Before You Leave the Hospital

Important information for new mothers

Please read this chapter before you go home. It explains important forms that you will need to fill out after your baby is born and other tasks you will need to do before leaving the hospital.

When will I go home?

- After a **vaginal birth**, most moms go home after 1 night in the hospital. If you give birth late at night or in the early hours of the morning, you may need to stay 2 nights.

- After a **Cesarean birth**, you will stay in the hospital 2 to 3 days. For example, if your surgery is Monday morning, you may be ready to go home Wednesday afternoon.

Please plan for your ride home before you come to the hospital.

Prescriptions

If your healthcare provider prescribes medicines for you to take at home, you can fill your prescriptions at your local pharmacy or at the UWMC pharmacy. The UWMC pharmacy accepts many prescription plans.

If a co-pay is needed, you can pay with cash, check, Visa, or MasterCard at the UWMC pharmacy. There are ATMs on the 1st and 3rd floors of the hospital.

Washington State Birth Filing Form

Before you go home, fill out the Washington State Birth Filing form, which is in the appendix in this book. This information is sent to the State of Washington Center for Health Statistics so that a birth certificate can be made for your baby.
Give this completed form to your nurse **before you leave the hospital.** If you do not fill out the whole form (for example, if you leave off the baby’s name), you may have to pay for updates and corrections.

**Birth Certificates**

The Center for Health Statistics in the Washington State Department of Health issues certified birth certificates. You can order a birth certificate in person, by phone, by mail, or online. UWMC will send you a copy of the “Order Form for a Certified Copy of a Birth Certificate” to help you.

Orders made in person will be processed right away. Orders by phone, mail, or online take about 1 to 2 weeks.

To request a birth certificate in King County:

- **In person:** Go to the King County Vital Statistics office, 908 Jefferson St., Seattle, WA 98104.
- **By phone:** Call 206.296.4769.
- **By mail:** Send your request to Vital Statistics, Box 359784, 325 Ninth Ave., Seattle, WA 98104-2499.
- **Online:** Go to [www.metrokc.gov/health](http://www.metrokc.gov/health).

For more information on costs, methods of payment, and Vital Statistics office hours, call 206.897.5100.

When you receive your baby’s birth certificate, put it in a safe place. It is an important legal document.

**Birth Verification Letter**

You will receive a Birth Verification Letter as short-term proof of your baby’s birth. You can have this letter sent to your home, or you can get it before you leave the hospital.

If you want to get a Birth Verification Letter before you leave the hospital, you or a family member can take your completed Washington State Birth Filing form to Admitting Registration on the 3rd floor of the hospital, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. They will give you your Birth Verification Letter.

You can use this letter in place of a birth certificate for 60 days after your baby is born. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) accepts an original Birth Verification Letter as proof of
If you get aid from DSHS, you need to tell DSHS about your baby’s birth.

Birth Verification Letters are available from the time of your baby’s birth until your baby is 60 days old. UWMC can give only one Birth Verification Letter to each family for their baby’s birth. We cannot replace a lost letter.

Baby’s Health Insurance

Please remember to call your health insurance company and have your baby added to your healthcare policy. You will need to give them:

- Your baby’s date of birth
- Your baby’s gender (male or female)
- A copy of your baby’s Birth Verification Letter (this is required for compliance and billing purposes)

Social Security Number

You will need to get a Social Security number for your baby. The easiest way to do this is to check the box that says, “Social Security Requested for Child” on the Washington State Birth Filing form. It will take 6 to 8 weeks for you to receive your baby’s number.

If you need a Social Security number sooner, you can go to any Social Security office. There is a list of local Social Security offices under “Federal Government” in the front sections of many phone books. You can also find the locations of Social Security offices online at https://secure.ssa.gov/apps6z/FOLO/fo001.jsp.

When you go to the Social Security office, you must bring:

- A certified copy of your baby’s birth certificate
- The Birth Verification Letter
- Your baby’s hospital identification (ID) band
- The name card from your baby’s hospital crib

Paternity Acknowledgement Form

If you are a single mother and want the name of your baby’s father on the birth certificate, both you and the baby’s father will need to fill out a “Paternity Acknowledgement” form within 10 days of your birth.
baby’s birth. Ask your nurse or social worker for information about this form.

The form must be signed by both you and the baby’s father in front of a notary. Both parents will need to show the notary current government-issued **photo identification**, such as a driver’s license, passport, or current state ID card.

To fill out the Paternity Acknowledgement form and make an appointment for free notary services, call 206.598.3478, or ask your nurse or social worker for help.

If you turn in the Paternity Acknowledgement form at UWMC’s Patient Data Services within 5 days of your baby’s birth, the hospital will send it and the information for the birth certificate to the Vital Statistics office. If you fill out the form more than 5 days after your baby’s birth, you must take it to the Vital Statistics office and pay a fee.

**Newspaper Birth Announcements**

To protect your privacy and your baby’s safety, UWMC does not give information about births to newspapers. If you decide to place a birth announcement, it should:

- **NEVER** include the family’s home address
- Use **ONLY** last names

**Footprints**

We will provide you with your baby’s footprints.

**Medical Records**

UWMC keeps a record of the healthcare services you and your baby receive while you are in the hospital. You may ask to see your record and request a copy by calling UW Medicine Release of Information at 206.744.9000.

We will not show your medical record to others unless you tell us to, or unless we are required by law to do so.

**Questions?**

Your questions are important. If you have questions about birth documents, talk with your nurse.

These UWMC numbers may also be helpful:

- UW Medicine Release of Information: 206.744.9000
- Notary Services: 206.598.3478
- Notary Services are also available at:
  - Registration: 206.598.4310
  - Social Work (for inpatients): 205.598.4349