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Attorney Jana R. Barnett represents clients in paternity claims.

Under Pennsylvania law, there are several presumptions concerning paternity. For example, a child conceived during a marriage is presumed to be a child of the husband and wife, because the public policy is to preserve families. The man named on a birth certificate is presumed to be the child's father.

The presumptions can be overcome under certain circumstances. However, determining who can challenge the presumptions, and the circumstances under which challenges will be considered, can be complicated.

It is important to understand a child support obligation is not necessarily based on paternity. Rather, the obligation to pay child support may be based on a parental relationship, *e.g.*, if a man allowed his name to be on the birth certificate, if he assumed roles of fatherhood, and if he had been supporting the child.

As of November 1, 2009, Orchard Cellmark has received the exclusive contact for Domestic Relations paternity testing throughout the Commonwealth. In order to establish the "chain of evidence," fingerprints and photographs will be taken at the same time as the DNA. If a person refuses to cooperate (by refusing to allow fingerprints, photographs and/or DNA to be taken), a Court is permitted to recommend a finding of paternity.

To read statutes and related materials, please visit www.janarbarnettesq.com

If you would like to speak with Attorney Jana R. Barnett about a paternity matter, and learn how she can assist you, call her at 610-478-1860, or click here to send her an e-mail, and she will reply as quickly as possible.

Attorney Jana R. Barnett's offices are located at 525 Kenhorst Boulevard, Reading, PA 19611 and 1238 Cleveland Avenue, Wyomissing, PA 19610-2102. Attorney Jana R. Barnett practices family law, employment law, and employment discrimination law in Reading, Wyomissing and the surrounding cities and towns, as well as in Berks County, Bucks County, Chester County, Delaware County, Lancaster County, Lehigh County, Montgomery County, Northampton County, Philadelphia County and in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and the United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.