



## How to apply for a correction to remove the wrong father's details

### 1. General Information

A paternity correction can only be made when it has been proven either by a DNA test or a court order that the man named on the certificate is not the natural father of the child.

A correction is made in the register held at the register office responsible for the area where the birth took place. However, all corrections involving paternity always need to be authorised by the General Register Office (GRO)

### 2. How do I apply for a correction?

You will need to complete an application form and take it or send it to the local register office for the area where the birth was registered. The application will then be referred to GRO. You can ring GRO on **0300 123 1837** who can advise which register office you should contact.

### 3. Is there a Fee?

There is a statutory fee for each application. The fee is £90.00 for any application requiring referral to GRO.

This is a consideration fee and, as such, is not refundable. The fee must be paid at the point of application. You should contact the register office before sending your application to ask them how they will take the fee.

### 4. Where can I get an application form?

- by downloading it from [www.gov.uk/correct-birth-registration/how-to-apply](http://www.gov.uk/correct-birth-registration/how-to-apply)
- your local register office may be able to supply you with one
- you can get one from GRO by ringing **0300 123 1837**

### 5. Who can apply for a correction?

- the mother
- the natural father
- the man named on the birth certificate
- a person with legal responsibility for the child

You will need to supply a contact address for the mother, the man named on the certificate and the natural father (if he took part in the DNA tests). The form will need to be signed by all person(s) making the application.

### 6. Do I need to prove that the birth certificate is wrong?

You will need to prove that the man currently named on the certificate is not the natural father of the child. You will have to produce a recognised DNA test report or a court order which either excludes the man

named of the certificate from paternity or confirms the name of the true biological father. You should also send a copy of the child's birth certificate with your application.

### **7. Are all DNA test results accepted as evidence?**

Only certain types of DNA tests are acceptable. Tests shown as being for 'peace of mind' or 'not suitable for legal purposes' cannot be accepted. Only DNA tests where the identities of the persons tested have been established can be used to support a correction. A list of approved testers can be found at:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/courts/paternity-testing/paternity-test>

### **8. Do I need to send in original documents?**

If sending the application in the post and paying for the service over the phone do not send original documents with your application form. You should only send photocopies of documents which have been certified by a professional person or reputable person as true copies of the original. We are not able to accept photographs of documents. A list giving examples of the type of person that would be suitable can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/countersigning-passport-applications>

The person certifying the photocopies must not be related by birth or marriage/civil partnership to the applicant(s), be in a personal relationship with them or live at the same address. The certifier should:

- include the words - "*Certified to be a true copy of the original seen by me*"
- sign the photocopy
- print their name
- confirm their occupation
- add their address and telephone number

If you are taking the application to a Register Office and paying in person then the Register Office should be able to certify your documents as a true copy of the original which means you can retain your original documentation.

GRO or the local registration service reserves the right to ask you to submit the original document if needed.

GRO will confidentially destroy all certified copies submitted here **unless** specifically asked to return them.

### **9. What does a correction look like?**

The original information will always be shown as it was first given at the time of the registration, but a note will be written in the margin of the register explaining the details of the named man should not have been recorded and the date on which the correction was made. The correction will **not** put the true father's details into the birth entry, for this to take place the birth will need to be re-registered (see Section 13).

All certificates issued after the correction will include this note. This is because birth certificates must show the same information as the birth entry.

### **10. Can I change the child's surname as part of the correction?**

No. Only information found to be wrong can be corrected in a birth entry. For this reason, the child's surname cannot be changed as this was the surname in which it was intended to bring the child up.

## 11. Do I have to be there when the registration is corrected?

No. A correction can only be made if statutory declarations about the error are made by two people with knowledge of the facts. A statutory declaration is a legal statement made before a solicitor or some other person who is legally able to witness an oath. The people who would be considered acceptable to make a statutory declaration would be :

- the mother
- the named man
- the natural father, if he took part in the DNA tests and was proven to be the father
- the DNA tester (it is likely the DNA tester will charge a fee for this service)

GRO will provide statutory declaration forms and instructions for making them after acceptable evidence has been provided and once it is clear who will make them.

## 12. How long does a correction take?

If there are no problems with your application, you can expect to be contacted within **25 working days**. If we ask you for more information or you need to send in more paperwork, each further reply may take up to **25 working days**.

However, in exceptional circumstances, it may not always be possible to meet these targets.

## 13. Can the natural father be put in the birth entry?

After the correction has been made, the mother and the true father can apply together to register the birth again. This re-registration will then show the true father's details. More information on re-registrations can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/adding-fathers-name-birth-certificate>

## 14. Where can I find out more?

You can contact the register office in the area where the person was born. They will be happy to explain what you need to do.

Alternatively, you can telephone GRO who will advise you on your individual circumstances and how to apply for a correction. Our contact details are:

**Address:** GRO Casework Team, PO Box 476, Southport, PR8 2WJ

**Phone:** 0300 123 1837

**E-mail:** [GROcasework@gro.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:GROcasework@gro.gsi.gov.uk)

**Internet:** Go to <https://www.gov.uk/correct-birth-registration/how-to-apply> to find forms for downloading.

The information contained in this leaflet is based on the **Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953** but is not a full statement of the law.

*For the purpose of detecting and preventing crime, information relating to an application may be shared and verified with other government departments or law enforcement agencies*

*The General Register Office is part of Her Majesty's Passport Office.*