

What is genetic testing?

The basis of genetic testing is relatively simple. A child receives one-half of his or her genetic markers from its mother and one-half of its genetic markers from its father. By matching the genetic markers of the mother and the child, a laboratory can determine which genetic markers the child received from the mother. It then attempts to match the remaining genetic markers of the child with the tested man or men. If the tested man has the required genetic information, he is a possible father. If he does not, he is not a possible father.

Why conduct genetic testing?

Genetic testing is a quick and painless way to establish paternity. It is especially useful if the mother or the alleged father have doubt about the paternity of the child.

How does the CSEA collect genetic samples?

A lab technician usually swabs the inner facial cheek. This procedure is painless and relatively non-intrusive. The Butler County CSEA currently contracts with DNA Diagnostics Center to collect and test genetic samples.

How do the genetic test results come back?

- The results may be 99 percent or higher. If the lab determines this, the CSEA will issue an administrative order of paternity and probably set the matter for an administrative support action. Ohio law requires a finding of 99 percent or higher to establish paternity.
- The test results may come back 0.00 percent, in which case the CSEA would issue an administrative order of non-paternity and close the case with that alleged father.
- The test results may come back inconclusive. This result is normally because one of the necessary parties did not submit a viable genetic sample due to a party's non-cooperation. The CSEA refers such matters for legal action.

How long does it take for genetic test results to come back?

Genetic tests usually take three to four weeks to complete once the lab tests the necessary parties.

What happens if the alleged or presumed father does not show up for genetic testing?

Assuming that the father received proper notification, the CSEA will issue an Administrative Order of Inconclusiveness, as the agency could not complete the paternity process administratively. The CSEA will then either close the case or refer it to the agency's legal unit, who will then take the matter to court for resolution of paternity, support, and related matters.

How long does the paternity establishment process take?

Once the agency receives a request from one of the parties or from the state of Ohio to establish paternity, the CSEA conducts an interview with the caretaker parent. The agency usually schedules the interview within one month. The letter setting this interview will ask the caretaker to bring in the child at this time and, if possible, the alleged or presumed father(s) so that the lab can collect genetic samples from any relevant party who appears (i.e., mother, child, and potential fathers). The CSEA will use this interview, which usually lasts 30 minutes to one hour, to obtain information regarding the case. Once the interview is complete, the investigator will refer this matter to the administrative hearings unit. This unit will order any party who did not appear for testing to appear. The results usually return within four weeks from the time the lab tested the parties.

What are the costs for genetic testing?

If the CSEA is working a case either administratively or judicially, the agency does NOT charge for genetic testing.