

Acquisition of American Citizenship

The law on acquisition of American Citizenship varies if one or both biological parents are also Americans, and if the child is born in or out of wedlock. Here's how it works:

▶ **Child born abroad to two U.S. Citizens**

A child born outside of the United States or its outlying possessions to parents, both of whom are citizens of the United States, is entitled to citizenship provided one of the parents had, prior to the birth of the child, been resident in the United States or one of its outlying possessions. (No specific period of time is required.)

▶ **Child born abroad to one U.S. Citizen parent and one non-U.S. Citizen...**

...on or after November 14, 1986. A child born outside of the United States to one U.S. Citizen parent and one non-U.S. Citizen parent may be entitled to citizenship providing the U.S. Citizen parent had been physically present in the United States or one of its outlying possessions for five years, at least two years of which were after s/he reached the age of fourteen. This period of physical presence must have taken place prior to the birth of the child.

▶ **Child born out of wedlock to a U.S. Citizen mother**

A child born outside of the United States and out of wedlock to a U.S. Citizen mother is entitled to U.S. Citizenship providing the U.S. Citizen mother had been physically present in the United States for a continuous period of at least one year at some time prior to the birth of her child.

▶ **Child born out of wedlock to a U.S. Citizen father**

A child born outside of the United States to an U.S. Citizen father where there is no marriage to the non-American mother is entitled to U.S. Citizenship providing the American citizen father had been physically present in the United States for the period of time as specified in previous paragraphs for children born in wedlock to one U.S. Citizen and one non-U.S. Citizen parent.

The following conditions must also be fulfilled:

The father must sign a sworn statement agreeing to provide financial support for the child until s/he reaches the age of 18 years; and...

...the following conditions are met:

- ▶ the father provides a written statement acknowledging paternity;
- ▶ or the child is legitimated under local law;
- ▶ or paternity is established by a competent court before the child attains the age of 18 years;

All of these statements are made by the father using the Affidavit of Paternity form.