



**Q:** Should paternity be established if the unmarried parents have an agreement and/or are in a relationship?

**A:** Yes. It is important to establish paternity as soon as possible for both the parents and the child. Relationships between two people can change over time.

**Q:** Will establishing paternity also establish custody and visitation?

**A:** No. Once CNCSS establishes paternity, parents will need to seek the advice of an attorney, mediator or court advocate to take the steps necessary to establish custody and visitation.

**Q:** Will establishing paternity also establish child support?

**A:** No. However, establishing paternity is required before child support can be ordered. CNCSS can establish child support at the same time as paternity at no cost to either parent. Also, child support does not have to be established if both parents agree.

**Q:** Who can apply for services with CNCSS?

**A:** Either mother or father can apply. However, if a parent is under the age of 18, the parents or legal guardians of the underage parent will need to apply for services. Once the minor parent turns 18, they can complete an application and take over the case.

For more information or to apply for services, call (866) 431-3419.  
Applications can also be downloaded at [Chickasaw.net/ChildSupport](http://Chickasaw.net/ChildSupport).

\* This document is intended to provide general information and not legal advice.\*

## *Chickasaw Nation* **CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES**



## *Information for* **Unmarried Parents**

**DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES**

*Chickasaw Nation Child Support Services (CNCSS)* helps applicants establish legal paternity through DNA testing. Here are some frequently asked questions about the benefits of establishing paternity:

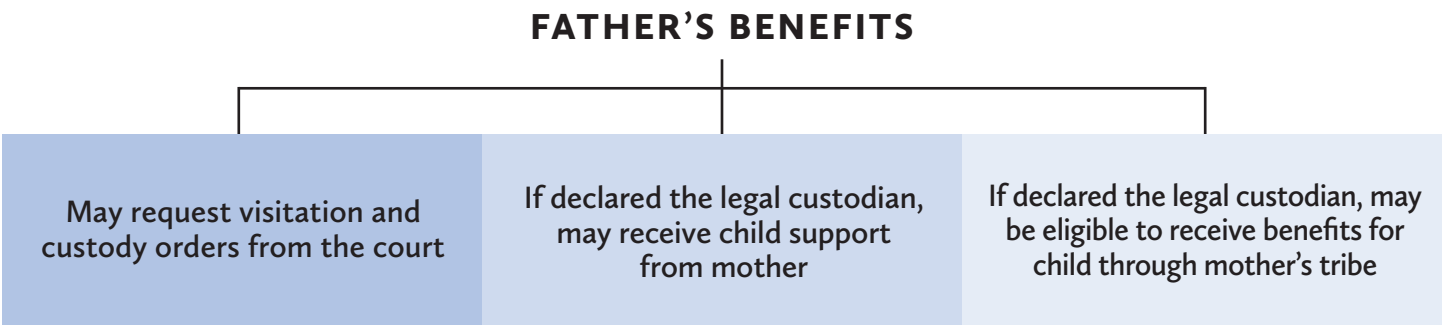
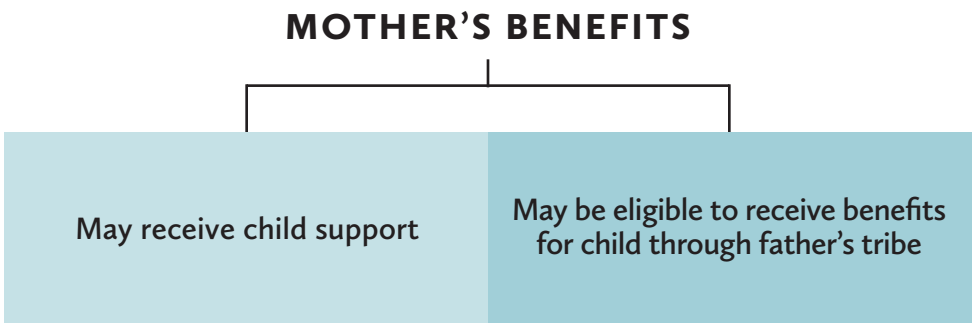
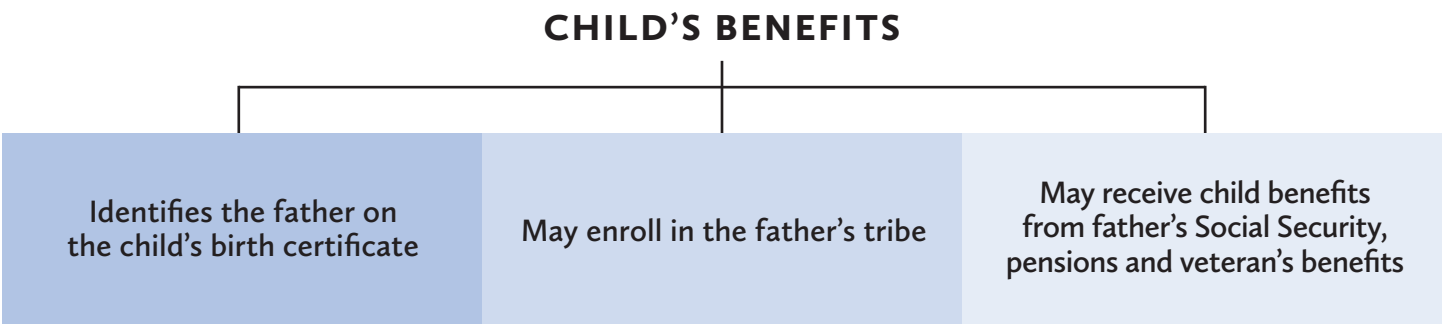
**Q:** What is paternity?

**A:** Paternity is the establishment of a legal relationship between a father and his child.

**Q:** What does it mean to establish paternity?

**A:** The process where an unmarried biological father is recognized as the legal father of the child.

*Why is establishing paternity important?*



**Q:** How is paternity established?

**A:** **Option 1 - Legal Process**  
Chickasaw Nation Child Support Services (CNCSS) conducts DNA testing and obtains a court order to determine the biological father, at no cost to the parents.

**Option 2 - Acknowledgment of Paternity**  
A form voluntarily signed by the parents (without DNA testing) that names the child’s father on the birth certificate. Once an Acknowledgment of Paternity has been signed, the ability of CNCSS to change the listed father is very limited.

**Q:** Do I have to sign an Acknowledgment of Paternity?

**A:** **No.** If there are any doubts about who the biological father is, the parents can contact CNCSS to request DNA testing and the legal establishment of paternity. CNCSS can perform DNA testing at no cost to either parent.

**Q:** How accurate are DNA tests?

**A:** Unlike over-the-counter DNA tests, CNCSS uses an accredited lab to obtain DNA results that are admissible in court.

**Q:** Who pays for the DNA tests?

**A:** CNCSS will pay the entire cost of DNA testing upon application for services.

**Q:** When can DNA testing be done and how long does it take to get the results?

**A:** CNCSS can do DNA testing as soon as the child is born and an application for services is received. Accommodations can be made if the parents prefer to test separately. Once everyone has submitted test samples, the results are usually available within three to five business days.

*When the DNA results come back:*

