



Paternity acknowledgement at prenatal clinic

- Paternity can be acknowledged at a prenatal clinic before the birth of child but no earlier than the 30th week of pregnancy. Both prospective parents should be present, so that the acknowledgement of paternity can be accepted.
- Bring with you a valid and acceptable identity card, which can be:
 - A passport (of any country)
 - An alien's passport granted by the Finnish authorities or a refugee travel document
 - An identity card issued by a country within the European Economic Area, San Marino or Switzerland.
 - A driving licence issued by the Finnish authorities after 1 October 1990.
- At the clinic, a document about the acknowledgement will be filled in, which the clinic will send to the child welfare officer.
- This document will then await the child's birth. After that, the father whose paternity has been acknowledged before the birth of the child, has the opportunity to cancel his claim by notifying in writing the child welfare officer in charge of establishing the child's paternity no later than within 30 days of the child's birth. The notification should be sent to the address: Turun kaupungin lastenvalvoja, Linnankatu 23, PL 364, 20100 Turku
- The register office will confirm the paternity and notify the parents.

• The parents attend the prenatal clinic → acknowledgement and joint custody agreement

• The clinic sends the documents to the child welfare officer

• The child welfare officer studies the documents and delivers the necessary additional reports and hearings

• The documents await the child's birth

• A notice from the population register to the child welfare officer about the child's birth

• The child welfare officer puts the clinic documents together into a birth notice

• The documents wait for 30 days

• Within 30 days of the child's birth, the child welfare officer prepares a paternity analysis report and sends the documents to the register office

• The register office notifies the parents and child welfare officer of the decision to confirm paternity

• The child welfare officer confirms the joint custody agreement and posts it to the parents



The legal effects of the confirmation of paternity

Through the confirmation of paternity, the child obtains the same legal status as a child born into marriage.

- A legally valid family relationship is created between the child and the father, which is entered in the population register. Through the confirmation of paternity, a family relationship is also created between the child and the father's relatives.
- The child is entitled to use his or her father's surname and to meet his or her father.
- The child has the right of inheritance from his or her father and the latter's relatives, and they also have the right of inheritance from the child
- The child is entitled to maintenance from the father up to the age of 18 and, after that, to financial support for his or her education
- The child is entitled to a survivor's pension if the father dies.

Custody of the child

Even after the confirmation of paternity, the mother remains the child's sole guardian. If they wish, the parents may make an agreement about joint custody of the child. This agreement may be made in the presence of a public health nurse at the time of the paternity acknowledgement. 'Custody of the child' means taking care of the child's matters and deciding upon them. A guardian is entitled to receive information on matters concerning the child from different authorities and to take care of the child's financial matters.

Joint custody

In a situation of joint custody, both guardians receive information concerning the child and may jointly decide on matters such as the child's

- name
- place of residence
- nationality
- mother tongue
- upbringing
- care
- religion
- day care and education
- health care
- passport
- and care of other personal matters

Sole custody

If just one of the parents is the child's guardian, he or she alone may make decisions concerning the child. The authorities will give information concerning the child only to the guardian, and to the other parent only with the consent of the guardian.

The principal of the Act on Child Custody and Right of Access is that the interests of the child are best served when the parents are jointly responsible for the child's custody. Joint custody requires from the parents a sufficient ability to decide together on and to discuss matters concerning the child.