

<b>DSS Policy and Procedure Guide</b>	
Division 03: Child Welfare	Chapter 04: Ongoing Case Management/Practice
<b>Item 031: Paternity Tests: Request, Notification and Documentation</b>	
Suggested changes send to: <a href="#">DSS PSOA Mailbox</a>	Issued: August 4, 2021
References:	<b>Revisions in red</b>
	Replaces Issue: September 14, 2012

## **Preamble**

Child Welfare Policy and Procedure Guides are meant to be used as tools to relay best practice and staff expectations. It is understood that specific case scenarios may not always align themselves with the stated practices and that at all times what is of paramount importance is the Safety and Well-being of the children we are charged to protect.

## **Policy**

Department of Social Services (DSS) social work staff shall follow the procedures detailed in this Policy and Procedure Guide (PPG) when a paternity test is ordered by juvenile dependency court on behalf of a dependent child. This PPG describes the role and responsibilities of the case managing social worker (CM SW) and other designated staff in the process of requesting the paternity test, notification to required parties and documentation of the test results.

## **Purpose**

To inform DSS Child Welfare social work staff of the procedure for the request, notification and documentation of paternity tests in a timely and accurate manner to avoid any delays in the court process or delays in a child's services, placement or permanency.

## **Procedure**

When the case managing social worker (CM SW) receives a court order indicating that the court has ordered a paternity test the CM SW shall complete a referral requesting a paternity test within 2 working days from the date that the orders are received.

## **Requests for DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid) Testing**

### *CM SW Responsibilities*

The CM SW shall complete the [DNA Test Request form](#) and email it to the [CWS DNA Requests mailbox](#). The CM SW shall ensure that the DNA Test Request form is completed with all of the following information:

- The case name and number;
- The name and date of birth of each person to be tested;
- The prisoner identification number of any incarcerated person;
- Each person's address, including the zip code
- For incarcerated fathers the CM SW shall enter the Scheduled Release Date, if known.
- **If the test is to be completed without the mother (motherless), the CM SW shall indicate this in the email.**

### *Responsibilities of Designated Paternity Test Staff*

- Upon receipt of the email request from the CM SW with all necessary information, paternity test staff shall access the **LabCorp IdentiLink** paternity test database and enter the required information. The anticipated release date of an inmate should be included in the area marked “Comments”.
- A copy of the court order authorizing the test **is required** for incarcerated persons and shall be scanned and emailed along with the request.
- When all necessary information has been entered the request shall be submitted online.
- **To avoid conflicts regarding court ordered contacts or other problematic issues each party’s test shall be scheduled at different times.**
- Upon receipt of an email from **LabCorp** confirming the paternity test appointment staff shall email the confirmation to the CM SW along with the **DSS case number**.

### Notification

- As soon as possible to avoid unnecessary delay, the CM SW shall notify all parties of the test date, time and location.
- Parties to be notified are the minor’s care provider and the parent(s). Parents shall be notified using the address on the current, filed [JV-140](#), *Notification of Mailing Address*.
- Notification by mail is required and as a courtesy notice may also be made by telephone, wherever possible.
- **LabCorp** staff provides notification for all incarcerated persons.
- Tests are completed at the **nearest LabCorp location**. **LabCorp has four testing sites:**
  - 6101 N. Fresno Street, Suite 103, Fresno, CA 93710
  - 1350 O Street, Suite 101, Fresno, CA 93721
  - 1016 W. Shaw Avenue (inside Walgreens), Fresno, CA 93711
  - 2570 Jensen Avenue, Suite 115, Sanger CA 93657

### **Receipt of Test Results**

- Test results are usually received by DSS within 2-3 weeks. The results are sent **electronically** to the staff that requested the test

### **Documentation and Submission of Test Results**

- When the paternity test results are received the CM SW shall:

- Upload a copy of the test results in Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) using the naming convention, Paternity Test Rslts <date>, as specified on the Child Welfare [Purging and Scanning Guide](#).
- Document the test results in the narrative section of CWS/CMS.
- After the court order is received documenting that the judge has made a finding of paternity the CM SW shall enter all pertinent information in the Paternity Finding tab in CWS/CMS. (Client Management Section [Blue Section] - Open Existing Family Information Notebook – Paternity Finding Tab – select the ‘+’ and select the appropriate parent for whom the finding was made)
- The CM SW shall submit the test results in Discovery to all parties authorized to receive them and attach the test results to the appropriate court report.

**NOTE: Test results may be shared verbally with the parents prior to the court hearing. Hard copies of the results are not to be provided to the parent(s).**