



Registration Services

Registering a birth in Staffordshire

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This document provides information on how to register a birth within Staffordshire and the responsibilities and requirements involved.

Where a birth can be registered

By law, registering the birth of a new baby must be done within 42 days of the birth taking place.

A birth must be registered in the area in which the birth took place. If the baby was born in Staffordshire then the birth of the baby can be registered at any registration office throughout the county. The registrar will take the details of the birth and enter them into the register which is then signed by the person registering the birth. A short version of the birth certificate will then be issued containing details about the baby's name, sex, date of birth and registration district. Form FP58 which enables you to register your child with a Doctor will also be issued. Further copies of the birth certificate can be purchased (both short and long versions).

If it is inconvenient to register the birth in the area where the birth took place then the information needed to register the birth can be given to a registrar in another district. The registrar will then record the details in the form of a declaration and will send the information to the registrar for the district where the birth took place. The registrar will then record the details into the birth register and issue a short version of the birth certificate which will be posted to you. No documents will be issued at the initial declaration.

If your baby was born in the Stoke-on-Trent Registration district, for example if your baby was born at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire, you can make a declaration at any register office in the county who will take the details in the form of a declaration and send these to Stoke-on-Trent Registration Services, who will then post a short version of the birth certificate to you.

People who can register a birth

If the parents of the child were married to each other at the time of the birth (or conception) then either the mother or father may register the birth.

If the parents were not married to each other at the time of the child's birth (or conception) then the father's details may be entered into the birth register in the following circumstances:

- If the mother and father go to the register office and sign the birth register together
- Where the father is unable to go to the register office with the mother, it is possible for him to make a statutory declaration acknowledging his paternity which the mother must produce to the registrar (the forms to do this can be obtained from any register office). Statutory declarations need to be witnessed by a Solicitor for which a fee will usually be charged.
- Where the mother is unable to go to the register office with the father the mother may make a statutory declaration acknowledging the father's paternity which the father must produce to the registrar (the forms to do this can be obtained from any register office)
- Where the mother or father has made a parental responsibility agreement or either one has obtained the appropriate court order the agreement can be produced to the registrar by either parent.
- Unmarried couples should note that wherever there is joint registration, the named father will automatically be granted full parental rights over the child until he or she reaches 18 years of age.

If the father's details are not recorded in the birth register it may be possible to re-register the birth at a later date to include his details.

What information you will need to provide

When registering the birth of a baby the registrar will ask you for specific pieces of information which will be entered into the birth registration record. The information required for each individual is as follows:

Child

- The date and place of birth (if the registration is for twins, triplets etc. then the time of each child's birth will also be needed)
- The sex of the child
- The forename/s and surname in which it is intended that the child will be brought up

Mother

- Her forename/S and surname
- Her maiden name (if she is or has previously been married)
- Her date and place of birth
- Her occupation at the time of the child's birth. If the mother is not employed at the time of the birth then details of her last occupation will/can be recorded
- The date of her marriage (if she is married to the father at the time of the birth)
- The number of previous children that she has by her present husband or by any former husband

Father

(where this information is to be entered into the birth register)

- His forename/s and surname
- His date and place of birth
- His occupation at the time of the child's birth. If the father is not employed at the time of the birth then details of his last occupation will/can be recorded.

Re-Registering a birth

There are two main situations in which the child's parents may request the birth to be re-registered.

To show that the parents are now married

If the natural parents have married each other since the birth was registered, the birth should be re-registered to accurately record the current legal status of the child.

A form can be obtained from registration Services which needs to be signed by both parents. Either parent can then attend the register office with the completed form and a copy of the marriage certificate. The birth can then be re-registered and the child's surname can be changed as part of this process. Copies of the re-registered birth certificate can then be purchased from the registrar.

Adding the father's details to the birth record

If the child's natural parents were not married at the time of the birth and the father did not attend with the mother to register the birth of the baby, the birth record can be amended at any time to include the father's details and to change the surname of the child. A form can be obtained from Registration Services.

The easiest way for a birth to be re-registered is for both parents to attend at a register office together. It is possible however for either parent to make a statutory declaration before a solicitor or other person able to legally witness an oath to acknowledge parentage of the child. It is also possible for either parent to obtain a court order naming the father. In any of these situations, the birth will be registered again and copies of the re-registered certificate can be purchased from the registrar.

If the parents were not married to each other at the time of the birth and it was decided to give the child the father's name (whether or not he attended the initial registration with the mother) it is not always possible to change the child's surname back to that of the mother. The only alternative would be to speak to a solicitor to make a statutory declaration or deed poll changing the name of the child. This would not change the entry on the original birth register.

The statutory declaration or deed poll should however be attached to the birth certificate to show that the child has been brought up with a surname different to that shown on the original birth record.

Registering a birth in special circumstances

Where neither the mother nor father can register the birth

Although in most cases, the birth of a baby is registered by the parents, sometime in exceptional circumstances neither the mother nor father is able to do this. In these circumstances, the registrar will arrange for the registration to be undertaken by whichever of the following people is best able to do so:

- The occupier of the house or hospital where the child was born
- A person who was present at the birth
- A person who is responsible for the child

Registering births conceived through fertility treatment

The woman who gives birth to the child (including surrogate mothers) will be shown as the child's mother in the birth register. The person who is to be regarded as the father of the child will generally speaking be the husband or partner who undertook the fertility treatment with the mother.

In the case of a surrogacy arrangement, the couple who arranged for the surrogate mother to carry the child for them can apply to the court for a parental order that will enable the birth to be re-registered to show them as the parents of the child.

Registration where the father dies before a child is conceived

Where a child is conceived as a result of fertility treatment after the death of a man receiving treatment with the mother, the man can be registered as the child's father on production of the following documentary evidence:

- His written consent to the fertility treatment and to being named as the child's father in the birth register (not required where the man died before 18th September 2003)
- Written confirmation from the clinic that the man's consent had not been withdrawn (not required where the father died before 18th September 2003)
- The woman's written request for the man to be named as the father in the birth register
- Written confirmation of the fertility treatment from a medical source, for example the fertility clinic, the mother's own doctor or hospital doctor
- The original copy of the man's death certificate
- A marriage certificate (if applicable)

Recording the man as the child's father in any of these circumstances does not mean that he will be treated in law as the child's father other than for registration purposes. Nor does it give the child any legal status or rights concerning for example inheritance or nationality.

Changing the first name of a child

It is sometimes possible to change the first name (or names) of your child. If you decide to change the name within 12 months of the date of registration then you are able to make the changes to the original birth registration.

If the child has been baptised into the Christian faith within 12 months of the registration then you can obtain a form from registration Services which needs to be completed by the minister of the church in which the child was baptised. Once this form has been completed it needs to be returned to Registration Services and the amended names can then be inserted into space 17 on the original birth register. This can be done at any time afterwards as long as the baptism took place within 12 months of the original birth registration. Amended copies of the birth record can then be purchased from the registrar.

The full version of the birth certificate will show both the original name and the new name. the short version of the certificate will only show the new name.

If the child has not been baptised then the parents can complete a Certificate of Naming form at any of the register offices. Again, this can take place at any time after the initial birth registration providing that it can be proved that the name change took place within 12 months of the initial registration. This could be accomplished by providing evidence in the form of a clinic card, NHS medical card or a bank book.

The amended names will be inserted into space 17 on the original birth register. This can be done at any time afterwards as long as the baptism took place within 12 months of the original birth registration. Amended copies of the birth record can then be purchased from the registrar. The full version of the birth certificate will show both the original name and the new name. the short version of the certificate will only show the new name.

It should be noted that there is no charge for re-registering a baby's birth.

Parental Responsibility

The law changed on December 1st 2003 to make it easier for unmarried fathers to get equal parental responsibility.

The child's mother (and father if they are married) automatically have parental responsibility. Where the parents are not married to each other, the father acquires parental responsibility if he attends the registration with the mother to have his name recorded in the child's registration record.

A father can also obtain parental responsibility by later marrying the child's mother, by making a parental responsibility agreement with her or by obtaining a court order.

For enquiries or to make an appointment please contact

General enquiries about Registration Services can be made during the following times:

Monday – Friday 08:00 – 18:00

Saturday – 09:00 – 13:00

Please contact:

Email: registrarsenquiries@staffordshire.gov.uk

Tel: 0300 1118001

Fax: 01785 276026

Deaf or hard of hearing:

Mini Com: 01785 276207

The Minicom service is a telephone typewriter device for communication between deaf, hard of hearing, speech-impaired and/or hearing persons.

All of our information leaflets are available in a range of formats and languages, including Braille and large print. If this would be useful to you or someone you know, please contact us.