

Minnesota Fathers' Adoption Registry Frequently Asked Questions

Before any adoption petition for a US born child is final in the State of Minnesota, a search of the Minnesota Fathers Adoption Registry (MFAR) is required. Staff in the Office of the State Registrar at the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) complete the search and provide certified proof of the search. Exceptions to the requirement to search the MFAR are limited to adoptions for a foreign-born child or of a "safe place" baby. Licensed adoption agencies, birth mothers, and social service agencies responsible for the report related to stepparent adoptions under, Minnesota Statutes 259.53, subdivision 1, may search the MFAR at any time. The responsible social service agency under 260C.150, as the petitioner in a juvenile protection matter may also request a search at any time.

Fact Sheets for Practitioners

1. [Court Administrators](#)
2. [Licensed Adoption Agencies and Private Attorneys](#)
3. [Child Support Officials – \(There is no fee requirement\)](#)
4. [Child Protection, Foster Care and Permanency Workers](#)

Information for Putative Fathers

Who may register on the MFAR?

Any putative father may register with the MFAR, including a person under age 18.

When and how must a putative father register?

A putative father may register any time from conception until years after the child is born. If a putative father registers after the 30th day following birth, his right to receive notice prior to the finalization of an infant adoption is lost, unless he can show proof of why he was unable to timely register, which will likely require court action.

Registration and Notice Requirements

Putative fathers may register with the Minnesota Fathers' Adoption Registry (MFAR), any time after the conception of a child that he believes he has fathered. There are two time sensitive requirements a putative father must meet to insure that he receives notice of a pending adoption:

- (1) the filing of a registration form with the MFAR within 30 days after the birth of the child in question; and,
- (2) after an adoption petition is filed related in court, the registered putative father must receive an additional 30 days during which they must file their intention to either claim or relinquish their paternal rights take affirmative steps toward establishing his paternity.

What happens after a man registers?

Once registered, a putative father's information is placed in the MFAR data base. The data base is searched upon request, and the results of each search are returned to the agent/agency who submitted the request. If a putative father match occurs, the agency requesting the search, not the Fathers' Adoption Registry, must send additional forms to the putative father, which are below.

ADO102 [Denial of Paternity](#)

ADO104 [Intent to Claim Parental Rights](#)

ADO103 [Notice to Registered Putative Father and Notice of Jurisdiction](#)

For more information and for form go to the State Courts website at:

<http://www.mncourts.gov/default.aspx?page=513&category=41>

Common Questions and Answers About Searching the MFAR

Q. If I submitted a search request to the MFAR and I have not heard anything. Have you received my request?

A. The typical turn around time for the completion and return is about 4 weeks or less, after they come into our office. Calls to inquire about the status of a request are discouraged. The birth data of a child born to an unmarried mother is confidential data, and are not available to the public, unless the mother designates the record as public.

Q. Does it cost to search the MFAR? If yes, how much does it cost?

A. There is a \$ 25 fee to search the MFAR, which you must submit with the request.

Q. The biological father signed a consent form for this adoption, which is a stepparent adoption. Do I still have to search the MFAR?

A. Yes.

Q. I received my forms back but no results, and my credit card was charged, what do I do?

A. Follow the instructions on the Corrections and Changes form that you received. Your request will be pending until we receive the data from you.

Q. Can a putative father register with the MFAR later than the 30th day following the child's birth?

A. Putative father can register if the child is more than 30 days old, however, in cases of infant adoption he may have lost his right to notice. Each father is encouraged to seek help from a lawyer to determine his situation. In cases where child protection, foster care or child support officials are searching the MFAR, they can contact a putative father, even if he registered late, to try to find a stable and permanent home for the child.

Q. How do I get an MFAR Search Form; brochures or a registration from?

A. On the MDH website at: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/registry/top.htm>