Genetic Testing for Parentage Establishment

California's Child Support Program: A Resource for Parents

Establishing parentage is the process of determining the legal father of a child. If you are served with legal documents to establish parentage (Summons and Complaint/ Petition), you may have the right to seek genetic testing to determine if you are the child's biological father.

- **What is genetic testing?**
  Genetic testing is a process that uses DNA to determine parentage. DNA samples from the alleged father, mother, and child are taken by swabbing the inside of their cheeks. The swabs are sent to the genetic test lab for testing. If the mother is not available, a motherless test is possible.

- **How do I request genetic testing?**
  Once served with the legal documents to establish paternity. contact your Local Child Support Agency (LCSA) at the phone number listed below to request genetic testing. You must do so within 30 days from the day served with the legal documents. You can also file an answer with the court requesting genetic testing.

- **The child's mother has not opened a case, but I want a genetic test. How do I do that?**
  You can apply to your LCSA for parentage establishment. The mother will be served with the legal documents and genetic testing can be arranged.

- **What happens next?**
  Once the test is completed, both parents will receive copies of the test results. It will indicate: 1) You are the father, or 2) You are excluded as the father of the child. After the test, a court order must be obtained to establish parentage. The test results are legally acceptable evidence of parentage. If the test results indicate that you are the father, you can contact the LCSA to discuss your options. If you are excluded, the case against you will close.

- **Is there a cost to me for genetic testing?**
  No, your LCSA will provide genetic testing without any cost to you or the other parent.

For more information, contact your local child support office: 1 (866) 901-3212 **or TTY:** 1 (866) 399-4096
https://childsupport.ca.gov/

Child Support Directors Association
A Coalition of Experts Collecting Billions for California's Children

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