

FACTS ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE

To the Parent (or other informant): A birth certificate is one of your child's most important documents. It will be required at critical points throughout his or her life. The State Vital Records Office will create a birth certificate for your child using the information you provide on the birth certificate worksheet. To avoid problems with your child's certificate, it is important that the worksheet is filed promptly and that it is free of errors. You will be asked to complete certain items on the worksheet, verify the information, and sign the worksheet before it is sent to the State Vital Records Office to be processed. **You should read the explanations provided on this form before entering information on the worksheet.** Please keep this information for future reference.

A. FILING THE BIRTH RECORD

1. Wis. Stat. § 69.14 states that the administrator of the hospital of birth, or the attendant at a non-hospital birth, must file information relating to a Wisconsin birth within 5 days of the birth event. Failure to comply with this law may result in a fine of up to \$1,000 or imprisonment of up to 90 days or both [per Wis. Stat. § 69.24 (2)(d)].
2. Complete all items on the worksheet, except spouse information if you are not married, or the certificate cannot be filed, per Wis. Stat. § 69.08. If your child's birth record is not filed within 365 days of the birth, additional documentation will be required, and if the State Registrar finds it insufficient, a court order may be required.
3. If you deliberately make false statements or do not provide required information when completing the worksheet, you could be fined up to \$10,000 or imprisoned for up to 3 years, or both [per Wis. Stat. § 69.24(1)(b)].

B. CONFIDENTIALITY

1. Release of information from the State Vital Records Office is strictly limited by Wis. Stat. § 69.20.
 - Birth information may be used for health or population analysis or for public health programs.
 - Birth information is provided to the Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR). If you do not wish to have your child participate in the WIR, contact the Wisconsin Immunization Program at (608) 267-9959.
 - Birth information is provided to the Wisconsin Birth Defects Registry (WBDR), when applicable. For more information about WBDR and your rights, please visit www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/birthdefects or call (608) 267-2911.
2. Legal parents are required to provide their Social Security number for their child's birth certificate. Social Security numbers may be released to the Social Security Administration, Child Support Enforcement Offices, per federal law 42 U.S.C. 405 (c)(2) or to the Department of Revenue. See Wis. Stat. § 69.20(3)(g).

C. NAMING YOUR CHILD

1. The child may be given any last name. All names on the birth certificate are printed with capital letters. An apostrophe and a hyphen are the only forms of punctuation allowed.
2. If a name (first, middle, or last) is undecided you may leave that item blank. You have one year (365 days) from the date of birth to contact the State Vital Records Office to complete the name. However, you will not be able to receive a copy of your child's birth certificate until a last name is entered on the record. **If you do not name your child within 365 days of the birth, a court order and additional fees may be required.**
3. **If you do not complete the name before the birth certificate is filed, you will have to apply for your child's Social Security number yourself (this means you cannot apply for the number by checking the Social Security enumeration box on the birth worksheet).**
4. If you change your mind about the name or the spelling of the name (first, middle, last, or suffix), you can make the change before your child's first birthday using the name change form approved by the State Registrar. On or after your child's first birthday the change requires a court order. Prior to your child's first birthday, any item may be amended one time. Additional changes on the same item may not be made without a court order. The name change will be documented on the certified copy of your child's birth certificate.

D. SPOUSAL INFORMATION ON THE BIRTH CERTIFICATE

1. Wis. Stat. § 891.41(1), creates a presumption that a woman's husband is the biological father of her child. The biological father is presumed to be the second legal parent per Wis. Stat. § 69.14 (1)(e). If you have any questions relating to this presumption, it is recommended that you seek legal advice.

If the parent giving birth was married to a male, she must complete the information requested in the "Spouse Information" section of the worksheet, even if she divorced during the pregnancy and even if she is certain that the husband is not the biological father of the child. If the husband is not the biological father of the child, the husband's information may be removed from the birth record later by court order and a new birth record will be filed to replace the original record.

2. If the parent giving birth was married at the time of conception, and conceived via artificial insemination under a physician's supervision and with the consent of her spouse, the spouse is the legal parent of the child and the spouse's information should be entered.
3. If the parent giving birth was unmarried during the entire pregnancy (from conception to the birth of the child) the name of an additional parent may not be entered on the birth certificate. An additional parent's name may be added later to the birth record by the State Vital Records Office using one of the methods listed below. The forms listed below can also be used to change the child's name at the time that the form is filed.
 - a) **Voluntary Paternity Acknowledgment form.** If you are unmarried and want to place the biological father's name on the birth record, you and the biological father may complete and sign this form before a notary public in the hospital or at any time after the birth if you are both 18 years of age or older. Mail the completed form and the fee to the State Vital Records Office at the address listed in the section "Obtaining Copies of Your Child's Birth Certificate." The hospital will mail this form to the State Vital Records Office if asked to do so.
 - b) **Acknowledgment of Marital Child form.** If you and the biological father married after the child's birth, you should complete an Acknowledgment of Marital Child form, have it notarized, and send it and the appropriate fee to the State Vital Records Office.
 - c) If you are not married to the father of your child, you may obtain assistance in establishing paternity through the **County Child Support Agency**, which has child and spousal support and paternity establishment programs. Contact the Child Support Agency by calling the information desk at your local county courthouse.
 - d) **Adoption or court determination of legal parentage.** A **circuit court** can make a determination of legal parenthood when petitioned, and the court must report that determination to the State Vital Records Office.

E. CHILD'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUESTED

Parents may voluntarily request their child's Social Security number through the birth worksheet. Using this method, you will receive your child's Social Security card in approximately 4 weeks. Your signature on the birth worksheet authorizes the transmission of your Social Security number to the Social Security Administration, per federal law 42 U.S.C. 405 (c)(2). You are required provide the following information on the birth worksheet:

- a) Your child's first and last name and mailing address;
- b) The signature of the legal parent;
- c) The Social Security number of each legal parent, if you have one. If you have never been issued a Social Security number, you may enter "None" for that item and still request a Social Security number for your child.

If you check the "No" box for requesting a Social Security number, you will need to purchase a certified copy of your child's birth certificate to take to your local Social Security Office along with additional proof of the birth. The number will not be issued until that office verifies the information about the birth. Questions about Social Security numbers should be addressed to your local Social Security Office at www.ssa.gov or 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

F. NOTIFICATION OF BIRTH REGISTRATION

1. A Notification of Birth Registration will be sent to you by the State Vital Records Office, approximately 2 weeks after the birth.
2. Review the information for accuracy. You have one year (365 days) from the date of birth to contact the State Vital Records Office to correct any errors on the birth record.
3. You may obtain a copy of your child's birth certificate using the Notification of Birth Registration.

G. OBTAINING COPIES OF YOUR CHILD'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE

1. You will not receive a copy of your child's birth certificate unless you purchase one.
2. You may obtain copies of your child's birth certificate from the State Vital Records Office, any county Register of Deeds office, and the Milwaukee and West Allis City Health Office.

Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association website: <https://wrdaonline.org/>

Milwaukee City Health Office website: <https://city.milwaukee.gov/health/birth-and-Death-Certificates>

West Allis City Health Office website: <https://www.westalliswi.gov/200/Birth-Death-Certificates>

Wisconsin Vital Records Office
PO Box 309
Madison, WI 53701

Telephone: (608) 266-1373

Email: DHSVitalRecords@dhs.wisconsin.gov Website: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/vitalrecords