



## Legal Assistance Center

### Case Worksheet: Paternity (Unmarried Parents)

#### What is a Paternity Case?

A paternity case is a lawsuit filed with the court by a mother, the person who believes he is the father or by the state to make a man the legal father of a child (paternity) and get child support. Custody and parenting time can also be ordered in a paternity case.

#### Requirements to File:

- You are not married to the other parent
- You and the other parent have **NOT** signed an Affidavit of Parentage **AND**
- Paternity has not been determined in the courts of another state
- You have lived in Michigan for 180 days and in Kent County for 10 days **AND/OR**
- The other parent has lived in Michigan for 180 days and in Kent County for 10 days

#### Initial Forms:

- Civil Case Cover Sheet (Kent County)
- Summons
- Complaint for Paternity
- Application for IV-D Services/Verified Statement
- Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Enforcement Act Affidavit (UCCJEA)
- 3 additional copies of the Summons, Complaint, Verified Statement, and UCCJEA

#### Information Needed:

- Your full name
- Your current address (can be a mailing address only)
- Your date of birth
- The other parents full name
- The other parents current address
- The other parents date of birth
- The county where each parent resides
- The name, age, social security number, and date of birth for each child
- Health Insurance information for each child (policy holder, group id, etc.)
- A physical description of each parent
- Employment and income information for each parent
- The child's current address
- The child's addresses during the past 5 years (since birth if under 5)
- The names and addresses of the current custodians for each child
- The location and approximate date when the mother became pregnant

**Cost of Filing:**

- LAC Paternity Case Packet \$20 (includes forms and instructions)
- Court filing fee of \$255 for mother; \$0 for father (waived in some cases, see below)
- Cost of copies for filing (approximately \$10 at LAC)
- Cost of certified mail for service (approximately \$12)
- Cost to obtain genetic testing, if necessary

**Waiving Court Filing Fees:**

- You receive public benefits
  - Need DHS Case Number
- Based on your income and expenses the court allows fees to be waived
  - Need information about your income and monthly expenses
- !!** Only waives court filing fee, not other costs

**Other Information/Questions:**

- Which parent should have legal custody of the child or children?
- Which parent should have physical custody of the child or children?
- Which parent will have parenting time?
- Which parent needs child support?
- Which parent will provide health insurance for the child or children?

**Getting the Forms:**

- Get the "Paternity" Case Packet at the Legal Assistance Center.
  - The cost is \$20. Cash only.
  - LAC staff/ volunteers can help you and answer your questions.
- Use the Michigan Legal Help ([www.michiganlegalhelp.org](http://www.michiganlegalhelp.org))
  - Informational articles are available on the website to help you.

**Getting Help at the Legal Assistance Center:**

- Walk in Tuesday to Friday, 8:30 am to 5 pm. No appointment needed.
- Kent County Courthouse, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 180 Ottawa NW, Downtown Grand Rapids
- Call 616.632.6000
- Basic information is available on the LAC website ([www.legalassistancecenter.org](http://www.legalassistancecenter.org))

**!!Caution!!**

This worksheet is offered as general legal information only. Each person's situation is different. This is not legal advice for any individual case or situation. You may wish to talk to an attorney before filing a paternity case.