



Virginia Recognizes Top Ten Hospitals for Stellar Paternity Establishment Rates

Richmond, VA (August 4, 2022) – Each year, the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), in conjunction with [Veritas HHS](#) and the [Virginia Paternity Establishment Program](#) (VPEP), recognizes the top ten Virginia hospitals with the highest rates of paternity establishment. In 2021, more than 33,000 births in Virginia were to unmarried parents and the Commonwealth’s paternity establishment rate climbed from 73.64% in 2020 to 76%. The hospital achieving the highest rate in 2021 was [Bon Secours Memorial Regional Medical Center](#) (MCRC) in Richmond, which averaged a rate of 88.31%.

“We are so proud of this accomplishment for MRMC Birthplace and the hard work of our unit,” said Bon Secours MCRC Director of Women’s Health Services, Amy Daly. “We want to thank Connie Vaughan, Krystal Cobb, Sharica Kennedy, Jocy Vuiller, and Catherine Bowling for all their hard work. They work so hard every day and continue to be dedicated to our families by making sure they have the opportunity to establish paternity,” Daly added.

The VPEP offers unmarried parents the opportunity to establish paternity for newborn children. Establishing paternity not only affirms a father’s legal rights and responsibility, but it also ensures the child has greater access to emotional support and other social and economic opportunities. VPEP also supports paternity establishment should unmarried parents decide later that they would like to add the father to the birth certificate.

“Research strongly indicates that children whose fathers are involved throughout childhood have more positive outcomes - economically, academically, behaviorally, socially, and emotionally. The child also has the opportunity for an expanded family support system that includes the father and the father’s side of his or her family. Thanks to our partners in the birthing hospitals, at Vital Records, and Veritas HHS, children in Virginia have the benefits of paternity and fatherhood,” said Barbara Lacina, VDSS Division of Child Support Enforcement Director.

Beyond providing legal rights and connecting a child with the other half of their genetic medical history, establishing paternity also provides the child with a sense of identity that lets them know they are part of a family. It is known to promote a more stable father-child relationship and opens the door to the child gaining a wealth of other relatives including grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. These and other benefits of

paternity establishment give the child a stronger family foundation, supporting their healthy development and self-esteem.

Top Ten Virginia Hospitals by Paternity Establishment Rate

Hospital	PER (Paternity Establishment Rate)
Bon Secours Memorial Regional Medical Center	88.31%
Inova Loudoun Hospital, Lansdowne	85.00%
Lewis-Gale Hospital, Montgomery	83.06%
Stafford Hospital Center	83.05%
Inova Fair Oaks Hospital	82.11%
Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center	82.00%
Twin County Regional Hospital	81.82%
Inova Fairfax Hospital	81.79%
CJW Medical Center, Johnston-Willis Hospital	81.77%
Winchester Medical Center	81.66%

For more information on the benefits of establishing paternity in Virginia or to get started, visit the [Virginia Department of Social Services](#).

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About the Virginia Department of Social Services

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), one of the Commonwealth's largest government agencies, is comprised of approximately 2,000 state staff who proudly serve alongside more than 10,000 employees of 120 local departments of social services and community action agencies to deliver critical social services to Virginia's most vulnerable citizens. VDSS is committed to ensuring Virginians have access to the high-quality human services and resources needed to enhance their individual and collective well-being, and shape strong futures for themselves, their families and communities. The agency provides a wide range of services and resources in the areas of food and energy assistance, foster care and adoption, child support, and abuse and neglect prevention, among others. For more information, visit dss.virginia.gov.