

CHECKLIST

Addressing Ethical Issues

Remember, the appointment creates the attorney-client relationship.

- Even if the father's whereabouts are unknown, you must make reasonable efforts to locate him.
- If your client's paternity has not been established, following his wishes, request paternity testing immediately.

Competently represent your father client.

- Consult an experienced lawyer to gain expertise if you are new to the field.
- Address critical legal needs of your client:
 - Establish paternity.
 - Determine the place, frequency, and need for supervision of visits.
 - Assess whether paternal relatives are capable of caring for the child if the father is unable.

Assess your options if you lose contact with your client. Consider:

- how much information you have gathered on the father's wishes before his absence;
- whether too much time has passed to determine if his previously expressed wishes are still accurate; and
- if circumstances have changed and you can't infer what his wishes may be.

**Avoid representing multiple fathers
or both parents in one case.**

- Dual representation may result in a conflict of interest and prevent you from zealously pursuing both clients' objectives simultaneously.

Download this and other checklists at www.fatherhoodqic.org/checklists

