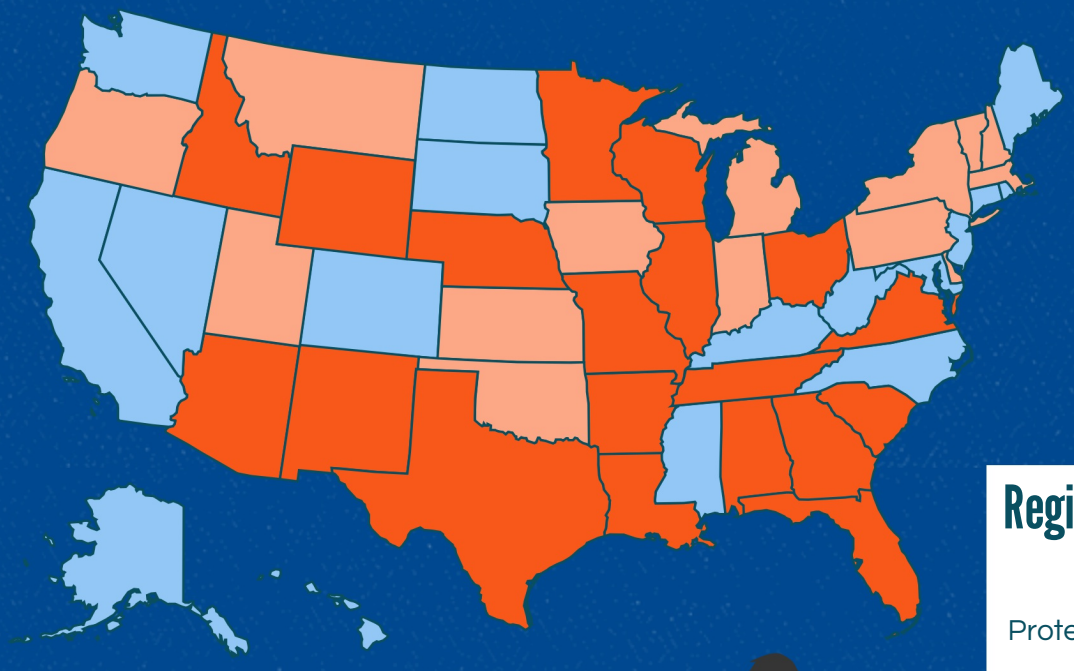
NATIONAL RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD REGISTRY

Responsible Fatherhood Registries – also known as putative father registries, paternity registries, or paternal claim registrars – allow an unwed biological father who registers in a timely manner to receive notice of any pending or future adoption proceedings involving his putative (or possible) child. Right now 32 states have them, and while we feel that state registries serve many important purposes, they only work within a state.

But adoptions often occur across state lines, and when to apply the rules of which state and how and where fathers should register can become quite confusing. A national registry would allow states to voluntarily participate, give fathers a place to register in every state, and provide professionals a mechanism to access more complete information from all participating states to ensure the best, most complete and ethical checks are done before children are placed with adoptive families.



States Without Registries

States With Registries

States With Online Registries

How Does it Work?

Exact rules and timelines vary by state but the essential concept is the same.

Any man who believes that he is the father of a child born out of wedlock can make a claim of paternity with the registry.

The alleged father can register at any time prior to the child's birth.

In most states it is free , but for a few there is an $8-15 fee.

Registries systems serve several purposes:

Protecting a biological father's parental rights

Providing greater stability for children by decreasing the likelihood of an adoption which may be contested or disrupted

Creating a system that balances responsibility between both biological parents, as expectant mothers are not given the full responsibility of notifying and seeking participation from expectant fathers

Providing extra assurance to adoptive parents that when a child is placed in their care, both biological parents have been allowed the opportunity to participate, to exercise their parental rights and make their preferences known.

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