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In law, Paternity is the legal acknowledgement of the parental relationship between a man and a child. Under common law, the child born by the wife during a marriage is presumed to be the child of the husband and he gains complete paternal rights and duties to the child. This presumption, however could be rebutted by evidence to the contrary, and also if the child was born before the marriage or as a result of a extramarital relations.

When the paternity is under question, the mother of the child could demand legal proceedings to determine the paternity among one or several possible fathers. Then the court order is based upon sworn statements, testimony and other evidence and is assigning paternity rights to a specific man which include child support duties and possibly visitation. In some jurisdictions if a man is being acknowledged as the father of a child, it is possible the court to grant him the right of directly participating in the upbringing of the child.

State law requires that the parents file a Parenting Plan to their district court, in which they have to outline how exactly they are going to share the parental responsibilities such as: decision making, parenting time or visitation, medical, insurance, etc.