

## 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](#)

### Fill out the forms online!!

Use a computer program to help you with all the forms. And e-file your forms after if you want.

→ [Take me to Online Program](#)

### 2. TURN IN THE FORMS AT THE COURTHOUSE

- Turn in forms and copies between 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 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:**

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