

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
BY DEPUTY L.M.C. DOUBLET OF ST. SAVIOUR
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 10th FEBRUARY 2025
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 17th FEBRUARY 2025**

Question

“Will the Minister advise what plans exist, if any, to communicate the changes to legislation which will provide equal parental rights to same sex parents, and if there are no such plans, explain why not?”

Answer

The Children and Civil Status Law will benefit and improve the rights of same-sex parents, and those using certain fertility treatments. The provisions include a number of retrospective elements:

- to enable same-sex female couples to re-register their child’s birth to add the second parent’s name to the birth certificate; and
- to allow the Court in Jersey to make recognition orders for Jersey-born children, to retrospectively recognise parental orders already granted by courts in England or Wales.

I appreciate that families are waiting keenly for these changes. However, it is vital that our communications to the families who will benefit from these changes, and the wider community, are clear, well targeted, easily understandable, and provide certainty. This legislation is extremely complex and has been developed in several stages. At the moment, policy development work and law drafting is still ongoing to abolish the status of illegitimacy. I do not want communications to be unclear, set false expectations regarding dates, or cause upset or confusion. We will communicate with families and the community with certainty when there is a clear coming into force date via the Appointed Day Act, which will be brought before the States Assembly as soon as possible.

A communications plan has been developed in conjunction with stakeholder mapping, and this will be published alongside the Appointed Day Act. All relevant Heads of Communications have been briefed on the impact the legislation will have on their specific departments. Officers are working with departments and internal stakeholders to ensure that they are ready for the Children and Civil Status Law to come into force. This includes developing new processes, forms, and registers. Updates to the Government website and guidance documents are being identified. Poorly planned or piecemeal communications strategies are likely to result in conflicting information and cause further uncertainty for families.

I would encourage families with specific questions or concerns to contact me directly. My officers are always very happy to provide accurate updates or advice to families.