What is Genetic Testing?
Genetic testing examines a person's genes. A child's paternity can be determined by looking at genes from both parents and the child.

What are genes?
Just like all humans have a unique set of fingerprints, they also have a unique set of genes. The material that makes up these genes is called DNA.

How can Genetic Testing tell us who a child's father is?
Children receive half of their genes from each parent. DNA is found within these genes. Therefore, the child's DNA will also be found in either the mother's or the father's DNA. Doctors can compare a child's DNA to his/her parents' DNA to determine if they are the biological parents.

When doctors look at the child's genes, they know which came from the father by ruling out those that came from the mother. So, if none of the child's genes match those from the man being tested, then he is not the child's biological father. However, if those genes match, then he is the child's biological father.

How accurate are the tests?
Genetic testing is very accurate. It can show with 100 percent certainty if the man being tested is not the biological father. And, it can tell with a high probability, usually 99.9 percent, if he is the biological father.

In Illinois, genetic tests must show that the alleged father is 500 times more likely than a random man of the same race to be the child's biological father. If the test results prove this, then he can be legally considered to be the father.

How is the testing done?
DNA is found almost everywhere in the body, so taking samples is fairly simple. Doctors can either swab the inside of a person's mouth to get a DNA sample or use a small blood sample (usually drawn from the arm). Samples are then sent to a laboratory for testing.

How can I get tested?
There are several ways to get a genetic testing appointment. If you receive child support services or wish to apply for services, a Child Support Enforcement staff member can make an appointment. Either parent can request testing. You can also ask a private attorney for help.

What should I bring to the test?
You should bring:
• A copy of the Administrative or court Order for paternity testing (you can get this either from the Department or a judge); and
• Two forms of identification; at least one should have your picture on it.

You might also be asked to sign a consent form. It allows the testing facility to test you and later give the test results to the Department. The Department will then let you and the other people tested know the results of the test.

What should I expect when I arrive for testing?
• The test will only take about 30 minutes. However, there might be many people waiting to be tested, so plan on spending extra time there.
• When you go in to be tested, you will sign a consent form.
• Staff will ask you a few questions and then take your picture and fingerprint to be sure the right person is being tested.
• The person conducting the test will explain what will happen, so there won't be any surprises.

Why is a Genetic Test important?
It helps to establish paternity for your child.
DNA TESTING FOR PATERNITY:

- **Reliable**: Tests results are reliable (99 percent and higher!)

- **Easy**: All it takes is a swabbing of the inside of the mouth or a blood sample

Why establish paternity?
You want your child to have the best possible future. Establishing a legal father-child relationship can help provide your child with many benefits:

- The right to know both parents
- Financial and emotional support from both parents
- Medical insurance, if available
- Social Security/Veteran/Union benefits, if appropriate
- Access to medical information
- Inheritance benefits

To apply for child support and paternity services, call:

Child Support Customer Service
Call Center

1-800-447-4278
TTY 1-800-526-5812