



Practice Points

PATERNITY TESTING

The purpose of this Practice Point is to clarify the process of making a referral for paternity testing. Prompt and appropriate referrals provides the opportunity for parents to become engaged in reasonable efforts, supports informed and timely decisions, and prevents unnecessary delays in permanency for children.

In the event paternity needs to be established, staff should first refer the case to the Family Support Division for processing. Staff shall:

- Mail the completed CS-201AC along with court order(s) for genetic testing to the Family Support Division (FSD), Alternative Care Collections Unit (ACCU), 1111 Kings highway, Suite D, Rolla, MO, 65401, or
- Email completed CS-201AC along with court order(s) for genetic testing to FSD.IntakeCenter@dss.mo.gov

In an effort to minimize delays in the process, staff should include the following documents, if applicable, with the CS-201AC at the time of submission:

- Protective Custody Order
Marriage Certificate
Divorce Decree
Out-of-State Birth Certificate
Adoption Order
Genetic Testing Order
Any Juvenile Court Order Requiring Parents to Pay Child Support

Once the referral and all supporting documents have been received by the ACCU, they will process the information and begin setting up the location and date of the test. After the ACCU has processed the referral, they will then contact the referring case manager

for approval. **Case managers must respond to the ACCU within 72 hours and APPROVE for the ACCU to move forward with scheduling the test.** The case manager will then be notified of the confirmed scheduled date and time of the testing. It is the responsibility of the case manager to notify parties and arrange for the child that is to be tested to be at the test site at the scheduled date and time. If the child is unable to keep the genetic appointment, staff will let ACCU know as soon as possible (even if on the same day of the child's genetic appointment) that the child will be unable to keep the appointment. If the child's placement provider cannot take the child to the testing site, it is the case manager's responsibility to get the child to the scheduled test.

There are special circumstances that do not allow FSD to pay for paternity testing. Special circumstances include:

- An administrative or judicial order determines a man to be a child's father, or
- The parents completed an Affidavit Acknowledging Paternity on the Missouri-born child after July 1, 1997, or
- The parents acknowledged paternity of the out-of-state-born child on an affidavit, filed the affidavit in the state where the child was born, and that state's law provides that a paternity acknowledgment by affidavit establishes a legal finding of paternity.

In the event special circumstances exist, field staff should complete the Children's Division genetic testing process. The case manager should complete the paternity scheduling request form, CD-37, with identifying information including DCN'S and social security numbers for child, alleged father(s) and mother, addresses, and with whom they want the child tested.

Field staff needing assistance with genetic testing procedures should contact their regional liaisons for assistance. In most instances, the regional liaison will be able to provide the information or assistance needed to facilitate genetic testing. In instances when further assistance is needed, regional liaisons and/or field staff should contact the central office liaison.

General procedures for genetic testing can be found in [CWM Section 3, Chapter 5, Attachment G](#).

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