

Minnesota Putative Father's Adoption Registry

Molly Crawford-Minnesota Department of Health



MFAR is a safety net for putative fathers and adoptive families.
It protects their rights.

Father Definitions

First...What is a *PUTATIVE* father?

Minnesota law defines a putative father as a man who may be a child's father, but who:

- is not married to the child's mother on or before the date that the child was or is to be born; and
- has not established paternity of the child before the filing of a petition for the adoption of the child.
- includes a male who is younger than 18 years old.

Father Definitions

A putative father may be a biological father and he may later become a legal father.



MFAR helps putative fathers protect their rights.

MN Putative Fathers' Adoption Registry

- **Created by the Minnesota Legislature in 1998**
- **Purpose of MFAR**
 - to determine the identity and location of a putative father interested in a minor child who is, or is expected to be, the subject of an adoption proceeding—now or later
 - to provide notice of the adoption proceeding to the putative father who is not otherwise entitled to notice
 - to provide a putative father an opportunity to participate in the adoption process or exercise his rights and establish paternity
 - to stabilize the adoption process by placing time limits on a putative father's opportunity to assert his rights.

See Minnesota Statute 259.52 for more information

Registration



A putative father must:

- Register any time before the birth or within 30 days of the child's birth
- Provide information about himself, the mother of the child, and the child
- Update information on his registration to assure notification in the event of an adoption

Registration

- Download and print the registration form from the MDH website:
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/registry/top.htm>
- Complete the registration form with as much information as he knows
- Sign registration form
- Mail/fax/email form to MDH

The Minnesota Fathers' Adoption Registry (MFAR) protects the rights of putative fathers and adoptive families. Complete this form to register with MFAR for a child who you think is yours. Registration is voluntary and available to men of any age. Complete this form before the birth or within 30 days of the child's birth if you:

- think you may be the father of a child
- are not married to the child's mother
- have not established paternity for the child in a court or through a voluntary acknowledgement form
- want to be notified if the child is the subject of an adoption petition in Minnesota

Minnesota law requires MFAR to be searched and putative fathers who have registered in relation to a child who is or may be the subject of an adoption in Minnesota to be notified before the adoption can be finalized.

Information about you—the putative father—required				
First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix	
Alias or other possible names		Date of Birth mm/dd/yyyy	Social Security Number	
Mailing Address		City	State	ZIP
Physical Address for service of notification		City	State	ZIP
Mother Information—complete as much information as known				
First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix	
Address		City	State	ZIP
Alias or other possible names		Date of Birth mm/dd/yyyy	Social Security Number (if known)	
Child Information—complete as much information as known				
First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix	
Date of Birth (or estimated date of birth) mm/dd/yyyy		Sex <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown		
Place of Birth (Hospital Name)		City and State of Birth		
Has a court in another state or territory of the United States established you as the legal father of this child? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (provide the Court file # _____ and attach a certified copy of the court order).				
The information I am registering is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if I register false information on purpose, I am guilty of a misdemeanor. I understand that information I register is private and that only those authorized to search the registry have access to this information. I understand that I must keep my registration current and notify MFAR if my contact information changes to be notified of adoption proceedings.				
Putative Father's Signature—required		Return this registration form		
		Mail	Minnesota Fathers' Adoption Registry Minnesota Department of Health P.O. Box 64499 St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0499	
		Fax	651-201-3730	
		Email	FAR@state.mn.us	
Date				

Registration Form

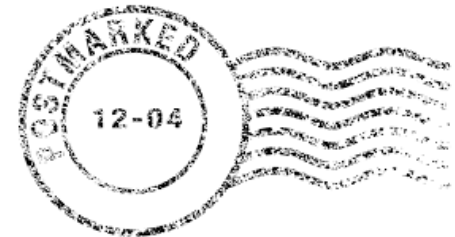
Registration

Putative Father	Mother of the Child	Child
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• name, including any other names or aliases• suffix• address at which he may be served with notice of an adoption petition, including any change of address;• Social Security number• date of birth• if applicable, a certified copy of a court order adjudicating the putative father to be the father of this child	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• name, including all other names or aliases• suffix• mailing address• Social Security number, if known• date of birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name• suffix• Sex• place of birth• date of birth• anticipated date of birth• Expect date of birth date range

Registration

MDH receives a registration and:

- Records the postmark and delivery date
- Enters data into the electronic database
- Assigns a registration number and registration date
- Sends a confirmation to the putative father and a copy of the data registered in the database
- Provides the putative father with instructions for updating information he has registered
- Stores the data securely in an electronic database registry.



Registration

MDH receives a registration and:

- Notifies the mother of a registration within 14 days of registration
- Mails the notification to the mother's address that the putative father provided with registration
- Registers all information regardless of when the father sent his form to MDH because only the court can determine a timely registration.

Searches



- The court requires a search of the registry before granting an adoption petition
- Proof of a search must be presented to the court
(MFAR search certification is e-filed with the court)
- Search requests are limited to only those individuals authorized by law
- Searches must be done no sooner than 31 days after the birth to meet the courts' requirements
- International and Safe Place for Newborns adoptions are excluded.

Searches

Only certain individuals are authorized to request searches and receive results including:

- ❑ The birth mother
- ❑ The person supervising the adoptive placement
- ❑ The social services representative that is a petitioner in a juvenile protection matter
- ❑ An attorney representing the birth mother or the prospective adoptive parents
- ❑ A child support representative responsible for establishing a support obligation
- ❑ The representative of the county agency responsible for the report required under MS 259.53, subd. 1.

They can request a search at any time, but only those done 31 days after the child's birth are admissible in court.

Search Request

MDH Minnesota Department of Health		Minnesota Fathers' Adoption Registry Search Request	
<p>Complete this form to request a search for a putative father who may have registered with the Minnesota Fathers' Adoption Registry in relation to a child who is or may be the subject of an adoption petition. The Minnesota Department of Health will certify the results of your search request only when all of the required information is provided, the fee is paid, and you have the right to the information.</p>			
Person Requesting Search—required			
First Name	Last Name	Daytime Phone	
Agency or Office Name		Email	
Mailing or Delivery Address		City	State ZIP
<p>Authority to request and get search results for the child named in the request—required (check one):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am the birth mother.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am supervising the adoptive placement.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am a social services representative that is the petitioner in a juvenile protection matter.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am an attorney representing the birth mother or the prospective adoptive parents. My MN License Number is: _____ For non-MN licenses, attach copy a photocopy of your license.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am a child support representative responsible for establishing a support obligation.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I represent the county agency responsible for the report required under Minnesota Statutes 259.53, subdivision 1.</p>			
Document and Services Requested		Fee	Total
Minnesota Fathers' Adoption Registry Search—certification of search results for one child		\$25	\$25
Optional: Rush processing fee – Payment of this additional fee moves your request ahead of non-rush requests. This fee applies only to the order in which your request is processed. Your documents will be sent by United States Postal Service First-Class Mail.		\$20	
Optional: Overnight shipment fee – Payment of this additional fee will have your documents shipped overnight once your documents are ready. Your documents will be processed as a non-rush request unless you've also chosen the rush processing fee above. You must provide a delivery address. Overnight shippers will not deliver to P.O. Boxes or A.P.O. addresses.		\$16	
Delivery signature required <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Enter total amount submitted or to be charged to credit card:			
If paying by credit card: MasterCard/VISA/Discover			
Cardholder name	Card number	Expiration date	3-digit security code
<p>If paying by check or money order, make payable to the Minnesota Department of Health:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Check # _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Money order # _____</p> <p>Checks returned for non-payment will be charged a \$30 fee according to Minnesota Statutes, section 604.113, subdivision 2 and penalties may be imposed.</p>			
Signature and Notary—application must be signed in front of a notary			
I certify that the information above is complete and accurate and that I have the authority to request a search and get results according to Minnesota Statutes, section 259.52, subdivision 2. This statement serves as an affidavit required by subdivision 4.			
Requester Signature		Date mm/dd/yyyy	
Signed or attested before me on: _____ day of _____, 20_____		Notary Stamp/Seal	
Notary Public Signature			
My commission expires mm/dd/yyyy			

MDH Minnesota Department of Health		Minnesota Fathers' Adoption Registry Search Request	
<p>Provide information about the child who is or may be the subject of an adoption petition and the child's mother. Information about the putative father is helpful but not required. Provide as much information about the putative father as you know.</p>			
<p>The Minnesota Department of Health will use the information you provide to search the Fathers' Adoption Registry. After the search is complete, the Minnesota Department of Health will certify the results of the search and send you a document with information from the registry.</p>			
Child Information—required			
First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix
Date of Birth mm/dd/yyyy	Expected Date of Birth	Date of Birth Range	Sex <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Place of Birth (Hospital Name)		City and State of Birth	
Mother Information—required			
First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix
Alias or other possible names		Social Security Number (if known)	
Mailing Address		City	State ZIP
Putative Father Information—complete as much information as known			
First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix
Alias or other possible names		Date of Birth mm/dd/yyyy	Social Security Number
Mailing Address at the time of registration		City	State ZIP
Send request and payment:			
By MAIL to: Minnesota Department of Health Central Cashiering – Vital Records 85 E 7th Place PO Box 64499 St. Paul, MN 55164-0499		By FAX to: 651-201-3740	By EMAIL to: health.issuance@state.mn.us
<p>If you have questions about the Minnesota Fathers' Adoption Registry, please contact us at 651-201-3994 or toll free at 1-888-343-1726 or email: FAR@state.mn.us</p>			
<p>If you have questions about payment, please contact us at 651-201-3980 or email: health.issuance@state.mn.us.</p>			

Searches

MDH searches the registry database when requests are examined and determined to be valid:

- Search request forms are available on the MDH website
- Requestors must supply information about the putative father, child, and mother
- MDH searches the MFAR database using various techniques and considers all of the information provided by requestors.

Searches

MDH searches the registry database when requests are examined and determined to be valid:

- MDH charges \$25 search fee (child support excluded) that must be paid up front
- MDH accepts check and credit card payments
- MDH certifies search results that result in:
 - No Registration Found
 - Registration found—data from the registration prints on the certification
- MDH mails certified search results to the requestor
- Data from a search may only be used for purposes authorized under MFAR or other law.

Search Results

- New “Certification of Search Results”
- Increases security
- Prevents fraud
- Unique numbering based on customer service request and item type
- Printed by Northstar



MINNESOTA FATHERS' ADOPTION REGISTRY
CERTIFICATION OF SEARCH RESULTS



CERTIFICATION NUMBER 2016-180925-3

DATE REGISTRY SEARCHED MARCH 14, 2016
CHILD NAME HARRY A PONTIAC
DATE OF BIRTH FEBRUARY 3, 2016

After searching the Minnesota Fathers' Adoption Registry on the date and for the child named above, no registration for a putative father was found

Molly Mulcahy Crawford
Molly Mulcahy Crawford
STATE REGISTRAR

ISSUED: MARCH 14, 2016 MINNESOTA DEPT OF HEALTH
THIS CERTIFICATION OF SEARCH RESULTS IS VALID ONLY WHEN PRINTED ON
OFFICIAL WATERMARKED SECURITY PAPER WITH THE STATE SEAL OF MINNESOTA



Results

- No registration found
- Prints search date
- References child name and DOB provided on search request
- Certificate serves as proof of search
- Unique customer service number identifies certificate

Results

- Registration for a putative father was found
- Prints search date
- References child name and DOB provided on search request
- Returns all info putative father provided with registration
- Prints important dates
- Certificate serves as proof of registration and search
- Registration number prints
- Unique customer service identify certificate

MINNESOTA FATHERS' ADOPTION REGISTRY	
CERTIFICATION OF SEARCH RESULTS	
CERTIFICATION NUMBER 2016-180925-3	
Search Result 1 of 1	
DATE REGISTRY SEARCHED	MARCH 14, 2016
CHILD NAME	HARRY A PONTIAC
DATE OF BIRTH	FEBRUARY 3, 2016
After searching the Minnesota Fathers' Adoption Registry on the date and for the child named above, a registration for a putative father was found. Information below is limited to what the putative father provided.	
<hr/>	
PUTATIVE FATHER	
NAME	GEORGE K SMITHERSON II
ALIAS NAME	GEORGIE
RESIDENCE	927 PORTLAND ST, MINNEAPOLIS SOUTH, MN
DATE OF BIRTH	JULY 15, 2015
MAILING ADDRESS	2345 31 AVENUE SE, MINNEAPOLIS, MN
MOTHER	
NAME	HANNAH C COOLIDGE MS
ALIAS NAME	MONE MTWO MTHREE FOUR FIVE
DATE OF BIRTH	JULY 15, 2015
MAILING ADDRESS	5031 COUNTY ROAD D, ROSEVILLE, MN
CHILD	
NAME	HENRY C PONTIAC JR
EXPECTED DATE	JULY 15, 2015
EXPECTED BIRTH DATE RANGE	FEBRUARY 2016 to MARCH 2016
SEX	FEMALE
COURT ORDER	HENNEPIN COUNTY COURT ORDER NUMBER 91881776-15C
Registration Number	387
Registration Date	MARCH 13, 2016
Registration Received	MARCH 13, 2016
Registration Postmarked	MARCH 11, 2016
Molly Mulcahy Crawford Molly Mulcahy Crawford STATE REGISTRAR	
ISSUED: MARCH 14, 2016 MINNESOTA DEPT OF HEALTH	
THIS CERTIFICATION OF SEARCH RESULTS IS VALID ONLY WHEN PRINTED ON OFFICIAL WATERMARKED SECURITY PAPER WITH THE STATE SEAL OF MINNESOTA	

Failure to Register

- A man who fails to register as a putative father:
- is barred from bringing or maintaining an action to assert any interest in the child during the pending adoption proceeding concerning the child
- is considered to have waived and surrendered any right to notice of any hearing in any judicial proceeding for adoption of the child, and consent of that person to the adoption of the child is not required
- is considered to have abandoned the child.

Failure to Register

- Failure to register is legally sufficient grounds to support termination of the putative father's parental rights.
- A putative father who has not registered timely is considered to have registered on time if he proves by clear and convincing evidence that:
 - It was not possible for him to register on time;
 - his failure to register was through no fault of his own; and
 - he registered within ten days after it became possible for him to register.

A lack of knowledge of the pregnancy or birth is not an acceptable reason for failure to register.

Notice and Service

Any time after conception, an interested party, may serve by certified mail a notice to registered putative father, an intent to claim parental rights form, a denial of paternity form, and adoption form.

Interested parties include:

- persons intending to adopt a child
- a child welfare agency with whom the mother has placed or has given written notice of her intention to place a child for adoption
- the mother of a child
- any attorney representing an interested party



Notice and Service

Documents may be served on a putative father in the same manner as a summons is served in other civil proceedings, or, in lieu of personal service, by certified mail return receipt requested to the putative father, at the address provided to the registry. Documents include:

- copy of the notice to registered putative father
- intent to claim parental rights form
- denial of paternity form
- consent to adoption form by certified mail
- notice of the jurisdiction in which the adoption petition will be filed.

Notice and Service

- The receipt for certified mail must state the name and address of the addressee and the date of mailing and must be attached to the original notice.
- The return receipt, when filed with the court, must be attached to the original notice to registered putative father, the intent to claim parental rights form, the denial of paternity form, and the consent to adoption form and constitutes proof of service.
- The court administrator notes the fact of service in a permanent record.

Responding to a Notice

Within 30 days of receipt of the notice, a putative father must:

- take action to preserve his right to maintain an interest in the child and receive notice during the pending adoption proceeding.
- file a completed intent to claim parental rights form with the court administrator in the county in which the adoption petition will be filed as provided by the petitioner, stating that he intends to initiate a paternity action
- Initiate a paternity action—if good cause is shown, the putative father must be allowed more time to initiate the paternity action.



Responding to a Notice

A putative father who files a completed denial of paternity form and consent to adoption form or who fails to timely file an intent to claim parental rights form with the court:

- is barred from later bringing or maintaining an action to assert any interest in the child during the pending adoption proceeding concerning the child;
- is considered to have waived and surrendered a right to notice of a hearing in any judicial proceeding for adoption of the child, and consent of that person to the adoption of the child is not required; and
- is considered to have abandoned the child.

Right to Counsel

A putative father has a right to counsel at public expense.

- Upon proof of indigence, a putative father who has registered with MFAR, has received a notice, and has timely filed an intent to claim paternal rights form with the court administrator, must have counsel appointed at public expense.

Right to Counsel

A putative father should contact the District Court Administrator and ask what steps he needs to take to receive an attorney at public expense. He may have to:

- fill out a form
- provide financial information
- have the information on that form reviewed by someone who determines whether, based on that information, he qualifies as indigent
- have a Judge approve the form and order an attorney appointed

Minn. Stat. 257.69 provides that any party to a paternity case who otherwise can't afford an attorney may be entitled to have one appointed at public expense.

Thank You

Molly Mulcahy Crawford

State Registrar

Minnesota Department of Health

Office of Vital Records

Minnesota Father's Adoption Registry

molly.crawford@state.mn.us

651-201-5972