

A Father's Rights



Paternity

You may have to prove that you are the father of your child before you have rights as a parent. You do not need to prove you are the father if

- you were married to your child's mother when she became pregnant with your child, or
- you both signed a paternity form at the hospital or at the Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS).

If you and the child's mother do not agree about who the father is, the court might tell you to take a paternity test. Once you have proven that you are your child's father, you have the right to see your child and the duty to pay child support.

Child Support

You have the right to see your child even if you are behind on child support. Your child support order is not related to your visitation rights.

You also have the right to change your child support order if your income or your child's mother's income has changed.

Safety

If you believe your child is unsafe, you can contact the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) at 1-800-842-2288.

Visitation and Custody

You have the right to see your child. If you cannot work out a visitation schedule with your child's mother, you should ask a court for help.

You must also ask the court if you want some or total custody of your child. The court will decide who should have custody based on your child's best interests. If you have some legal custody of your child, you have the right to help decide things about your child's education, religion, and medical care.

Adoption

You can stop the mother of your child from putting the child up for adoption

Moving

Your child's mother may not take your child and move far away without permission from you or the court. If you or your child's mother need to move, the court will decide custody and visitation based on the child's best interests.

Tip: To speak to an attorney, call Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-453-3320 or the Children's Law Center hotline at 1-888-529-3667.