



Equality Illinois Applauds State's Recognition of Same-Sex Surrogate Parents

CHICAGO – [Equality Illinois](#) applauds a new state rule recognizing the rights of all same-sex couples to have their names on birth certificates if they are the intended parents of a baby through surrogacy.

In a letter sent to all the hospitals in the state that provide birthing services, Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck wrote, "From this point forward, all same-sex 'intended' parents that are not married or in a civil union will be recorded on the birth record, in the same manner that you currently record opposite-sex 'intended' parents."

Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois, the state's oldest, largest and most effective LGBT advocacy organization, applauded the department for recognizing the need for this change. "This is another step that recognizes the rights of same-sex couples in Illinois, who only want to build loving families and be treated the same as opposite-sex couples without legal or bureaucratic roadblocks," Cherkasov said . Before civil unions were legal in Illinois, the state forms were gender specific, and interpreted by the state as requiring a same-sex second parent to adopt the child. Even after civil unions became law in Illinois and birth certificates were changed to being gender-neutral, some same-sex "intended" parents in surrogacy births were denied the right to have both of their names on the birth documents, even though opposite sex couples who were not married had both of their names recorded. The new policy requires hospitals to record both parents' names.

State Rep. Sara Feigenholtz of Chicago, one of the state's leading advocates for fair adoption practices, joined Equality Illinois in lauding the Illinois Department of Public Health. "IDPH's decision affirms that families should not be treated differently just because of how they were formed," Rep. Feigenholtz said. "I am thrilled for this victory for same-sex parents and especially heartened by what this will mean for their children. A birth certificate represents the first chapter of our lives, and the significance and meaning of an accurate birth certificate that reflects one's origins cannot be underestimated."