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Biology Not Required to Establish Parentage

BY MARIA L. ROCKWELL REMILLARD • OCTOBER 4, 2016

Today, in the landmark decision of [Partanen v. Gallagher](#), the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court held that a woman may establish herself as a child's presumptive parent even in the absence of a biological relationship with the child. [I previously wrote about](#) the history of the parties, their positions and oral arguments before the Court. To establish parentage, a person must demonstrate that the named child was born to two people who are not married to each other and that he or she, jointly with the other, received the child into their home and openly held the child as their own. Although the impact of this decision remains to be seen, the novelty of the issue at hand may result in it setting precedent for other courts across the country.