

## Confidential

### State of Vermont Voluntary Acknowledgment of Parentage Form

Parentage creates specific legal obligations. This signed form may be used in court in support of a parentage claim. You should seek legal advice before signing this form if you have any questions or if you are confused about your rights and responsibilities. Further information about the legal rights and responsibilities of a parent is available on the back of this form.

These rights and responsibilities are serious, and you should not sign this form unless you understand them. If you need help understanding your rights and responsibilities as parents and the alternatives to, and consequences of, signing this form, call 1-800-786-3214 (or dial 2-1-1 for help in other languages).

#### Child's Information

Child's Full Name

Date of Birth

City/Town, County, and State of Birth

Social Security Number (if any)

*Being of sound mind and memory, voluntarily and without coercion, and of our own free will, we hereby acknowledge that we are the biological parents of this child. We understand that signing this acknowledgment is voluntary and we understand our rights and responsibilities as a parent and the alternatives to, and consequences of, signing this form.*

#### Mother's Information

Full Name

Date of Birth

State of Birth

Social Security Number

Mailing Address

City

State

Zip Code

Mother's Signature

Guardian's Signature if mother is a minor

Signature of Witness\*

Date

Witnessed in (City, County, State)

#### Father's Information

Full Name

Date of Birth

State of Birth

Social Security Number

Mailing Address

City

State

Zip Code

Father's Signature

Guardian's Signature if father is a minor

Signature of Witness\*

Date

Witnessed in (City, County, State)

\* The witness must be at least **18 years of age** and **not** the mother or father of the child.

**IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ OTHER SIDE OF THIS FORM.**

Revised 8/12

## Important Information

### Legal Parentage

If you are married when your child is born, Vermont law automatically recognizes you both as the *legal* parents. However, if you are **not married** when your child is born, the law:

- Assumes the mother is the biological (and *legal*) parent of the child; but
- Does not recognize the father until parentage has been legally established.

### Establishing Parentage

You may establish parentage one of two ways:

1. **By signing this Voluntary Acknowledgment of Parentage form and filing it with the Office of Vital Records.** Do not sign this form if either of you is unsure or has any doubt about the father's identity.
2. **By filing an action in the Family Division of Superior Court.** The judge may establish legal parentage and parental rights and responsibilities; assign child and medical support obligations; and order genetic testing if needed. For further information about the court process for establishing parentage, ask the court clerk. For help establishing parentage, apply to the Vermont Office of Child Support.

### What Voluntary Acknowledgment Means

By signing this *Voluntary Acknowledgment of Parentage* form, both parents accept the legal rights and responsibilities that come with being a parent. This means that:

- Either parent may seek parental rights and responsibilities (*custody*) or ask for parent-child contact (*visitation*);
- Both parents have the right to notice and a hearing before the child may be adopted; and
- Both parents are responsible for financially supporting the child. Once parental rights and responsibilities are established, either parent or the Office of Child Support may file a petition to establish a child support order with the Family Division of Superior Court.

### Confidentiality

The *Voluntary Acknowledgment of Parentage* form is confidential; however, it may be shared with the Office of Child Support for the purpose of initiating a parentage or child support proceeding.

### Legal Representation

You may hire an attorney to advise you about the legal consequences of voluntarily acknowledging parentage and to represent you at any legal proceedings.

### Changing Your Mind

The law allows a person who signed this form to rescind the acknowledgment within 60 days after signing or prior to a judicial determination of parentage, whichever occurs first. The rescission must be in writing and must be filed with the Department of Health at the address below.

### Submitting this Form

Keep a copy of the completed form for your records. After both parents and the witnesses have signed the completed form, submit it to:

**Office of Vital Records, Department of Health**  
**108 Cherry Street, PO Box 70**  
**Burlington, VT 05402-0070 • 1-800-439-5008**

*If this form is filed with the Department of Health within 6 months of the child's birth, the father's full name, date and place of birth will be added to the child's birth certificate. After 6 months from the date of birth, the child's birth certificate may be amended only by order of the Probate Court, as provided in 18 V.S.A. Section 5075(a).*