

Registering the Birth of Your Baby

It is a legal requirement in Ireland to register the birth of your child, no later than 3 months after the birth. A birth certificate is required to enrol your child in school and to apply for a passport, among other things.

The information contained on a child's birth certificate is about the child and their parents, as given at the time of registration. It is important for this information to be accurate as it is a record for the child of information about his or her parents and can support a sense of identity and personal history.

You can register the birth of your child in any office of the Register of Births, Marriages and Deaths; these offices are known as the Civil Registration Service. Generally, the hospital staff where your child was born or your local HSE health centre can advise you on where to register the birth. The birth should be registered within the first 3 months following the birth.

The Birth Registration process

You will need to complete a Birth Notification Form (Form BNF/01). This form is usually completed with the parent(s) by hospital staff or by a midwife in the case of a home birth in order to ascertain that the information being recorded is correct and accurate. This form will then be forwarded to the Registrar's office informing them of the birth. You will then need to register the birth.

The birth is registered by information provided from an individual referred to as a 'qualified informant'. The main qualified informants are usually the mother and father of the child. The qualified informant is required to personally attend the office of the register to sign the Register of Births. You will need to bring photographic identification with you such as a driving licence or passport along with your PPS number (Personal Public Service Number).

If you have been married previously it is advisable to contact the [Civil Registration Service](#) to ascertain if you will need to bring along additional documents.

At present, when a mother and father of a child are not married then the father's name is not automatically included.

The parents may attend together to register the birth and they will complete form **CRA 9**. In the instance where a father is not in attendance then he must complete a form **CRA 3**, declaring he is the father of the child, in order for the mother to include his details; the mother will complete form **CRA 1**. A father can also register the birth, completing form **CRA2** and the mother would need to complete form **CRA 4**, naming him as the father, for him to register the birth.

The father (using form CRA 6) or mother (using form CRA 5) may also make a written request, on the production of a court order naming the father, for the father's details to be registered.

****Note:** The commencement of the Civil Registration (Amendment) Act 2014 will mean that there is a duty to include the father's name on the child's birth certificate. This amendment has **not** yet commenced.

The following information is recorded in the Register of Births:

The information listed on the register of births includes the mother's personal information, the father's personal information and the child's details. This will include the Personal Public Service number (PPSN), occupation, full name and marital status of both parents, when the father's name is also registered.

Choosing a surname

At present parents can choose to use the mother's surname, the father's surname (if he agrees to have his name on the birth certificate) or both parents' surnames again if the father agrees. This can be double barrelled or hyphenated in any order.

It is important to be aware that there are very limited circumstances in which a child's surname can be changed following birth registration.

This can be done when the child's parents marry or if the birth is being re-registered to include the father's name, providing the original registration was after October 1997 then the surname can be changed, once both parents agree.

Frequently asked questions:

Will having the father's name on the birth certificate affect my One Parent Family Payment?

No, it will not affect eligibility for One Parent Family Payment. Having the father's name listed on the birth certificate is for the child and his or her identity. When making an application for the payment the form includes a section for the father's details and as part of the assessment you will be asked for the father's name.

Does having the child's father's name on the birth certificate mean he has the same rights as the mother?

No, having the father's name on a child's birth certificate is for identity and for the child to know who his mother and father are. For a father who is not married to the mother it does not confer a legal relationship with the child. An unmarried mother is the sole legal guardian of her child. For the father of that child to attain legal rights he needs to apply for guardianship of the child. Where the parents are married to one another they are both legal guardians of their child.

I am married to someone who is not the father of my child, how may I register the birth with the father's details?

In this instance the father would have to provide a sworn statement that he is the father of the child. In addition to this, one of the following documents would need to be provided;

- A declaration from the mother confirming that she has been living apart from her husband for more than 10 months before the birth of the child and a decree of divorce or deed of separation
- A sworn declaration from the mother's husband stating that he is not the father
- A certified court order naming the individual to be registered as the father

Claiming Child Benefit

Once you have registered the birth of your child you will automatically be contacted by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection regarding your child benefit payment.

Further information

The General Register Office operates under the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. However, the HSE has the day to day responsibility for the Civil Registration Service and it these local offices that can be contacted regarding registering a birth.

General Register Office can be contacted on Lo call 1890 25 20 76 or by emailing gro@groireland.ie

HSE Civil Registration Service

Details of local offices

<http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/bdm/>

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