LEGAL ISSUES FOR TEEN FAMILIES

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PATERNITY
CHILD CUSTODY AND VISITATION
MARRIAGE
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You cannot get a birth certificate until you “Register” your baby’s birth.

How do I register my baby’s birth?

“Registering” a birth means making a legal record with the State of California that a baby has been born. To do this, you should get a birth registration form from the hospital where you will be giving birth and fill it out before your baby is born. (You can fill it out after your baby is born, but it is easier to do it in advance).

Pack the completed form with the things you will take with you to the hospital when you go to deliver your baby. When you get to the hospital, give the completed form to a staff person. A nurse will use the information on the birth registration form to complete a “Certificate of Live Birth.” The hospital must then register your baby’s birth with the county within 10 days. After your baby’s birth is registered, you can get a birth certificate.

What information do I need for the registration form?

Note: What you put on the birth registration form, or what you tell the hospital staff to put on the form, is very important because it is what will go on your baby’s birth certificate.

Make sure everything you write down is true and correct. Do not sign the “Certificate of Live Birth” unless all the information on it is correct. The baby’s mother (and the father, if you’re married) are the ONLY people who should tell the hospital staff what to write on the form.

Be prepared! Here are some important things to think about:

Baby’s Last Name: The baby’s last name can be either the mother’s or father’s name or a combination of the two. This is true whether you are married or not.
Adding the Father’s Name: The father’s name can ONLY go on the birth registration form at the hospital if:

- The mother and father are married, or
- The father is at the hospital when the birth registration form is filled out, and both parents sign a voluntary “Declaration of Paternity” – a legal document that identifies who the father is.

If the father’s name does not get on the birth registration form at the hospital, the father’s name will not be on the birth certificate right away. However, if the parents sign a “Declaration of Paternity” later on or go to court to establish paternity, they can pay a fee to change the birth certificate to add the father’s name.

DADS! If keeping close ties with your child is important to you, think about acting like a father before your baby is born. Can you give rides to the doctor’s office, buy baby clothes, or go to a childbirth class? If you’re not married, but you want your name on the birth certificate, you should ask your child’s mother about being at the hospital when your baby is born so you can sign the “Declaration of Paternity.” If she says no, you may need to go to court to establish paternity.

Your baby’s birth certificate

It is important to get a birth certificate for your baby and keep it in a safe place. The birth certificate is legal proof of when and where your baby was born and who are the parents. You will need to show a birth certificate to get Medi-Cal or other benefits for your baby, and later, to enroll your child in school.

How do I get the birth certificate?

About two months after the birth of your baby, you can get an “authorized certified copy” of your baby’s birth certificate at various county offices. An authorized certified copy has a seal pressed into the paper to make it official. You should get it as soon as possible.

There are two kinds of birth certificates:

1. **Authorized Certified Copy** – This copy of the birth certificate can be used to establish the identity of the person named on the certificate. Authorized certified copies of birth certificates will only be issued to certain people. The baby’s mother and the father, if he is listed on the birth certificate, are authorized to get authorized certified copies of the birth certificate. Other “authorized” people include the baby’s grandparents, legal guardian, or an attorney representing
the baby. To get an authorized certified copy, you must provide a notarized sworn statement and pay a fee.

2. **Informational Certified Copy** – This copy has the same information as the certified copy, but **cannot** be used to establish identity. Anyone can get an informational certified copy of a birth certificate. To get an informational certified copy, you do not need a notarized sworn statement, but you must still pay a fee.

### There are two ways to get birth certificates

1. **By mail:** A mail request is usually processed within 15 working days from the date the request is received. To get your baby’s birth certificate by mail, submit a completed Application for Birth Record and a notarized Certificate of Identity. These forms are available at [http://www.lavote.net/recorder/BDM_Records.cfm](http://www.lavote.net/recorder/BDM_Records.cfm).

   **Enclose with your application:**
   a. A check or money order for $28.00 for each copy, payable to “Registrar/Recorder – County Clerk”, and
   b. A stamped envelope with your address on it so the County can mail the birth certificate back to you. Be careful to send all the required information – you don’t get your money back if the County can’t find a record of the birth.

   **Mail the request to:**

   **Los Angeles Registrar/Recorder County Clerk**
   Birth Records
   P.O. Box 489
   Norwalk, CA 90651-0489
   **Telephone:** (562) 462-2137

2. **In person:** To get a birth certificate faster, you can go in person to one of the Los Angeles County Registrar offices. Call (800) 201-8999 or go to [https://www.lavote.net/home(records](https://www.lavote.net/home/records) to find the office closest to you.

   You must bring a valid photo I.D. and $28 with you. Blank copies of the Application for Birth Record and Certificate of Identity will be at the office for you to fill out there.

**Note:** Fees may change.
What if I need to change my baby’s name?

It is not easy to legally change your baby’s name. First, you have to get a court order to have the baby’s name changed. Then, you must send in a certified copy of the court order with a form called “Application for Amendment of Birth Record to Reflect Court Order Change of Name,” a photocopy of the original birth certificate (if you have it) and a $23.00 check or money order payable to the Office of Vital Records. To get the application and more information on the process, go to [http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/birthdeathmar/Documents/CourtOrderNameChangePAMPHLET-(01-16)-MERGED.pdf](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/birthdeathmar/Documents/CourtOrderNameChangePAMPHLET-(01-16)-MERGED.pdf).

Does this sound too complicated? The name on the birth certificate is the baby’s legal name, but it does not have to be the name your child uses every day. Even without a court order, you or your child can use another name to enroll in school. But your child’s Medi-Cal card, passport, etc., must have the same name as the birth certificate.

Can I add my baby’s father’s name to my baby’s birth certificate?

Yes. If the space for the father’s name on your baby’s birth certificate is blank and both you and the father agree, you can add the father to the birth certificate by filling out some paperwork. The paperwork necessary to add the father’s name is different if you are married or not married to the baby’s father (see below). To get the paperwork and more information on the process, go to [http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/birthdeathmar/Documents/Acknowledgement-of-Paternity-Parentage-PAMPHLET-(01-16)-MERGED.pdf](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/birthdeathmar/Documents/Acknowledgement-of-Paternity-Parentage-PAMPHLET-(01-16)-MERGED.pdf).

If you are married to the baby’s other parent ...

You must send the following items to the Office of Vital Records to add the father to the birth certificate:

- Completed Application to Amend a Birth Record
- Acknowledgement of Paternity –VS 22 (signed by both parents)
- A photocopy of the original birth certificate (if you have it)
- A photocopy of the marriage certificate
- $23 check or money order made payable to the Office of Vital Records
If you are not married to the baby’s other parent …

To add the father’s name to the birth certificate, both parents must first complete a “Declaration of Paternity.” The “Declaration of Paternity” must be notarized and sent to the California Department of Child Support Services. To get information on how to do this, go to:

www.childsup.ca.gov/Resources/EstablishPaternity.aspx

After you complete this process, you can ask that the father’s name be added to your baby’s birth certificate. To do this, you must send the following items to the Office of Vital Records:

- Completed Application to Amend a Birth Record – Acknowledgement of Paternity – VS 22 (signed by both parents)
- A photocopy of the original birth certificate (if you have it)
- $23 check or money order made payable to the Office of Vital Records
- A photocopy of the Declaration of Paternity

Can I change the father’s name on my child’s birth certificate?

If you put down one father’s name on the original birth certificate and now want to change it to another father’s name, you have to go to court. Before you start the court process, you should talk to a family law attorney. In some cases, you cannot change the father’s name even if the father listed on the birth certificate is not your baby’s biological father.

If you do go to court, the court will decide who should be the father of the child and will issue an “adjudication” of paternity. If the court agrees to change who is legally the father of the child, the court will issue an order instructing that the birth certificate should be amended to list the new father’s name. If the child’s name is being changed to match the new father’s name, the new full name must be listed in the court order. Once you have a certified copy of the court order, you can ask the state to amend your child’s birth certificate by sending the following items to the Office of Vital Records:

- A completed Application to Amend a Birth Record – Adjudication of Facts of Parentage – VS 21
- A certified copy of the court Order Adjudicating Parentage (no photocopies!).
- A copy of the original birth certificate (if you have it).
- $23 check or money order made payable to the Office of Vital Records.

To get more information on this process, go to http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/birthdeathmar/Documents/AdjudicationPAMPHLET-(01-16)-MERGED.pdf.

**Where do I Send all of this Information?**

Once you have completed all of the necessary paperwork and have your check or money order, send everything together to:

**Office of Vital Records**
MS 5103
Post Office Box 997410
Sacramento, CA 95899-7410

**What will the new birth certificate look like?**

The new birth certificate will replace the original birth certificate. The original birth certificate will be sealed and will not be available to the public. The new birth certificate will look just like an original birth certificate.
How does my baby get a social security number?

You can request a social security number for your baby at the hospital after he/she is born—and it is a good idea to do this! There is no fee for a social security card, and your baby will need a social security number to receive government benefits like MediCal, CalFRESH, or CalWORKS.

When you give hospital staff information for your baby’s birth certificate, they will ask you if you want to apply for a social security number for your baby. If you do this, you should receive your baby’s social security card in the mail a few weeks after your baby is born. This is the easiest way to get your baby’s social security number.

If you did not do this, you must apply for a social security number:

**In person:** Either parent can go to any Social Security office with the baby’s birth certificate and a document proving your child’s identity (such as your baby’s health record or school record). The parent will also need ID, such as California driver’s license, school identification, passport, etc.

**By mail:** You can call the Social Security Administration at (800)772-1213 and get an application in the mail, or go online to [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov). After you fill out the application, you can mail it or take it to a Social Security office. The same kind of proof of the baby’s birth and your ID will be needed. Because you must submit original documents, we recommend that you apply in person.
What does it mean to “Establish Paternity”?  

“Establishing Paternity” means identifying the father of the child through a legal process.

How is paternity established?

Paternity can be established in several ways:

- **Go to court**: Either parent or the county child support services agency can file a court case to establish paternity. If the alleged father is not sure he is the father, he can ask the court to order a DNA test.

- **By marriage**: If the parents are married when the child is born, the husband is usually the baby’s legal father by law.

- **Through a Voluntary Declaration of Paternity**: If the parents are not married, but they agree on paternity, they can sign a “Declaration of Paternity” at the hospital when the child is born - or later in the presence of a Notary Public. If the parents sign the “Declaration of Paternity” later, they must file the original form with the California Department of Child Support Services. To get more information on how to do this, go to [www.childsup.ca.gov/Resources/EstablishPaternity.aspx](http://www.childsup.ca.gov/Resources/EstablishPaternity.aspx).

  - Parents can get a Declaration of Paternity from the local registrars of births, the county Department of Child Support Services, welfare offices, or birthing hospitals.
  
  - Both parents must sign the “Declaration of Paternity” for paternity to be established. Signing the form is voluntary.

  - Either parent can cancel the Declaration of Paternity within 60 days of the date of signature unless a court order for custody, visitation, or child support has been entered. He/she must complete a notarized “Rescission Form for the Declaration of Paternity” and file it with the California Department of Child Support Services POP Unit. The other parent must receive a copy of the form by certified mail.

  - The Declaration of Paternity does not establish paternity until 60 days after both parents turn 18. If you were under 18 when you signed the form, you may cancel it within 60 days of your 18th birthday.
What are the rights of Mothers and Fathers?

**Before the Birth:** Before the baby is born, the mother has the right to make decisions about the pregnancy. It is her choice whether to have the baby or have an abortion. The baby’s father cannot make her have the baby or make her have an abortion.

**Adoption:** Both the father and the mother have to agree before the baby can be put up for adoption. (If you are thinking about adoption, read the Public Counsel booklet “Sex? Choices for Teens”).

**After the Birth:** Once the baby is born and paternity is established, both parents have the right to take part in raising their child unless a court order prohibits one of them from doing so. Both parents also have the responsibility to pay child support if they are not living with the child.

**Should I establish paternity for my baby?**

If you were married when your baby was born or you and the father signed a Declaration of Paternity at the hospital, paternity is already established. But if not, you may be wondering if you should try to establish paternity.
Here are some things to think about:

“Pros” of establishing paternity

- Most children want to know who their father is. Establishing paternity may help your child feel close to the father and his family.
- Paternity must be established to get child support from the father.
- If the father has health insurance at work, it might cover the child if paternity is established.
- If the father is injured at work, becomes disabled, or dies, the child may be able to get benefits like Worker’s Compensation or Social Security if paternity is established.
- If the father joins the military, he can get an extra allowance for the needs of the child if paternity is established.

“Cons” of paternity

Once paternity is established, the mother and the father have the exact same rights to take part in raising their child unless a court order says otherwise. If the mother is afraid that the father might abuse her or the child or that the father may take the child and not return, she may choose not to do anything that would make him want contact with the child. If paternity is established and especially if he starts having to pay child support, the father may request visitation or custody.

Need help? If you are scared about what might happen if you establish paternity, there are agencies that can help.
How do I get child support?

Both parents have the duty to support their child. Child support is based on the parents’ income and the amount of time each parent spends with the child. This is called guideline child support.

- The easiest way to get child support is to get help from the county office of the California Department of Child Support Services by either applying online through their website or by going to their office and filling out a paper application. They will then start a child support court case for you.
- You can also get child support by starting your own court case in Family Court. If you would like to go through Family Court, you should see the Family Law Facilitator at your local courthouse for more information.
- If you are on welfare (CalWORKs), you are required to give the welfare office and the Department of Child Support Services information about your baby’s other parent unless you have good cause for not doing so.

**Examples of good cause:**
- The parent fears for her safety or the safety of her child.
- The child was conceived as a result of incest or rape.
- The parent is unable to name or locate the noncustodial parent.
- Unless you have good cause not to give them the information about your baby’s other parent, the Department of Child Support Services will use the information you give them to get a court order to collect child support from your baby’s other parent even if you don’t want them to.

- However, if the court grants child support, you will receive **an extra $50 per month as part of your welfare benefits.** The rest of the money will go to the government to pay for welfare benefits.
What about child custody and visitation?

If you and the baby’s other parent are not living together, there are many different ways to work out custody and visitation without going to court. If you can do so safely, you should sit down and talk to the other parent about a custody agreement. Many people are able to work out agreements without ever going to court.

If you can’t agree with the other parent or you feel like the other parent will not honor your agreement, you may need to get a court order. However, you should know that the court will expect you to try to work out an agreement with the other parent before coming to court if it is safe to do so. In fact, even if you do go to court, you will be required to go to mediation before you are allowed to see the judge. At mediation, a counselor will talk to both parents to see if you can work out an agreement on custody and visitation. If mediation doesn’t work, you will have a court hearing and the judge will decide custody and visitation according to the best interests of the child. Once a court makes a court order, you must follow it even if you don’t agree with it.

If you need to get a court order on child custody and visitation, call the referral numbers at the end of this booklet, or go to the courthouse Family Law Information Center.

There are many choices for custody and visitation. Think about what you want and what would be best for your child before you go to court:

◊ **“Legal Custody”** is the right to make decisions about the child’s health care, school, religion, etc. Usually parents have “Joint Legal Custody,” meaning both parents share legal custody, but the court can also award “Sole Legal Custody,” where only one parent has the right to make decisions about the child.

◊ **“Physical Custody”** is the right to have the child live with you. The court can either give “Primary (or sole) physical custody” to one parent, which means the child lives mainly with one parent and visits the other parent, or “Joint Physical Custody,” which means the child lives part of the time with one parent and part of the time with the other parent.

◊ **“Visitation” or the “Parenting Plan”** is the schedule of days and times each parent gets to see and spend time with the child.
“Supervised Visitation” is visitation at a place like a visitation center or at the home of a neutral person (like a grandmother). The court usually orders supervised visitation when there is proof that it is not safe for a parent to be alone with the child.

A grandparent may request visitation, but, if the parents do not agree, the court can only give the grandparent visits if there is evidence the child already has a bond with them.

What if I am afraid for my or my baby’s safety?

Sometimes there is a lot of conflict between parents over child custody, visitation, and child support. If you are afraid your baby’s other parent, a current or past boyfriend or girlfriend, or a family member will hurt you, you may need a “restraining order.” A restraining order is a court order saying that someone must stay away from you and, sometimes, your child. As part of a restraining order case, you can ask that the court make or change child custody and visitation orders in order to protect your child. There are agencies that can give you advice, and may be able to help you get a restraining order. Read Public Counsel’s booklet “Get the Truth about Teen Dating Domestic Violence” for advice and referrals!

If your child is abducted, call the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office Child Abduction Section at (213) 257-2677 to make an appointment to get help. The office is located at 211 West Temple Street, Suite 300 in Los Angeles. Bring a picture of your child to your appointment.

Also, file a Child Abduction Report and a Missing Persons report with the police. The Missing Persons Report allows the police to enter the name of the child and parent into the National Crime Information Center.

If you are afraid the other parent may remove the child from the United States, request the U.S. State Department to list your child in the Children’s Passport Issuance Alert Program. That way, you will be notified if the other parent tries to obtain a U.S. passport for your child. For more information, visit the U.S. Department of State website at www.travel.state.gov.
Do I need an adult to help me file a family law court case?

No. You generally do not need an adult to help you file a paternity, custody/visitation, child support, or restraining order court case as long as you are able to understand what is going on in the case. However, if the Court decides you need help understanding and participating in the case, the court may ask you to bring an adult with you when you go to court or may appoint a “Guardian Ad litem.” A Guardian Ad Litem is someone who helps the court understand what is best for you.

Marriage for teens

When a person under 18 decides to get married, there are special rules. California law does not set a minimum age for marriage by a minor, but minors need their parents’ consent and court approval to get married. Most minors are at least 16 years old before the court will approve their marriage. If the court approves your marriage, the court will issue an order. You can then apply for a marriage license. There is a $90.00 fee for the license.

In Los Angeles County, you need to take the following steps if you want to get married and one or both of you is under 18:

- Complete a “Request of Minor to Marry” (Form FL-910) and a “Consent of Parent or Guardian to Issuance of Marriage License” (Form FAM-048) and file them with the Superior Court. You can get these forms at the Family Law Filing Window at the court.
  - The consent must be signed by both parents (or legal guardian) of the person under 18. One parent can consent if that parent has sole legal custody or the other parent is dead. If you are both under 18, both sets of parents must consent.
- File your application with the court. When you file the application, you will be given an appointment to meet with a court social worker to assess if you are mature enough to consent to marry. The social worker will make a recommendation to the court about whether to approve your application. You and your fiancée will each need to bring with you to your appointment:
  ◊ A picture identification with your birth date (such as a Driver’s License)
  ◊ The Parental Consent Form (FAM-048)
  ◊ Court papers showing that you are divorced if either of you was married before
◊ A letter from the counselor about the issues addressed in counseling if you received premarital counseling
◊ The parents (or legal guardian) of the person(s) under 18 must also attend and bring with them a valid ID

- If the Court approves your application, you will get a court order. After you get the court order, get a packet of marriage license application forms to fill out from your local County Clerk’s office. You can find a local office online at [http://www.cdph.ca.gov/pubsforms/forms/Pages/BirthMarriageandDeathCertificates.aspx](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/pubsforms/forms/Pages/BirthMarriageandDeathCertificates.aspx). You will need a parent with you to get the forms.

- Go to your local County Clerk’s office and submit the following documents for a marriage license:
  ◊ Completed Marriage License Application
  ◊ Certified copy of the court order
  ◊ Notarized parent or guardian consent statement from each parent or legal guardian of the person(s) under 18
  ◊ Court papers showing that you are divorced if either of you was married before

- Both of you must be present and have ID when submitting the application to the County Clerk. Once you get your marriage license, plan your wedding!
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<th>AGENCY</th>
<th>SERVICES</th>
<th>FEE &amp; HOURS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Asian Americans Advancing Justice—Los Angeles</strong>&lt;br&gt;1145 Wilshire Blvd., 2nd Floor&lt;br&gt;Los Angeles, CA 90017</td>
<td>Direct legal services for survivors of domestic violence: restraining orders, paternity, child custody, child support</td>
<td>Free to low-income residents of Los Angeles County.&lt;br&gt;Appointments only&lt;br&gt;Mon.-Fri.: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.</td>
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<td>HOTLINE: (888) 349-9695&lt;br&gt;www.advancingjustice-la.org</td>
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<td><strong>Community Legal Services, Norwalk</strong>&lt;br&gt;11834 E. Firestone Blvd.&lt;br&gt;Norwalk, CA 90650&lt;br&gt;Tel.: (562) 864-9935</td>
<td>Restraining orders, paternity, child custody, child support, primarily serves survivors of domestic violence</td>
<td>Free to individuals who meet income and residency requirements. Call program for particulars.&lt;br&gt;Mon.—Thurs. 9 a.m.—6 p.m.&lt;br&gt;Fri. 9 a.m.—4 p.m.</td>
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<td><strong>Appointments &amp; Legal Advice:</strong>&lt;br&gt;(800) 834-5001&lt;br&gt;www.legal-aid.com</td>
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<td><strong>Harriet Buhai Center for Family Law</strong>&lt;br&gt;3250 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 710&lt;br&gt;Los Angeles, CA 90010</td>
<td>Has a special project for teen parents: Restraining orders, paternity, child custody, child support</td>
<td>Free to low-income residents of Los Angeles County.&lt;br&gt;Appointments only&lt;br&gt;Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Appointments and information:</strong>&lt;br&gt;(213) 388-7515&lt;br&gt;www.hbcfl.org</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles</strong>&lt;br&gt;1102 Crenshaw Blvd.&lt;br&gt;Los Angeles, CA 90003</td>
<td>Restraining orders, paternity, child custody, child support, primarily serves survivors of domestic violence</td>
<td>Free to low-income residents of Los Angeles County.&lt;br&gt;See website for walk-in clinic hours and location. Also by appointment.&lt;br&gt;Mon.-Fri.: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Appointments and information:</strong>&lt;br&gt;(800) 399-4529&lt;br&gt;Www.lafla.org</td>
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**Note:** Listings are provided for informational purposes only. Public Counsel does not endorse any agency. Prepared by Public Counsel’s Children’s Rights Project.
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<tr>
<td><strong>Levitt and Quinn Family Law Center</strong>&lt;br&gt;1557 Beverly Blvd.&lt;br&gt;Los Angeles, CA 90026&lt;br&gt;Tel.: (213) 482-1800&lt;br&gt;www.levittquinn.org</td>
<td>Adoption, child custody, child support, domestic violence, paternity, visitation.</td>
<td>$60 fee for initial intake &amp; consultation: additional fee base on income for each additional service required (only money orders or credit/debit card; no cash or checks.)&lt;br&gt;Walk-in for initial intake.&lt;br&gt;Thurs. at 12 p.m. Fri. at 8 a.m.&lt;br&gt;(First 12 people will be helped on a first come basis)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice</strong>&lt;br&gt;1241 South Soto Street, Suite 102&lt;br&gt;Los Angeles, CA 90023&lt;br&gt;Tel.: (323) 980-3500&lt;br&gt;www.laclj.org</td>
<td>Has a special project for teen parents: Restraining orders, paternity, child custody, child support</td>
<td>Free to low-income residents of Los Angeles County.&lt;br&gt;Appointments only&lt;br&gt;Mon. - Fri.: 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. &amp; 1 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Neighborhood Legal Services</strong>&lt;br&gt;Various locations&lt;br&gt;Tel.: (800) 433-6251&lt;br&gt;www.nls-la.org</td>
<td>Restraining orders, paternity, child custody, child support, primarily serves survivors of domestic violence</td>
<td>Free to low-income persons. Call to determine eligibility. <strong>Note:</strong> All family law and domestic violence services are walk-in only.</td>
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**Note:** Listings are provided for informational purposes only. Public Counsel does not endorse any agency. Prepared by Public Counsel’s Children’s Rights Project.
WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Appointment tips

When you have an appointment to get help on issues affecting your children, here are some important papers to bring with you if you have them:

◊ Your child’s birth certificate
◊ Marriage certificate
◊ Divorce certificate
◊ Restraining order
◊ Police report
◊ Court documents
◊ Child support documents
◊ Important addresses and telephone numbers
◊ Proof of income (check stub)
◊ Proof of government benefits (like Cal-Works, Cal-Fresh)
◊ Proof of U.S. Citizenship of Law “Green Card”

Telephone tips:

◊ If you reach someone’s voicemail, always leave a message with your name and phone number
◊ To speak to an operator, press “0”
◊ Make a list of your questions & take notes
◊ Get the name of the person you talk to
◊ Be patient, you may be put on hold

Bus & Metro:
For bus and metro information call (323) GO-Metro or (323) 466-3876
Or visit: www.commutesmart.info.

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Prepared by Public Counsel’s Children’s Rights Project
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While this publication is designed to provide accurate and current information about the law, readers should contact an attorney or other expert for advice in particular cases, and should also consult the relevant statutes and court decisions when relying on cited materials.

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You may find this booklet and other Public Counsel booklets at [www.publiccounsel.org/practice_areas/childrens_rights](http://www.publiccounsel.org/practice_areas/childrens_rights). Click on the “Publications” tab.

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Do you have any questions such as:

- How to register your baby’s birth?
- How to get your baby’s birth certificate?
- How to change baby’s name?
- How to get your baby’s social security number?
- What is paternity?
- How do I get child support?
- Can a teen get married?

This booklet will cover those questions and many more that you might have related to legal issues for teen families.

We are here to help.

HAVE QUESTIONS FOR AN ATTORNEY?

213-385-2977 X500

OR VISIT: WWW.PUBLICCOUNSEL.ORG