request Form for Declaration of Paternity (CS 918), which includes the instructions to the parent on how to order copies. All parent requests must be mailed (not faxed), and signed by one of the parents.</p>

Alignment with SET

This policy supports SET [Value 1: Relationships with Children, Youth, and Families Are the Foundation](#) by partnering with families to identify parents (and alleged parents) to develop family support systems.
