

Birth Registration

For one-parent families, cohabiting couples, parents' sharing parenting and children born through donor-assisted human reproduction



Registering a birth is a legal requirement in Ireland. You will need your child's birth certificate to get them a PPS number, getting them vaccinated, or to go to school, etc.

Registering a birth in Ireland is free but there is a cost of getting a birth certificate.

It costs €20 for a full standard birth certificate, €10 to have a certificate authenticated by the General Register's Office and €5 for an uncertified copy. A copy is free for social welfare purposes or registering for a public services card. You need a letter from the Department of Social Protection to get a free copy.

This booklet will cover:

- When to Register a Birth
- How to Register a Birth Online & In-Person
- The Compulsory Inclusion of the Father's Details on the Birth Certificate
- Four Important Things to Remember about including a father's name
- How to Add a Father's name onto a Birth Certificate
- Re-Registration
- Choosing a Child's Surname
- Exceptions to changing a child's surname on the Birth Certificate
- Changing a Child's Surname on the Birth Certificate
- How do I register my child's birth if the father is not my (former) husband?
- Changing a Child's Surname for Day-to-Day Use: Deed Polls & Common Usage
- Birth Registration for children born through Donor-Assisted Human Reproduction

- Birth Registration & Guardianship for Unmarried Fathers
- Useful Contact Information

When does a birth need to be registered?

The birth of a child should be registered within 3 months of the birth or in exceptional circumstances within 12 months.

How can I register a birth online?

Births can be registered online for certain family types. Opposite-sex married or unmarried parents can be registered online.

For unmarried couples, both parents must have a verified MyGovID and it is a two-step process that the mother begins.

For married couples, only one parent needs to have a verified MyGovID and the mother or father can register the birth online.

To register a birth online please go to <https://civilregistration.mywelfare.ie/>

To register online, you will need:

- the Birth Notification ID (automatically sent by letter to the mother)
- Your person details: date of birth, mother's maiden name, address at the time of the child's birth, your PPS number, your occupation, your civil registration status,
- The other parent's name, PPS number and date of birth
- The child's surname

There are a small number of parents who will be unable to do an online but the Civil Registration Service is working to change this. These include:

- Donor Assisted Human Reproduction (DAHR) births.
- Widowed, divorced or separated mothers
- If either parent is deceased
- stillbirths, this service is being developed and will be launched as soon as possible
- unmarried or married mothers who are not registering the father's details

If a kinship carer has taken over the care of a baby because a parent has passed away or is unable to care for the baby and the parent cannot register the birth themselves, the kinship carer will often need the support of TUSLA to register the birth. For information and support on this, please get in touch with our Kinship Care Ireland team through www.kinshipcare.ie

Registering a Birth In-Person

All parents can register the birth of a child in-person in a Civil Registration Office and a list of them can be found here: [Civil Registration Offices](#)

Compulsory registration of a father

If your child was born after **10th December 2025**, new birth registration legislation requires a mother who is not married to the father of her child to provide his details when she is registering their child's birth. This legislation is designed to provide the child with fuller access to biological information in relation to their biological parents.

Prior to the commencement of the new legislation, there was no requirement for a mother to provide the details of a child's father where the parents were not married to each other. The registration service will write to the father at his address to advise of the steps he should take if he would like his name entered as the child's father in the register of births.

Where the father does not accept his paternity or reply within 28 days, the birth will be registered without his details, however, these can be recorded later under existing birth re-registration legislation. The new legislation also allows for situations where the mother has a **compelling reason** for not naming the father.

If the mother believes she has a compelling reason, she can provide a statutory declaration to declare that she does not know who the father is or that she does not know where the father is living.

The mother can provide a statutory declaration along with evidence where she wishes to declare that it would not be in the best interests of the safety of her child to provide the registrar with the details of the child's father. These statutory declarations must be requested from the Civil Registration Service and must be correctly witnessed by a solicitor or commissioner of oaths.

There is no change to existing registration procedures of recording the name of the father where the father either attends with the mother or provides the mother with a statutory declaration, or where the parents are married to each other.

Four Important things to remember

1. Including the father's name on the birth certificate does not give the father any automatic legal rights in relation to his child such as Guardianship, Access, and / or Custody.
2. Having the father's name on the birth certificate does not prevent the mother from getting One-Parent Family Payment or any other social welfare payments.
3. A child has a right to be financially maintained by both parents and to inherit from them once paternity of the child has been established. This applies whether or not the father's name is on the birth certificate.
4. Including the father's name on the birth certificate can be especially important in relation to the child's right to citizenship. A child being born in Ireland does not entitle them to Irish citizenship automatically. However, if an unmarried mother does not have Irish or EU citizenship but the biological father does, the child would be entitled to citizenship through parentage. The parent of an Irish citizenship may have the right to live in Ireland. For more information on this scenario get in touch with Treoir, The Immigrant Council of Ireland or the Migrant Rights Centre of Ireland.

How can father's name be registered when the parents aren't married?

- Both parents can register the birth together in-person by going to their local civil registration office or online if they both have MyGovIDs.
- The mother can complete a declaration form naming the father (Form CRA 1) and bring it along with a declaration by the child's father (Form CRA 3) acknowledging that he is the father of the child. The declaration must be correctly witnessed. The mother then completes the register.
- The father can complete a declaration form acknowledging that he is the father of the child (CRA 2) and bring it to the Registrar's office himself. He must bring a declaration by the mother naming him as the father (Form CRA 4)
- If there is any court order for guardianship, access, custody, child maintenance which names the father as the parent of the child, this can be used to add the father's name to the birth certificate. Either the mother or the father can make a written request (Form CRA 5 and Form CRA 6 respectively), accompany by the court order, to have the father's name added to the birth certificate. The parent making the request will be required to attend the Office of the Registrar to sign the birth register. Whichever parent did not make the request for the father's name to be added will be notified by the Registrar before the father's name is added but their consent is not needed.

Re-Registration

If the child has been registered in the mother's name alone, it is possible to re-register the birth at any future date to have the father's details included by:

- Agreement of the mother through any of the methods outlined above or
- By court order. The mother or the father can apply for guardianship, access, custody ([court form 58.1](#)) or maintenance ([court form 54.1](#)). During the court hearing the judge will establish the paternity of the child (by confirming with both parents or a DNA test) and then grant the court order. Once any court order names the father as the father, the mother or father can contact and show this to the birth registrar to have the father's name added onto the birth certificate. In this option, you do not need the consent of both parents to add the father's name.

Choosing a surname

Ensure that you are happy with the surname you have picked for your child, as this cannot be changed on the birth certificate later, **except in very limited circumstances** which are outlined in the next section.

Parents can choose:

- Mother's surname
- Father's surname. This is only if the father's name is going on the birth certificate, and he agrees. If the father does not agree to give his surname to the child, this may be challenged in court.
- Both parents' surnames – a double-barrelled surname, hyphenated any in any order (but again, only if the father's name is going on the birth certificate and he agrees).

Since **10 December 2025**, if parents do not agree on a surname for the child, the child's surname can be left blank until they do. If you're in this situation and it's causing delays in getting your child's PPSN, contact Client Identity Services (details included on the back cover).

Exceptions for changing a child's surname in the Birth Register

It is possible to change a child's surname on their birth certificate by:

- The biological parents marry - where the two parents marry each other following the birth of a child and they both agree to the change. This applies if the father's name was initially registered or not.
- Re-Registration - the birth is being registered to add the father's name details and both parents agree to the change
- Correcting the Birth Certificate - If the wrong man is registered as the child's father and this is later fixed, then the child's surname can also be changed.

How do I register my child's birth if the father is not my (former) husband?

If a couple have separated, formally or otherwise, and the mother gives birth to a child that is not her husband's there is a process of getting the biological father on the birth certificate. In Ireland, the assumption is that a husband is automatically assumed to be the father and therefore is put on the birth certificate.

To correct the birth certificate the mother must have:

- A. A sworn statement from the father that he is the father AND one of the following:
- B. A sworn statement from your (former) husband that he is not the father
- C. A deed of separation and a sworn statement from you confirming that you were living apart from your husband for more than 10 months before the child was born
- D. An Irish divorce dated or statement that you were living apart from your husband for at least 10 months before the child was born. If it is a foreign divorce, you should contact the General Register's Office to confirm if it's valid.
- E. Any court order which names the father as the father. For example, the mother could apply to the local district court for a child maintenance order or the father could apply to the local district court for a Guardianship or Access order.

There are 2 scenarios for divorced mothers:

1. The mother's divorce is dated prior to the 10 months before the birth of the child and the mother is not married, and the birth can be registered as normal for unmarried parents.

2. The mother's divorce is dated within the 10 months prior to the birth of the child and the before the birth is registered, the mother is not married and the birth can be registered under section 22(3)(b) of the CRA 2004.

The mother must provide a Statutory Declaration CRA 8 (contact the General Registrar's Office) to state she has been living apart from the person who was her husband during the 10 months before the birth and this must be accompanied by her decree of divorce dated sometime between the 10 months prior to the birth of the child and the date of the birth being registered. Once this is provided to the satisfaction of the registrar, the birth can be registered with the usual declarations being provided by the mother and father.

Changing a Child's Surname for Day-to-Day Use: Deed Polls & Common Usage

It is possible to change a child's surname in the ways outlined below. They do not change the child's name in the birth certificate but they can be used for many official purposes such as a child's passports, registration in school, etc.

Deed Poll: a deed poll is an official document that shows a person has changed their name or a child's name. The Deed Poll can be used along with the birth certificate as proof of a name change. A child under 14 will need their parents to assist them in changing their name, while a child between 14-17 can carry out the Deed Poll themselves, but they still need both parents' consent. If a parent isn't a guardian, their consent will still be needed for changing the child's surname by Deed Poll.

Process for Deed Poll: Where a parent wishes to change the surname of their child by Deed Poll it will be necessary to have the other parent sign a relevant form clearly indicating that they agree to the change. The reasons why the surname is changed must be outlined. If a mother wishes to change the surname of the child and the father's name does not appear on the Birth Certificate, a mother will have to sign a "[supplemental affidavit](#)" confirming that there are no court orders in force in relation to guardianship, access, custody or maintenance in relation to the child and outlining what role if any the father has in the child's life.

Execution of a deed poll is a relatively simple process that involves declaring that the person has given up a former name and adopted a new name for all purposes. The deed must be printed on Deed Paper, signed in the former name and the new name and in the presence of a witness. You will need copies of the child's birth certificate and one of the parent's photo ID as well as the relevant deed poll form: [Deed Poll Form \(14-17\)](#) for children between 14-17 and [Deed Poll Form \(Under 14\)](#) for children under 14.

The witness must be 18 years or over, must sign the deed poll as a witness and must swear an affidavit (called an '[affidavit of attesting witness](#)') before a Garda, solicitor or commissioner for oaths stating that they witnessed the signing of the deed poll. The parent providing the photo ID must also sign a [Supplemental Affidavit](#) in front of the Garda, solicitor or commissioner of oaths.

These documents can subsequently be used with the birth certificate and should be acceptable for most administrative procedures.

If one parent does not consent, the other parent can go to the district court to dispense with the need for the other parent's consent using [Application in Relation to Arrangements for Children \(58.1\)](#).

It costs a total of **€80** to child a child's surname by deed poll.

If you would like to place the change of name on a publicly accessible record, it is possible to enrol the deed poll in the Central Office of the High Court.

If you are a non-EU national, you will require the permission of the Minister for Justice & Equality to change your name.

Common Usage: A new name is 'commonly used' as in the child is known by this name in everyday life. Both guardians consent are needed to change a child's name by common usage. If the other parent is not a guardian, their consent is not needed.

Please note: the **Passport Office does not accept deed poll** to change the name on an Irish passport, only common usage.

Process for Common Usage: Start calling the child by the new name and re-register them with public services under the new name. For example, contact your child's school or GP and ask for the child's name in their register be changed to the new name. After two years of the child being known by that name, you can use this to apply for the child's passport under this name. You will need to provide the Passport Office with two forms of formal proof dating back at least two years that the child is known by this name. You must provide the originals to the Passport Office but they will return these.

The passport office will accept:

- School correspondence
- Letter from a medical doctor
- Certified copy of the child's medical card
- Government correspondence.

Birth Registration for children born through Donor-Assisted Human Reproduction

- **Pre-4 May 2020:** Births of donor-conceived children (also known as DAHR), where the procedure was performed before 4 May 2020, must first be registered in the state as a non-DAHR birth. This applies to donor-conceived children born before or for a period after 4 May 2020. After the birth has been INITIALLY registered, a court order naming another person as the parent of the child is required prior to a DAHR re-registration. The parents can then apply for the birth to be re-registered as a DAHR birth with an application form can be found here: <https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/re-registration-of-a-donor-assisted-human-reproduction-dahr-form-brr1.pdf>
- **After 4 May 2020:** Children born through donor-assisted human reproduction (DAHR). This applies to both opposite-sex parents and same-sex parents. Since 4 May 2020 you can record the details of the parent(s), including the non-biological parent, when registering the birth of a donor conceived child (also known as DAHR).

If you have any doubts about registering a child born through donor-assisted human reproduction, contact the DAHR section of the General Register's Office at dahr@welfare.ie or get in touch with Treoir.

Birth Registration and Guardianship for Unmarried Fathers

Birth Registrars can witness the Statutory Declaration of Guardianship ([S.I No. 210 of 2010](#)) when parents register the birth together. This form will be available at the Birth Registrar's office and both parents need to sign it. This form gives an unmarried father joint guardianship of the child. Guardianship is the right to make important decisions in the child's life. If both parents are guardians, both of their consent is needed for any major decision such as medical consent, what school the child goes to, getting the child a passport etc. A mother does not have to sign the Statutory Declaration of Guardianship to register the birth. If the Birth Registrar is to witness it, it must be done within 14 days of the birth registration. If parents would like to sign the form later, it can be witnessed by a solicitor, a commissioner of oaths or a peace commissioner (who will do it for free).

Useful Contact Information

Client Identity Services - for issues with a child's PPSN

Client Identity Services, Department of Social Protection, Shannon Lodge, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim, N41 KD81.

Phone Number: (071) 967 2616 or 0818 927 999

Email: CIS@welfare.ie

Donor Assisted Human Reproduction (DAHR) Section

DAHR Section, General Register Office, Government Offices, Convent Road, Roscommon Town, F42 VX53

Email address: dahr@welfare.ie

Deed Poll Section

Deed Poll Section, Central Office of the High Court, Four Courts, Inns Quay, Dublin 7
01 888 6000

Website: <https://www.courts.ie/hubs/deed-poll>

Email address: DeedPollQuery@courts.ie

General Registrar Office

General Register Office, Government Offices, Convent Road, Co Roscommon, F42 VX53.

Phone Number: 0818 253070

Website: www.gov.ie/gro

Email address: gro@welfare.ie

To keep up to date with these changes, visit www.treoir.ie and follow us on our social media handles listed below.

If you would like to talk through individual situation, call Treoir on our confidential helpline at 01 6700 120, request a call back on our website at: <https://treoir.ie/request-a-call-back/> or email us at info@treoir.ie



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