

ALERT – Name Change After Birth Record Registered Requires Court Order

PLEASE SHARE WITH HOSPITAL STAFF WHO ASSIST NEW PARENTS WITH THE BIRTH WORKSHEET

No Name Change after Registration: Effective immediately, parents may no longer request to “change” their infant’s first and/or middle given name without a court order after the birth record has been registered. When the parent completes the birth worksheet, the name they write down becomes the child’s legal name. Please ensure, also, that the birth mother or her legal husband attests to the accuracy of the information by signature as the informant on the birth worksheet.

- If they change their mind about the name or the spelling of the name prior to the birth worksheet being entered into the IVRS application and registered, the birth mother must complete and sign an entirely new Mother’s Birth Worksheet (and shred the old one). Do NOT take the information over the phone, or allow anyone to make strikethroughs, etc., even if someone initials it – the worksheet must be started over.
- If they change their mind after the birth worksheet has been entered and registered, then it is too late.

Corrections to Date-Entry Errors Continue: As always, the state vital records office may correct errors made at the time of data entry. State birth registration staff will continue to contact hospitals to request a copy of the signed birth worksheet if proof is needed whether or not there was a typographical error, or the parent has just changed their mind about the name or the spelling of the name. Even with typographical errors, the parent has the burden of returning the form on the back of the New Parent letter that came with the newborn certified copy, indicate what’s wrong, have their signatures notarized, include a photocopy of their U.S. government-issued photo ID, and return the incorrect newborn certified birth certificate.

- It is important that data entry staff at the hospital proof the screen as they are entering the information. We get a big bundle of requests to correct typographical errors every week. With the new regulation disallowing a change of name after registration, birth registration staff will be forced to request copies of birth worksheets from hospitals more often in order to prove if there was an error made or the parent has just changed their mind about the name or the spelling of the name.

Legal Change of Name Court Order Required: If the parent changes their mind concerning the infant’s first and/or middle given name, as well as the surname, after the record has been registered, they will need to contact their local Clerk of District Court office to ask the procedure for doing a Legal Change of Name pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 674. This may involve the cost of an attorney, as well as court costs, plus an administrative processing fee for our office to make the changes to the record. Iowa Code requires that both the old name, and the new name, be reflected on the birth record; therefore, a statement is added to the top of

the record to reflect the new legal name and the body of the birth certificate remains as originally registered.

- Please note that, as always, the child's surname (i.e., last name) requires the same Legal Change of Name court order, or Paternity Affidavit, to be changed after registration of the birth record.
- Paternity Affidavit laws allow the child's surname to be changed to that of the biological father, which includes adding the father's surname to make a 2-word surname if the infant was already given the same surname as the birth mother.

Adding a Given Name Where None Existed. Parents will still be allowed to add the first and/or middle given name with a special affidavit acquired through the state vital records office, birth registration staff. However, this only applies if the infant was never given a first name or a middle name at the time of the record was registered. The Affidavit to Add (where none existed before) must be received by the state vital records office prior to the child's first birthday, must be notarized by both parents named on the record, must include the returned previously-issued certified copies for exchange, and must include an administrative processing fee and photocopies of each parents U.S.-government issued photo identification cards. Parents must contact the state birth registration staff to acquire the special Affidavit to Add.