

# OFF THE RECORD

*techniques, tips, and traps for our partners who file birth certificates*

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## **Home Births: With or Without a Medical Professional**

We frequently speak of all births that occur outside of a medical facility as 'home births' regardless of whether the birth occurred with a professional attendant, at the home of a relative or friend, or with the mother alone in her own home (as sometimes happens). The main difference between the two types of home births is whether or not a licensed attendant or registered midwife was available at the delivery. A licensed attendant is a physician, nurse midwife or licensed direct entry midwife. A registered midwife is registered with the state vital records office and can also file birth certificates.

### **Home Births that occur without a licensed attendant or registered midwife:**

The state vital records office directly registers the birth if the certifier is not a licensed attendant or registered midwife. In this situation, the birth certificate should not be registered at the county. The certificate and any other documents received at the county office should be forwarded to our registration specialist, Jennifer Maloney (503) 731-4426, for action. If registration is completed within six months of the birth date, a white copy of the registered certificate will be sent to the county of birth for their records.

### **Home Births at home with a licensed attendant or registered midwife:**

If a licensed attendant or registered midwife is present, but the father, (as an example), 'catches' the baby as it emerges, the father could be listed as the attendant and the licensed attendant or registered midwife recorded as the certifier. The certifier would need to be present at the birth and can then file the birth certificate without additional documentation regarding the birth.

## **How to register a birth without a licensed attendant or registered midwife:**

When someone contacts our office for information on filing the birth certificate for a birth that occurred without a licensed attendant or registered midwife, we send information that includes a birth certificate form (45-1), two affidavits (labeled Affidavit A and Affidavit B) and a letter requesting proof of residency or other proof of physical presence in Oregon at the time of birth. If these documents arrive in the county vital records office, please forward them to the state office immediately.

## **Why are there different requirements for these births?**

Births that occur outside of a facility, without a licensed attendant or registered midwife require additional evidence of the birth under ORS 432.206(3) and OAR 333-011-0043. The State Registrar determines what evidence is needed. Our procedures require less documentation for registering births if the attendant is licensed through the Board of Medical Examiners, the Board of Nursing, the Health Licensing Office, or is a midwife registered with our state vital records office.

## **How would the county know who can certify a birth? Who is a licensed attendant?**

For a licensed attendant, the county vital records office can act based on the information on the certificate. If the certifier includes the title of M.D., D.O., C.N.M., L.D., D.M. or other medical designations licensed in Oregon, the certificate can be registered at the county. If the county staff wants to check on the certifier because the title is missing or unclear, each board has a web site to look up license information.

## **Board of Medical Examiners**

<http://www.bme.state.or.us/search.html>

## **Board of Nursing**

<http://mscfprod1.iservices.state.or.us/nursing/lu/LicenseLookup.cfm>

## **Licensed Direct Entry Midwives**

<https://elite.hlo.state.or.us/elitepublic/LPRBrowser.aspx>

These sites can be used because they are the official licensing check sites for the boards and agencies. Other sources, like the yellow pages, can be used as information for corrections to obvious errors, but shouldn't be used to confirm license status.

## **Who is a registered midwife?**

Registered midwives must be listed as active on the most recent list from the Center for Health Statistics. We send updated lists to county vital records offices monthly. Contact Lynda Jackson (503-731-3392) regarding any questions or changes to the list.

## **What about newborns who come to the hospital? Should the hospital file a birth certificate?**

If a baby is born en route to the hospital, the facility should file the birth certificate under ORS 432.206(1). There is no definition of 'en route'. The hospital birth clerk should change the default location of birth from the facility to 'en route to' the facility or the actual address where the birth occurred. Using the memo field (Alt plus M) to note that the birth occurred outside the facility and is submitted as a courtesy to the parent, is also very helpful to our office. If the baby is more than a few hours old, the parents should be referred to our office or the county

office for information on registering the birth.

### **Submitting Birth Records**

Under no circumstances should a medical facility or a midwife give the certificate of live birth to a parent to submit to the county or state. Facilities and birth attendants have an individual responsibility to file the birth records within five days of the birth with complete and accurate information.

If a parent submits a birth record directly to the county, the affidavits and proof of residency required for other out of facility births should be submitted as well.

### **AMI'S CORNER**

Greetings fellow workers of vital events!

Some of you may already know me from my many journeys out of the office, having met some of you by way of a "meet and greet", and a few of you through the triennial review. While the travel has been far-reaching at times, it's very rewarding to see and hear about some of the great things going on across the state regarding the registration of vital records.

Where have my journeys taken me? Thus far, I've traveled to the south coast to Coos and Curry counties, over to Douglas county and then to eastern Oregon to visit Malheur, Baker for the triennial review, Union and Umatilla counties. I recently returned from a visit to the north coast to Tillamook and Clatsop counties. I've also visited most of the metro Portland area hospitals, as well as some others in Yamhill County. In late May, I traveled to the Klamath and Lake counties for their triennial review and visited other sites in the area, including those in Jackson and Josephine counties. I recently returned from visits with Deschutes, Crook

and Jefferson counties. I returned to Umatilla County last week to complete the triennial review. I will be in Harney County in early August for the review there as well. As you can see, not only has my travel schedule kept me busy, but also there are plenty of places in the state yet to be seen.

Some of the projects that I have been working on are a paternity acknowledgement and affidavit training with rules and guidelines, the hospital birth worksheets, a county registrars manual, and updates to our website. We expect to have the paternity training materials online soon. Look for more information regarding paternities later in this newsletter.

While I have enjoyed this job tremendously, it is with heavy heart that I report my last day of employment here at CHS will be August 10th. I have been accepted into graduate school at Washington State University. It was a very difficult decision for me to make as I have appreciated this job so much; the people here in the CHS office are a wonderful and dedicated staff and the extensive travel throughout the state meeting county, hospital and funeral home staff has been a great treat. I've enjoyed working, laughing and discussing local flavor with each of you. I look forward to this new chapter in my life, but am saddened to leave such a wonderful community. Thank you for being so welcoming to me – I'm sure the next field liaison will be just as excited to meet you as I was!

Happy Trails, Ami

### **Do You Need Updated Forms?**

In our Fall 2004 newsletter, we provided a list of forms with the last revision date for each. Some of these forms have since been updated. The form number and last

revision date are shown after each title, and are also printed in the lower right-hand corner of each form.

Forms recently updated:

- 45-1, Certificate of Live Birth, (04/05);
- 45-25, Affidavit to Correct a Birth Certificate, (05/05);
- 45-31, Voluntary Acknowledgment of Paternity (hospital only), (05/05)

Additionally, if you need to order forms, please use the 07/04 version of Form 45-43. The 07/04 version not only has correct package quantities, but it also does not require two copies to be sent to us, nor does it require ordering for a six-month supply at one time. As well, this form is also available online: <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/chs/registration/docs/45-43.pdf>

If you need the current version of any of our forms, you may complete a Request for Vital Records Forms and Tags (Form 45-43, 07/04) and fax it to us at (503) 731-3076 or contact Linda Reynolds at (503) 731-4027.

### **Paternity and Questionnaire**

As you may have noticed from the last newsletter, from the visits Ami has made with you, or the upcoming training mentioned in “Ami’s Corner,” paternity is a very important topic for us right now. The paternity acknowledgment and affidavit is important for many reasons:

1. It is a way for people to know who their father is. Paternal biological information is important medically, socially and emotionally.
2. State and federal agencies use the number of paternities established to determine social services caseloads and budgets. For example, these numbers are used the

following year to determine paternity goals. If the state doesn’t meet that goal, we lose some of our TANF funds (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families). The federal government then uses these numbers to assess distribution of TANF funds to the states.

Currently, our numbers indicate a decline in the number of paternity acknowledgments filed for births to unwed mothers. We rely on those working the front lines with mothers, families, and community partners to have the paternity paperwork available and filled out properly.

To those working in hospitals, we ask that you take a moment and consider whether your facility is making every effort to have the paternity acknowledgement available to single mothers and fathers. We’ve enclosed a questionnaire with this newsletter, and ask that you please consider faxing it back with candid comments regarding paternity acknowledgement. We welcome anonymous comments as well.

If you would like training or if you have additional questions, please include your name and phone number. We have or will contact every facility in the state in the normal course of our business. Again, the more candid you are about paternity issues, the better we are able to address your concerns and maintain TANF funding for the state.

### **Featured Section of the Birth Record**

#### **Items 25-27 Prenatal Care**

#### **Item 25 -Month of Pregnancy Prenatal Care Began**

If no prenatal care was received, enter 0. In EBC, the program will skip the number of

visits and site of prenatal care if the month prenatal care began is 0.

If mother was seeing a medical provider prior to pregnancy and continues to see the provider during pregnancy, prenatal care began in the first month (so enter 1).

If mother received prenatal care but doesn't remember when it began, put the latest month of the range rather than putting "Unknown". For example, if it was the third or fourth month, enter 4.

**Item 26** -Prenatal Visits –Total Number (If none, so state)

If no prenatal care was received, enter "None". If Item 25 is reported as "None", this item should also be completed as "None". DO NOT leave this item blank. In EBC, this item will be skipped if Item 25 is 0.

If Month Prenatal Care Began and Site of Care is known but number of visits is unknown write a confirming memo "Item 26 # of Visits is Unknown." If mother is unsure of the number of visits, but knows a range (8 or 9), enter the lower number rather than indicating "Unknown".

Note: If a clerk enters "Unknown" for Prenatal Care Began the computer automatically puts in NONE for number of visits. In this case write a memo to confirm or update the info "26. # of Visits is Unknown" or note the number of visits.

**Item 27** - Site – Prenatal Care

Indicate the type of facility where prenatal care was received. If care was received at more than one type of facility, indicate the location where the most visits occurred. Leave blank if no prenatal care. EBC will automatically skip this field if Item 25 is 0.

## Helpful Hints

**Item 5e:** Attendant Mailing Address...

This item often gets left blank when the certifier is the attendant. In these situations, item 5e needs to indicate the certifier's mailing address. **Item 5d** is the only item that can be blank and should be blank only if the certifier was the attendant.

**Item 7b:** Mother's Maiden Surname...

This item always needs to be filled out, *regardless of mother's marital status, and even if the mother's last name has never changed.* Maiden surname is the last name of the mother as it appears on her birth certificate.

**Item 36** Antenatal Procedures (Check all that apply)

If no procedures were used, check "None". DO NOT leave this item blank.

Note: If there is no PNC then Antenatal Procedures must be None and all procedures are to be entered in Intrapartum procedures. This includes an Ultrasound performed during labor.