

Minnesota Putative Fathers' Adoption Registry Fact Sheet

- ◆ Searches of the registry to locate a father may be requested before the child is born. However, the official search that will result in the notice of the adoption plans cannot be requested until 31 days after the child is born.
- ◆ When the child is at least 31 days old and if there are plans for adoption in Minnesota, the registry will be searched for a father who has registered in relation to the child. If a father is registered and has met the filing requirements, the court will send the father notice of plans for the adoption of his child.
- ◆ When a father is notified of plans for adoption, he will receive forms to complete and file. He may choose to claim his rights as a father or he may choose to deny that he is the father.
- ◆ Information about the forms and filing requirements will be included with the notice of the plans for adoption. The Minnesota Department of Health does not send the notice to the father. The notice to the father is sent by the court.
- ◆ If the father chooses to claim his rights as a father, he will also be required to initiate a paternity action to legally establish that he is the child's father. If you have questions about paternity actions, contact an attorney.
- ◆ If a putative father fails to register with the Minnesota Putative Fathers' Adoption Registry within 30 days after the birth of his child:
 - He may not be notified of any court action for the adoption of his child.
 - His consent to the adoption may not be required.
 - He may lose his right to claim any parental rights during the adoption proceeding.
 - He may be considered to have abandoned his child.

Limitations of a father's rights due to failure to register apply only in adoption proceedings, and apply only to putative fathers who may not otherwise be notified of the adoption.

- ◆ In addition to putative fathers who register, the following people, **if known to the court**, will be sent notice of an adoption hearing.
 - the child's guardian;
 - the child's parent whose name appears on the child's birth certificate;
 - a person who has substantially supported the child;
 - a person who has recently married to the child's mother;
 - a parent who is openly living with the child or the child's mother;
 - a person who has been established by a court as the child's legal parent;
 - a person who has initiated a paternity action within 30 days after the child's birth if the action is still pending;
 - a father who, with the child's mother, has signed a declaration of parentage or a recognition of parentage; and
 - an Indian child's tribe.

- ◆ If you have questions about the adoption process in Minnesota, contact the Department of Human Services at (651) 296-0584.
- ◆ The Minnesota Putative Fathers' Adoption Registry is administered by the Minnesota Department of Health. If you have questions about the Minnesota Putative Fathers' Adoption Registry, call 1-888-345-1726.
- ◆ The purpose of the registry is to allow a "putative" father to register so that he will be notified if plans for the adoption of his child are made in Minnesota. The Minnesota Putative Fathers' Adoption Registry is required to be searched only if the adoption is petitioned in Minnesota. Laws about notification in adoption proceeding differ from state-to-state.
- ◆ Registration is open to "putative fathers" of children born after January 1, 1998. If a child was born before January 1, 1998, the father must file an affidavit stating intention to retain parental rights with the Minnesota Department of Health.
- ◆ "Putative father" means 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 in a court proceeding.
- ◆ A putative father may register with the Minnesota Putative Fathers' Adoption Registry, a father must fill out a written registration form, sign it and return it to the Registry (in person or by mail). There is no registration fee. For a free registration form, contact:

Minnesota Putative Fathers' Adoption Registry
Minnesota Department of Health
717 Delaware Street Southeast
P.O. Box 9441
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440-9441
1-888-345-1726

- ◆ A father will be asked to provide information about himself such as his name, address, social security number, birth date, the mother's name, and as much information as he can provide about his child and his child's mother.
- ◆ The information fathers give to the registry will be kept private and will be released only as allowed by law. Minnesota law allows the information in the registry to be released only to the agency supervising the adoptive placement, the birth mother of a child being placed for adoption, or a county social service agency.
- ◆ If there is no adoption, the information may be used to contact the father about financial support for his child.