

## Information about Consenting Parent/Party

This information is provided to clarify who may sign paperwork and consent to evaluation and treatment for a child at Pediatric Specialists of Virginia. If you have any questions about this information, please contact your provider.

**Biological parent:** The biological parents are the child's natural mother and father, i.e., the woman who gave birth to the child, and the man who fathered the pregnancy. Biological parents may sign all paperwork on the child's behalf and may consent to evaluation and treatment unless a court has determined that the parent no longer has this right. By signing any paperwork at Pediatric Specialists of Virginia, the biological parent certifies that there has been no court action that would prevent them from doing so.

**Parent requesting accommodation of a divorce decree:** In an instance when the divorce decree changes either parent's rights to consent to a child's treatment, Pediatric Specialists of Virginia needs to have a copy of that court decree. It is important that you bring any required paperwork referenced above to the child's first appointment at Pediatric Specialists of Virginia to avoid the need to cancel appointments or procedures.

**Adoptive parent:** The adoptive parent is the parent who has been granted adoption of the child by court order.

**Foster parent:** The foster parent may or may not be able to sign paperwork for the child, depending on the state and county in which the child lives. If you are the child's foster parent, please contact the child's social worker to clarify what you are permitted to sign for and to request documentation from the social worker indicating this. You will be required to present paperwork

from the county establishing your ability to consent prior to the child being seen or treatment being given. Please also give the social worker's name and phone number to the child's provider so that we may contact the social worker directly if questions arise.

### A note to parents of adult children

At age 18, children become legally responsible for providing consent for all medical treatments. However, if you or your doctor feel that your child is not able to understand the risks and benefits of medical treatment and cannot make a informed medical decision, a legal guardian must be appointed for that purpose. To obtain legal guardianship over an adult child, parents must apply to probate court in the county where the child lives. For more information, please contact a lawyer or the probate court.

### Informed consent and advance directives

If you are an adult patient age 18 or older who has the ability to make an informed decision, you have the right to make your own medical treatment decisions. You also have the right to draft an advance directive giving instructions for health care when you are no longer able to participate in treatment decisions. For copies of advance directives, call Pediatric Specialists of Virginia at 571.766.3022 and select the option for the pre-operative nurse, or speak with your nurse or doctor.

**If these guidelines are not followed, your child's surgery will be delayed or canceled. We appreciate your attention to this important information.**