WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR CHILD’S BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Your child’s birth certificate lasts forever. Please be certain the information on the certificate is accurate and complete before you sign it.

- The birth certificate is a legal document.
- An amendment form is required to make corrections to the birth certificate.
- The birth certificate will become a two-page document if an amendment is requested after the original has been processed.
- Many changes on the birth certificate require the applicant to go to court for a court order, including reversing the order of last names (surnames).
- Parents may have problems receiving benefits, traveling on an airline, obtaining a passport or social security number for their child if the birth certificate is not true and correct.
- It can take a couple months to apply an amendment. The processing time for amendments can be located on the California Department of Public Health-Vital Records website at:
  
  http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/birthdeathmar/Pages/ProcessingTimes.aspx

Common mistakes that require amendments or court orders:

- Misspelled first, middle, and last names of child and/or parents
- Incorrect birth place or date of birth of parent(s)
- Reversed order of last names (surnames)
- Adding extra names to parent(s) or child later
- Incorrect gender (sex) of child
- Incorrect birth date

Errors on birth certificates cannot be corrected on the original certificate.

The original birth certificate does not change, but an amendment is attached to create a two-page document.

✓ Parents, please review the information on the birth certificate carefully before you sign it.
✓ Your signature confirms that you have reviewed the information and that the facts are correct.

Amendment forms may be obtained at the local health department or county recorder’s office.