

ESTABLISHING PARENTAGE

To ask for custody or child support, you must first legally establish who the parents of a child are. This is called establishing parentage. *Being on the birth certificate may not be enough.*

- If parentage has NOT been established, either parent can open a parentage case to ask the court to establish legal parentage.
- Use this info sheet to learn how. You can ask for child custody or child support at the same time as you open a case.
- To learn how to respond, see page 2.

Establishing parentage is serious! Once a court says who the child's parents are, it may be impossible to change that, even with DNA tests. Learn more from [Cal. Courts Self-Help Guide](#).

- If parentage has already been established, this information sheet is not the right one for you.

These cases can be complicated. Get help from the [Self-Help Center](#) or talk to a lawyer.

1. FILL OUT COURT FORMS & MAKE COPIES

- [FL-200](#): *Petition to Establish Parental Relationship* (+ 1 copy)
- [FL-210](#): *Summons* (+ 1 copy)
- [FL-105/GC-120](#): *UCCJEA* (information about children) (+ 1 copy)
- For a court date for custody, child support, or mediation: use [FL-300](#) too.
- If need to ask court to waive the court fees: Use [FW-001](#) and [FW-003](#)

<https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/parentage>

Information about
Parentage in
California



<https://www.butte.courts.ca.gov/parentage>

Fill out the forms
online!



2. TURN IN THE FORMS AT THE COURTHOUSE

- Turn in forms and copies between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.:
 - **Ukiah**, 100 N. State Street, Room 107
 - **Fort Bragg**, 700 S. Franklin Street, clerk's window in the lobby
- Clerk will stamp papers, return to you with a *Notice of Case Management Conference*. One set of copies is for you. The other is for the other parent.
- If you used [FL-300](#), the clerk will give you a court date for you and the other side.

3. LET THE OTHER SIDE KNOW, LEGALLY

This is called *service*, and you can't do it yourself.

- a. Have someone over 18—not you—give the other parent, in person:
 - Stamped copy of [FL-210](#), [FL-200](#), & [FL-105](#) and copy of *Notice of Case Management Conference* (and [FL-300](#), if you used it). **If you got a court date using [FL-300](#), the deadline for service is 16 court days before the court date.**
 - Blank forms for the other side to use if they want to answer:
 - [FL-220](#): *Response to Petition to Establish Parental Relationship*
 - [FL-105](#): *UCCJEA* (information about children)
- And, if you used [FL-300](#): [FL-320](#): *Responsive Declaration to Request for Order*
- b. Have the person who delivered the papers (your server) fill out and sign:
 - [FL-115](#): *Proof of Service of Summons* with all the correct boxes checked.
- c. Turn in the [FL-115](#): *Proof of Service* at the courthouse.

4. WAIT 30 DAYS TO SEE IF RESPONDENT RESPONDS. THEN, FINISH ONE OF 4 WAYS:

NO RESPONSE, NO AGREEMENT:	NO RESPONSE, WRITTEN AGREEMENT:	RESPONSE, WRITTEN AGREEMENT:	RESPONSE, NO AGREEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FL-165: Request to Enter Default • FL-230: Declaration for Default or Uncontested Judgment • FL-235: Advisement & Waiver of Rights • Custody Declaration • FL-250: Judgment • FL-192: Notice of Rights: Health Care Costs if child support • FL-190: Notice of Entry of Judgment • 3 stamped envelopes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FL-165: Request to Enter Default • FL-230: Declaration for Default or Uncontested Judgment • FL-235: Advisement & Waiver of Rights (each fills one out) • Parenting Plan/Agreement • FL-250: Judgment • FL-192: Notice of Rights: Health Care Costs if child support • FL-190: Notice of Entry of Judgment • 3 stamped envelopes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FL-130: Appearance, Stipulation & Waivers • FL-230: Declaration for Default or Uncontested Judgment • FL-235: Advisement & Waiver of Rights (each fills one out) • FL-240: Stip for Entry of Judgment • Parenting Plan/Agreement • FL-355: Stipulation & Order • FL-250: Judgment • FL-192: Notice of Rights: Health Care Costs if child support • FL-190: Notice of Entry of Judgment • 2 stamped envelopes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for trial. • FL-250: Judgment • FL-190: Notice of Entry of Judgment <p>May not need trial if you have already have a court-ordered agreement. Talk to the Self Help Center or a lawyer.</p>

IF A COURT DATE WAS SET USING FL-300: GO TO COURT ON THE HEARING DATE

If it's a custody case, the judge will send you and the other person to mediation on the court date. The mediator will meet with both of you to work out a parenting plan.

If you can agree to a parenting plan in mediation:

- the mediator will write up the agreement and you will both sign it.
- the judge will then sign the agreement and it will become a court order.

If you cannot agree to a parenting plan in mediation:

- If you do not work out a plan, your conversation with the mediator remains confidential and you will go back in front of the judge on a different day.
- The judge will make the decision in your case.

How to Respond (To Participate in the Case)

1. Fill out these forms & make copies:

- [FL-220](#): *Response to Petition to Establish Parental Relationship* (+ 1 copy).
- [FL-105](#): *UCCJEA (information about children)* (+ 1 copy)
- [FL-320](#): *Responsive Declaration to Request for Order* (only if other person filed an FL-300) (+ 1 copy).
- If low income, ask the court to waive the court fees: [FW-001](#) and [FW-003](#)

2. Turn in the forms & copies at the courthouse. The clerk will stamp forms & return them to you.

3. Have someone deliver papers to the parent who started the case in the legal way. Have someone 18 or older—**not you**—give or mail to other parent copies of: FL-220, FL-105 (& FL-320, if used)

- Have that person fill out either [FL-335](#): *Proof of Service by Mail* or [FL-330](#): *Proof of Personal Service*. If the other parent filed FL-300, the deadline for service of the response is 9 court or business days before the hearing date, plus 5 more calendar days if service is by mail.
- Turn the Proof of Service in at the courthouse.