



1511 Fredericksburg Rd., San Antonio, Texas 78201  
(210) 227-2229 Fax: (210) 227-2241  
[www.adoptionangels.com](http://www.adoptionangels.com)

## **ADOPTIVE PARENT APPLICATION PACKET**

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## **The Step by Step Guide through the Adoption Process**

**Application:** We ask that you complete and submit the **Application to Adopt** so we may begin the process of accepting you as clients. At this time we ask that you provide the agency with the \$350 (non-refundable) Application Fee which can either be mailed in with your application or paid over the phone.

### **Documents to be included with your application:**

- Conviction Statement (pg.31)
- Pet vaccination (if applicable)
- Floor plans of your house with dimensions and diagramed fire evacuation plan with meeting place
- Photos of the outside play area to be used by the child
- Copies of your state driver's license/ID
- Copies of your social security cards (all family members and others over age 14 living in home)

Once we receive your application you will be notified. You must meet the eligibility requirements at time of application. A thorough background check will be done at this time.

***\*Adoption Angels reserves the right to decline applicants if they do not meet the agency's eligibility requirements. The agency will notify you in writing if your application is declined.***

**Initial acceptance:** Upon approval of your application and Texas background check clearance, you will be contacted regarding your "Initial Acceptance" as a client. At this time we will provide you with instructions on how to obtain FBI clearance, finger print cards (for out of state clients) along with the rest of the information, forms and documents that are needed to for you to become "parents in waiting".

**Home Study:** You will need to schedule a Home study if you have not already done so. Adoption Angels can provide Home Study services for our clients residing in our local area. If you live outside of the area, you must have your Home Study conducted by a person possessing the credentials and the qualifications required by the State of Texas licensing standards. If needed, we can provide referrals for a home study provider in your area.

A Home Study is an investigative evaluation of your family and home to determine your suitability for the special circumstances of bringing a child into your home through adoption. This is an excellent learning experience as it helps you to shape your expectations and preparedness for an adoptive placement.

**Adoptive Parent Profile:** Your adoptive parent profile consists of your Photo Book, Dear Birth Parent letter, and De-Identified Adoptive Parent Profile. This is one of the most important parts of your adoption pursuit, because the birth parent(s) use these to make their decision on who they want to adopt their child. The key to a good first impression is to present yourself genuinely with the goal of connecting with the birth parent(s) that are right for you. We know how wonderful you are and want our birth parents to know as well. So we are here to help you through this very important part of the adoption process. You will receive further instruction and examples of profiles once you are accepted as a client.



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**Parents in Waiting:** Once all of the following is received and approved you will be given full acceptance into the program as “Parents-in-Waiting:

- Home study
- Adoptive parent profile which consists of your photo books, Dear Birth Parent letter, and De-Identified Adoptive Parent Profile form
- Background clearances
- Required documents and agency forms (you will receive these once you become a client).
- Financial Agreement **NOTARIZED** (you will receive this once you become a client).
- Payment of Agency Fee and
- Payment of Gender Preference Fee (if applicable). Please refer to our fee policies on pg.25

You will receive your official “Parent in Waiting” letter along with your required adoption training topics and information.

**The Waiting process:** The average wait time is approximately 9 months to a year, but can happen at any time so you must be prepared and up to date on all documents. Adoption is a process with many factors and waiting is always one of the hardest parts. We are here to help you through this waiting period and keep in close contact with our clients to insure they are updated throughout the adoption process. To help increase your exposure to prospective birth parents, we have designed a “Parents in Waiting” web profile. An online profile is not required but it is safe and may reduce the waiting time to be matched.

During this time you will also be required to complete specific trainings. The required trainings are there to ensure the adoptive family is informed and prepared for their adoption journey and the demands of parenting. You are also required to take a CPR and first-aid class before placement can occur. You will receive further instruction on your required trainings once you are accepted as parent in waiting.

**The Selection process:** Your profile which consists of your Dear Birth Parent Letter, Photo Book, and the De-identified profile will be only shown to birth parent(s) whose profiles meet your preferences. Open-minded preferences improve your probability of being chosen sooner. We encourage you to really go over and discuss in detail the preferences that will fit into your families dynamic. We have put together a very detailed adoption preference sheet along with resources to help aid in your decision.

We accept expectant mothers on a case-by-case basis, usually after the first trimester of the pregnancy. A physician must verify a pregnancy test. Screening for drug use, STD, and HIV are also required by the Agency. The Birth Mother must be willing to go to all doctor's appointments and be cooperative with all requirements.



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**Committing to a case:** Once you are selected by a birth family, you will be contacted and sent a packet with all available information regarding the case. This packet consists of information given by the Birth Parent(s) that may contain the genetic, social and medical history, including possible genetic diseases, mental health and disorders of birth parents and their immediate and extended family members. It may also consist of available prenatal records, pictures, the Estimate of Expenses, and a Commitment Letter.

You will have three (3) days to review the information packet, ask questions, and make a decision. If you decide to commit to the birth parents, you will need to sign and return the Commitment Letter along with payment of the Estimate of Expenses which will be due in full.

**During the Match:** The caseworker meets with the Birth Mother on a weekly basis. We maintain close contact with you, apprising you of the Birth Mother's pre-natal progress and will alert you to any medical or psychological factors, as they become apparent. Contact with the Birth family can be arranged at a comfortable level for all involved. The Agency will also coordinate with you a communication plan that can involve phone calls and meetings. Once you are matched with a Birth Mother, contact with us and the Birth Parent(s), whether directly or indirectly is very crucial.

During this time, the caseworker will fill out a Cooperative Plan with the Birth Mother. The cooperative plan is a mutual agreement between both parties to facilitate communication in relation to the pregnancy term, birth, placement, and post placement relationship.

**Time of Delivery:** You will receive detailed instructions leading up to the delivery on how to prepare. You will refer to your cooperative plan in regards to what hospital your birth mother is delivering and what kind of contact she wants to have with you during this time. As soon as your birth mother contacts the agency that she is in labor you will be contacted to make your arrangements to get to the hospital, unless you have been given a c-sec or inducement date.

The caseworker will maintain ongoing contact with your birth mother during the 48 hours. She will be at the hospital as she is needed by the birth mother. This includes going to the hospital the day the baby is born to ensure everything is taken care of so you can visit with your baby.

**Relinquishment and Placement:** The caseworker will arrange a time for relinquishment with your birth mother. In Texas a birth mother cannot sign her legal paperwork until 48 hours after giving birth. Once the relinquishment is signed, placement can take place. The Director of Social Services will set up a time with you to complete placement paperwork.



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**Interstate Compact (ICPC):** If you are from out-of-state, you will need to make arrangements to stay in Texas until approval is received from your state. You cannot leave the State of Texas until you are informed by Adoption Angels that the Interstate Compact approval has been received which can take from 7 to 10 days after submission of documents which cannot occur until the child is discharged from the hospital.

All adoptive families are required to come to San Antonio for placement and finalization. We have established an excellent relationship with local hotel chains that provide our adoptive families with discounted rates. We will share this information with you when you are ready to make travel arrangements.

**Post-Placement:** When you adopt through the State of Texas the law requires there be a 6 month supervisory period before your adoption can be finalized. During this time you will meet with your home study provider for post-placement visits. 1<sup>st</sup> visit must be completed 30 days after placement & final visit must be completed 5 months after placement. You will also provide Adoption Angels with regular monthly reports along with physical examinations reports signed by a physician. The purpose of these reports is to keep Adoption Angels informed of the development, behavioral and medical changes in the child and how the family is adjusting.

Along with every monthly report you will send at least five (5) pictures of the child with a letter addressed to the Birth Parent(s) on the progress of the child for the purpose of being forwarded to the Birth Parents.

**Finalization:** Once Adoption Angels receives your 5th monthly report and final post-placement report, a court date can be set. **Be advised that all finalizations will take place in San Antonio, TX.** After the final court action, you will receive from the attorney a new birth certificate naming you as the child's parents. Be advised that this process takes approximately six (6) months for the Bureau of Vital Statistics to send the certificate.

**After Finalization:** You are asked to send to the agency at least five (5) photographs of the child and a letter describing the health, progress, special talents and hobbies of the child for the purpose of being forwarded to the birth parent(s). These will be sent on or near the child's birthday and Christmas (if child's birthday falls within 3 months of Christmas, you must send at birthday and mid-year) for at least five years, or if agreed upon with birth parent(s) till the age of 18.

You will refer back to your Cooperative Plan for what was agreed upon with your birth parent(s) on your relationship going forward. **The foundation of an adoption relationship is based on respect, honesty and trust. Please consider that if this contract is breached the long term affects it can have on the birth parent(s) and your child.**

*We truly appreciate your interest in our Adoption program*





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	His	Hers
Race/Ethnicity		
Religion		
Highest level of education		
Degrees earned		
Employer		
Occupation/Title		
Salary		
Other employer or sources of income		
Amount of other income		

**Financial Information**

Annual combined income from ALL sources: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Account Balances:

All Checking Accounts: \_\_\_\_\_

All Savings Accounts: \_\_\_\_\_

All Money Market Accounts: \_\_\_\_\_

All Retirement Plans: \_\_\_\_\_

Equity in Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Stocks, Bonds, Other Securities: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Real Estate: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Investments: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list below an alternative means for funding the costs of your adoption (loans, grants, ect.)

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**Employment History (last five years)**

Dates /places of employment starting with current <b>His:</b>	Dates /places of employment starting with current <b>Hers:</b>

**Marital Status**

{ } Married Date: \_\_\_\_\_ any separations? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

{ } Widowed Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Divorce(s): Date married/divorced (his): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date married/divorced (hers): \_\_\_\_\_

**Children**

Name/Sex                      Age/D.O.B                      Biological or Adopted                      Ethnicity

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**Residential History**  
 (List all residences for the past 10 years from most recent to the oldest)

Dates (Mo/Yr)/ Street, City, State, Zip <b>His:</b>	Dates (Mo/Yr)/ Street, City, State, Zip <b>Hers:</b>

**Other Household Members and/or Children over the age of 14 who are currently living in the home**

Full Name/Sex	Age/D.O.B	Relationship	Social Security #



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### Health and Insurance Information

	His	Hers
Overall health		
Height		
Weight		
Eye color		
Hair color		

Health Insurance Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of coverage: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of life insurance: His \_\_\_\_\_ Hers \_\_\_\_\_

Describe reasons for infertility:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe any substance abuse, alcoholism, mental disorder, and physical disability:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List any counseling experiences or support groups: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe preparation for adoption (reading, seminars, and groups):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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**Criminal/Parental record**

Has either applicant been arrested? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, give details (Date, nature of arrest, subsequent conviction; etc.):

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Convicted of a crime or misdemeanor? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, give details (Date, nature of arrest, subsequent conviction; etc.):

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Have you ever terminated your parental right for a biological or adopted child?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what were the circumstances regarding your termination? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever been investigated for child abuse or neglect? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, give details: \_\_\_\_\_

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Is there a history of abuse or neglect in your childhood?

(His) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

(Her) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, give details: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Family and Extended Family Data

Names of parents, ages, location, marital status:

His \_\_\_\_\_

Hers \_\_\_\_\_

Names of siblings, ages, location, marital status, children:

His \_\_\_\_\_

Hers \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your extended family's attitude toward your adopting: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a will?

His: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Her: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Full names, addresses, and telephone numbers of designated caretakers of child(ren) in the event of death: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

EMERGENCY CONTACTS:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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### Required Information

List your reasons for wanting to adopt: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are your feelings about your childhood and parents?  
His: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe your values, and practices regarding child discipline and care:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe your expectations of and plans for an adoptive child:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the importance of an adoptive child knowing he or she is adopted:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe your expectations about any on-going relationship with the birth family:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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Describe your feelings about different socioeconomic, cultural, or ethnic groups:

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Describe your ability to maintain the cultural or ethnic identity of a child from a different background:

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### Home Study Information

Do you currently have plans to complete your Home Study? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes, Agency or Social Worker's name and phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

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If No, Do you need a referral? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

### Feedback

How did you hear about Adoption Angels? \_\_\_\_\_

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Because we pride ourselves in being able to provide the best quality service to our parents, we welcome any comments and/or suggestions you may have. Thank you.

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### Adoption Preferences

Please give careful consideration when filling out this form. These adoption preferences are very important to the adoption process and are used to find the right match that will result in the well-being of all parties involved. We recommend you contact MotherToBaby North Texas. They provide free counseling for anyone concerned about teratogen (alcohol, drugs, smoking, ect.) exposures during pregnancy. Text questions to 855-565-3892, call 940-565-3892 or email lori.wolfe@unt.edu. We also suggest you visiting www.mothersbaby.org for further education and research.

Once we receive your application we will follow up with you on any questions or concerns you may have about your preferences. Open-minded preferences do improve the probability of being chosen sooner. We also understand that preferences can change over time so we will continue to discuss these during the waiting process.

#### Please check what you ARE opened to:

##### Gender of Child:

***\*Please note that if there is a gender preference it will require an additional \$3,000.00 non-refundable fee paid with your agency fee. See our Fee Policy pg. 25***

- No preference     Boy     Girl

##### Age of Child:

- Newborn     1-6 months     6-12 months  
 1-2 years     3- \_\_\_\_ years

##### Number of Children:

- Twins     Sibling group

##### Race of Child:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hispanic       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> African American           | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Native American            | <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian-Hispanic        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian-Asian            | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic-African American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian-African American | <input type="checkbox"/> African American-Asian    |

Other: \_\_\_\_\_



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**Level of Openness (after placement):**

- Open Adoption (phone, e-mail, social media, or in person contact)  
Explain in detail what you are open for in an Open Adoption:

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- Semi-Opened Adoption (Pictures & letters twice a year till the age of 18)

**Child Conceived as a Result of:**

- Rape  Incest

**Birth Mother’s drug exposure during pregnancy:**

- Methadone treatment (treats opioid dependence/clinic regulated)

Limited, infrequent exposure during pregnancy:

- Cigarette smoking  Marijuana  Cocaine  Heroin
- Methamphetamine /Amphetamine  Benzodiazepine, non-prescription
- Narcotics/Painkillers  Alcohol  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Moderate exposure during pregnancy:

- Cigarette smoking  Marijuana  Cocaine  Heroin
- Methamphetamine /Amphetamine  Benzodiazepine, non-prescription
- Narcotics/Painkillers  Alcohol  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Heavy exposure during pregnancy:

- Cigarette smoking  Marijuana  Cocaine  Heroin
- Methamphetamine /Amphetamine  Benzodiazepine, non-prescription
- Narcotics/Painkillers  Alcohol  Other: \_\_\_\_\_





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**Heath History:**

Mental illness and medical conditions in birth parents:

- Clinical depression       Bipolar depression       Schizophrenia
- Hepatitis C                       HIV/AIDS                       Chromosome disorder

Please list any other mental illness or medical conditions you are unable to accept in birth parents: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mental illness and medical conditions in extended family:

- Clinical depression       Bipolar depression       Schizophrenia
- Hepatitis C                       HIV/AIDS                       Chromosome disorder

Please list any other mental illness or medical conditions you are unable to accept in extended family: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Conditions in Child:**

- Hearing impaired                       Visually Impaired                       Strabismus (eyes crossed)
- Large birth mark                       Cleft palate                       Club feet (feet turned in)
- Hepatitis B                       Heart defect                       Chromosome disorder
- Low birth weight      If checked, what is the lowest weight: \_\_\_\_\_ lbs.
- Premature birth      If checked, what is the earliest gestation: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks

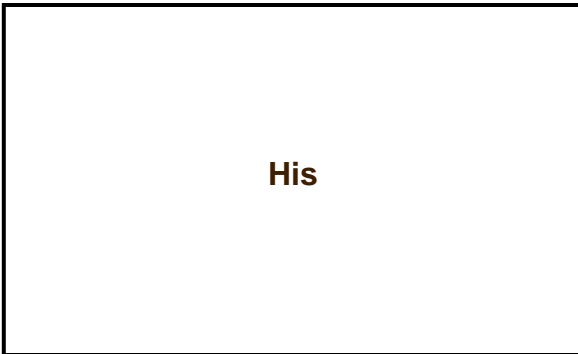
Please specify any other behavior, background, special needs status, or characteristics of a potential adoptive child that you cannot accept:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



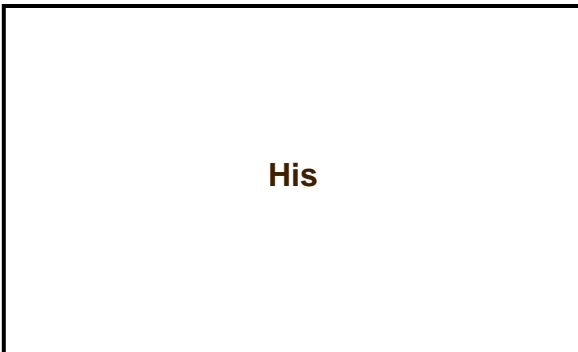
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We hereby certify that the above information is true, complete and accurate to the best of our knowledge. We understand that the information will be verified.

We understand and agree to abide by all policies and procedures set forth by Adoption Angels.

We understand and agree to abide by all rules and regulations of our home state, the birth state of the child and/or the state of placement.

We understand this application, if excepted will remain active for 3 months from the date the application fee was paid. If that time expires and you are still wanting to continue the adoption process you will have to re-submit your application and fee.

With this application we have included:

- Copies of driver's license/ID
- Copies of social security cards (all family members and others over age 14 living in home)
- Copy of current Pet vaccinations (if applicable)
- Floor plans of your house with dimensions and diagramed fire evacuation plan with meeting place
- Photos of the outside play area to be used by the child

**If this information is not attached, your application is considered incomplete.**

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Adoptive Father Date

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Adoptive Mother Date



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## **AGENCY SERVICES**

Adoption Angels is a full service child placing agency. We offer a knowledgeable, highly qualified staff that is ready to assist the needs of our clients at any time.

Adoption Angels serves Birth Mothers considering an adoption plan who establish proof of pregnancy; agree to HIV, STD, and drug screening; agree to meet all medical appointments; submit application for Medicaid, if necessary; agree to pre-placement counseling; and provide information requested in the Birth Mother packet. The Agency also serves Birth Fathers (if participating) who provide information for the Birth Father packet, consider pre-placement counseling, and consider signing a Waiver of Interest or Relinquishment. Adoption Angels can also serve newborns or older children that are in need of adoptive placement till the age of 10.

Adoption Angels offers a semi-open/ de-identified adoption plan whereby the Birth Parents select an adoptive family affiliated with the Agency. Any identifying information is removed and all correspondence is maintained through the agency. The prospective Adoptive Parents receive all available information that the Agency obtains from the Birth Parents and other viable sources. The Agency facilitates correspondence between Adoptive Parent(s) and Birth Parent(s) as is mutually desired.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:**

The Agency serves couples wanting to adopt who are emotionally stable; between the ages of 25 and 45; married a minimum of three years; who have a medical reason to adopt; and who are free of communicable disease and in sufficient good health to raise a child to adulthood. They must have sufficient financial resources and insurance coverage, living arrangements conducive to a child's needs, no criminal background without proof of rehabilitation, and no history of child abuse (physical or sexual). They must meet all eligibility criteria including a current home study or home study update and agree to participate in all pre-placement preparation. They must agree to post-placement supervision requirements.

## **COUNSELING:**

The Agency follows the definition put forth by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services as a procedure used by professionals from various disciplines in guiding individuals, families, groups and communities by such activities as giving advice, delineating alternatives, helping to articulate goals, and providing needed information. Only Child-Placing staff will provide this type of counseling to Agency clients. The Agency can offer to make referrals for psychotherapeutic-type counseling requiring insight into life's systemic causes or other related counseling if the client identifies this need and requests a referral. Depending on the financial resources of the client, counseling centers or professionals providing sliding scale fees (i.e. United Way agencies, Church Centers) can be offered as referrals to Birth Parents, Adoptee and Adoptive Parents at the client's own cost.



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### **SERVICES FOR PROSPECTIVE ADOPTIVE PARENTS INCLUDE:**

- Eligibility screening and child-placing decisions for acceptance into program, completion of forms, and verification of qualifications.
- Home Study service or agency referrals along with Home Study report and post-placement supervision.
- Counseling to prospective adoptive couples concerning their decision to adopt, assistance in the steps to adopt, and available resources. Counseling offered to the adoptive family (face-to-face or by telephone) regarding adoption-related issues from the inquiry phase through the post-adoption period.
- Adoptive Parent profile preparation and guidance, including a Custom Photo Book service.
- Discussion and development of trainings needed for Adoptive Parents related to adoption issues and parenting preparation.
- Ongoing contact through the entire process, including updates, feedback and progress.
- Counseling and ongoing contact with you during the commitment and matched process. Informing you of the prenatal care that your birth mother is receiving along with updates on any developments in your case, and facilitation of involvement with the Birth Family.
- Submission of documentation for Interstate Compact on Placement of Child along with preparation (ICPC), along with filing and processing of legal documents, and court appearances involving the termination of parental rights and finalization.
- Supervision of adoptive placement at least six (6) full months until the adoption is finalized. The Agency has the right to extend the post-placement supervisory period for any reason that a Child Placing staff deems appropriate, such as, the Adoptive Parents liability to submit the required reports and pictures.



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### **SERVICES FOR BIRTH PARENTS INCLUDE:**

- Counseling to consider their options to parent, place their child(ren) in temporary substitute care, place with relatives, or relinquish their child(ren) for adoptive placement, with consideration given to implications of each option included in this counseling.
- Inquiry, Intake, forms completion, service plans, needs and financial assistance based upon a needs assessment for subsisting expenses such as rent, utilities, groceries, and maternity clothes, as well as medical care and transportation related to the pregnancy.
- Support and counseling to Birth parents who choose adoption as an alternative; however, should they decide not to place for adoption at any point in the adoption process, the Agency supports that decision and will not pressure the Birth parents. At that point, the Agency no longer provides support for adoption-related expenses, including financial assistance to the Birth parents.
- Counseling related to the decision to place their child for adoption is offered face-to-face at least once a week and/or on the telephone to Birth parents during the placement process and up to 6 weeks post-partum. After consummation of the adoption, counseling or offered referrals to Birth parents are available upon request indefinitely.
- Counseling involving a description of legal documents as defined in the Texas Family Code in regard to the Mother's Irrevocable Affidavit of Relinquishment of Parental Rights to licensed Child Placing Agency, 48 hour waiting period before relinquishment, Affidavit of Status, Husband's Acknowledgment Receipt, Birth Father's Affidavit of Relinquishment and/or Affidavit of Waiver of Interest in a Child, Definitions of Presumed Father, designating a father of a child as unknown, adoption registries, and related rights and responsibilities.



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### **CHILDREN IN NEED OF ADOPTIVE HOME PLACEMENT INCLUDE:**

- An assessment of child(ren)'s needs for services while in placement and the development of strategies with periodic evaluation for addressing the needs.
- Substitute care when an adoptive home is not immediately available. This includes an active service plan and Agency supervision.
- Placement pursuant to adoption with potential adoptive families who meet the agency's criteria and who demonstrate competence in meeting the child(ren)'s needs.
- Placement into adoptive homes based upon the best interest of the child(ren) rather than race or ethnicity of the child(ren) and the adoptive parent.
- Counseling (face-to-face or by telephone), or referrals offered for Adoptee or older children for the remainder of their lives regarding adoption-related issues.

### **POST ADOPTION SERVICES INCLUDE:**

- The Agency facilitates correspondence through pictures and letters between Adoptive Parents, Birth Parents, and Adoptee.
- Provided that the Agency is kept informed of the Birth Parents whereabouts, the Agency forwards information about developing genetic conditions, terminal illness, or death of the child if the Birth Parent indicated in the Intake or subsequent interviews/counseling to be contacted. This information and the attempts to inform are documented in the case record.
- The Agency maintains information about the adopted child. Any significant information concerning the child, such as medical or genetic data that impacts the child's future, given to the Agency by the Birth family, is routed to the adoptive family. The Agency makes all effort to contact the adoptive family; if the family cannot be located at the last known address then this is documented in the case record.
- The Agency provides a de-identified copy or summary of the adoptive record to the Adoptee upon request, including the county and court of jurisdiction for the adoption. If the Adoptee is younger than 18 years of age, the request must come from the written consent of the Adoptive Parents or managing conservator.



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## **TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES INCLUDE:**

You must educate yourselves in regards to adoption issues. You are required to receive training on specific topics that include Bonding, Parenting Issues, Separation and Loss, Transcultural Families, Exposures, and other related topics that will be beneficial to your adoption experience. The intent of required training is to ensure the adoptive family is informed and prepared for the demands of parenting and to get a better understanding of adoption as a whole.

Once you become Parents in waiting, you will receive the list of required trainings that must be covered before time of placement. We will also discuss with you any other specific training that you may need. You are required to write at least two paragraphs of what you've learned after reading or attending that training.

You may also receive trainings from other sources and we will verify the training by evaluating the books, articles, or seminars that are related to required adoption topics. Some Adoptive Parents find that joining an Adoption Support Group is helpful and informative.

You are also required to take a CPR and first-aid class before placement can occur. All caregivers must be certified in: 1) First-aid, with rescue breathing and choking; and 2) CPR for infants, children and adults. The following may provide these certifications: The American Red Cross, American Heart Assn., or a training program that has been approved by the local Emergency Medical Services Auth., or is offered through a local hospital. **\*You may NOT obtain first-aid or CPR certification through on-line or self-instructional training.**





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## **FEE POLICY**

### **Adoption Fees/Description of Services/Fee Schedule:**

- **\$350.00 Application Fee\*** Submitted with the Application Packet. This fee is expended for costs associated with written materials, postage, and telephone, staff resources in reviewing, evaluating, and making decisions regarding the application and processing tasks. ***Non-refundable/ Non-transferable.***  
***\*Applications are only good for 3 months. If that time has expired you will have to resubmit your Application fee.***
- **\$1,200.00 Home Study Fee\* (For Texas residents. Out-of-state must inquire with a social worker in your area for fee amount.)**  
Due at the time it is conducted by Agency staff. The Home Study will consist of two face to face visits. The fee covers: individual and joint/family interviews with adoptive applicants, at least one interview with each child and anyone living with applicants, at least one home visit with all parties present, and with each adult child no longer living with applicants. Payments of this fee do not guarantee approval of a family for adoption or placement of a child. ***Non-refundable.***  
***\*Home Studies expire in one year and must stay current up until placement.***
- **\$600.00 Home Study Update Fee\*** Applicable if Home Study expires or if there is a significant change such as relocating or a change in family composition.  
***\*Home Study Updates continue yearly until placement.***
- **\$20,000.00 Agency Fee** is payable upon the signing of the Financial Agreement. Services include linking the Birth Parents with the Adoptive Parents; Birth/Adoptive Parent counseling; developing, maintaining and reviewing adoption service plan; preparing Birth Parent, child, and Adoptive Family for adoption; conducting pre-consummation activities; providing post-adoption services; staff resources; and administrative overhead expenditures associated with rent, utilities, salaries, insurance, and office supplies. ***Non-refundable/ Non-transferable.***
- **\$3000.00 Gender Preference Fee** (if applicable) this fee is required if you have a gender preference. This fee must be paid before you can become Parents in Waiting. Please understand that if you have a gender preference it is highly likely your wait time will be longer than average. This is due to the fact that most birth mothers are shown profiles before they know the gender of the child. Your profile will **Only** be shown to those birth mothers who have proof of your gender preference. ***Non-refundable.***



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- **\$375.00 Custom Adoption Photo Album Service Fee** (if applicable) Our professionally trained marketing specialist will create a one of a kind photo album unique only to you. This includes the content, photo, text suggestions/editing, and creation of a 20 page hardcover photo album with copy, printed, bound and sent directly to our agency.

- **\$3,500.00 Legal Fee** This will cover preparation, filing and processing of legal documents, and court appearances involving the termination of parental rights (Waiver Interest in a Child, Termination Decree, Relinquishment of Parental Rights, Citation by Publication, Affidavit of Status) and subsequent adoption (Birth Certificate request form, decree of adoption, waiver of managing conservator). The court filing fees, Attorney Ad Litem fees, service of process fee, newspaper publication fee are all included in legal fee. **Non-refundable.**

- **Post Placement Supervision Fee\*** (if applicable) there is a total of 5 post placement visits. 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Post Placement is conducted in **Agency Office**. The 5<sup>th</sup> and final Post Placement will be conducted in the **Home**.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Post Placement - \$300
- 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Post Placement - \$75 per visit
- 5<sup>th</sup> Post Placement- \$600

These fees are due upon receipt of monthly invoice. The fee covers an evaluation of the placement, a determination that the placement meets the child's best interest, an assessment of barriers to finalization, recommendations and a summary report, and preparation for court documents pursuant to adoption.

**Non-refundable.**

**\* Please note that the final post placement supervision meeting must be in the home.**

- **Other related expenses** (receipts of exact costs) Related to travel: mileage, lodging, and food expended by staff conducting supervision are payable upon receipt of submitted invoice to the Adoptive Parents. These expenses are not part of the home study fee and should be considered extra expenses. **Non-refundable.**

**We further understand that the finalization of the adoption does not relieve us of our financial responsibility for any and all expenses incurred by the Agency related to the Identified Adoption Plan.**

**RECEIPTS FOR ALL EXPENDITURES ARE PART OF THE ADOPTION RECORD.**



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### **Birth Mother's Estimate of Expenses (or Pass-Through Expenses):**

The Agency in no way persuades the Birth Parent(s) to make a decision to relinquish their child by offering any incentives. Certain expenditures are allowed on behalf of the Birth Parents after the Agency completes and documents a demonstrated reasonable financial need, based upon the average cost in the city of residence.

Existing living arrangements are not changed without documented substantiation that the health and/or safety of the Birth Mother and child are in danger.

Based upon need, the Agency can provide financial assistance to Birth Parent(s) from the intake date through the sixth week postpartum, and charge the Adoptive Parent(s) for the costs. These costs are **Non-refundable**. Vendors are paid directly by the Agency for rent, utilities, medical care, and legal fees.

The Agency also provides assistance to Birth Parent(s) for groceries, personal-grooming items, clothes, cleaning supplies, gasoline, and public transportation with signed receipt in exchange for the assistance. All expenditures are kept in the case record by category, date, amount, and description. Prospective Adoptive Families receive a documented Estimate of Birth Mother's Expenses (Pass-Through Expenses) before making a commitment for any placement. Estimated expenses exceeding 10% are documented by the Agency in writing and approved in writing by the Adoptive Parents. Birth mother's estimate of expenses is payable upon signing the Commitment letter.

The Agency does not pay for anything that was incurred prior to birth mother becoming a client nor does it seek re-payment from Birth Parent(s) for any expenses incurred on their behalf. Birth Mother expenses, for which the Agency has paid or must pay a vendor, cannot be waived.

We understand that in the event that we are matched with a Birth Mother, and have paid the Estimate of Expenses, if the Birth Mother decides to parent, or declines the original Adoption Plan, the **balance** of the Birth Mother expenses is **transferable** to another Adoption Plan. The specific amount for expenses incurred in the original plan will be subtracted. **The balance of the Birth Mother expenses and the Agency fees are transferable to your next case and NOT refundable. These amounts would be credited to another Adoption plan.**



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## **CLIENT RIGHTS**

Birth Parent and Adoptive Parent packets containing detailed information necessary to make viable decisions about the Agency services are provided to people interested in becoming clients. Child-placing staff is available before, during, and after placement, to ensure that clients have access to clarification concerning their role once becoming an Agency client. This includes the Client Rights and information regarding the process and procedures to appeal any Agency action and/or decision.

The Agency makes available for review upon request to clients or any interested person the Minimum Standard and Guidelines for Child-Placing Agencies, State Inspection reports, and the Agency's policies.

### **WRITTEN APPEAL PROCESS/PROCEDURE:**

A client of the Agency has the right to appeal decisions and actions that affect them. The process/procedure for a client in regard to all actions and decisions by the Agency that affect the client:

The client must first discuss with the Agency staff who took the action in dispute, in person or by telephone. If the Agency staff is unable to resolve the dispute, the client must write the appeal to the Director of the Agency within thirty (30) days.

The Director hears the appeal and makes a decision, based upon the best interest of the child(ren), the impact on the client, Agency policies, legal factors, state licensing standards, and financial implications for the Agency.

The Director provides to the client, by certified mail, the decision regarding disagree with the appeal and the basis of the decision within thirty (30) days of receiving the written appeal.

If the Director is the subject of the dispute, the Board of Directors convenes with the Director to hear it. If the Board of Directors is in conflict with the Director, the Director withdraws from the hearing, and the Board of Directors makes the appeal decision. The client is verbally informed of the Board of Directors' decision within thirty (30) days, as well as notification by certified mail.

Any client who believes the Agency has violated *Minimum Standards* may file a complaint with the Licensing Division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. You can make that report to 1-800-252-5400.



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## **AGENCY-ADOPTIVE FAMILY RELATIONSHIP RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The following is a statement of the rights and responsibilities of Adoption Angels and Adoptive Parents regarding the Agency/Adoptive Family relationships prior to finalization of the adoption.

1. Adoptive Parents have the right to privacy.

Adoption Angels will not provide information about the Adoptive Family without the family's verbal or written consent. With the family's consent, Adoption Angels will provide de-identified information to birth parents as part of the matching process.

2. Adoptive Parents have the right to state their preferences for an Adoptive Child.

Adoption Angels will place a child in accordance with the preferences listed on the application. If the Adoptive Family reconsiders its preferences, they must provide Adoption Angels a written statement to that effect.

3. Adoptive Parents have the right to state their preferences regarding the level of openness in the adoption process.

Adoption Angels will honor that request.

4. Adoptive Parents have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy.

Adoption Angels expects that all staff treat clients with dignity and respect at all times.

5. Adoptive parents have the right to seek their own legal counsel experienced in the field of adoption (excluding the finalization of the adoption). The Agency will provide follow up services to assure that the correct procedures are being maintained.

6. Adoption Angels has the responsibility of making a thorough study of all applications.

People wanting to adopt through Adoption Angels must agree to the study.

7. Adoption Angels has the responsibility of placing children into families who demonstrate the potential for loving, nurturing, and guiding a child.

People who want to adopt through Adoption Angels have the responsibility of supplying information and/or documents that support their request.



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8. Adoption Angels has the responsibility of making the final decision regarding to place or not to place with a family.

If a placement is not made, Adoptive Families may dispute that decision through the Adoption Angels appeal process. If an Adoptive Family chooses not go through with the placement of a child, the Director of Social Services will look at the reasoning behind their decision. He/She will then carefully review and decide whether the Agency will continue working with the family.

9. Adoptive Parents have the right to select their child's permanent name.
10. Adoption Angels has the responsibility of making or arranging for post-placement supervision until the adoption is finalized.

Adoptive Parents must cooperate with the supervision.

11. Adoption Angels has the responsibility of making a decision to finalize the adoption by the end of the sixth month or explaining the reason for the delay and involving the Adoptive Family in a plan that will facilitate adoption.
12. Adoption Angels has the right to remove a child from an adoptive home prior to finalization of the adoption.

Adoptive Parents have the right to know the reason for the removal. The procedure must begin by contacting the Social Worker who conducted the home study and determining the reason for the removal of the child. If the problem cannot be solved, the Director of Social Services will place the child with another Adoptive Family. If the Adoptive Family decides they do not want to go through with the placement, the Agency will locate another family for the child. The Agency will confer with the family that chose not to follow through with the placement. There will always be someone at the Agency who can answer any questions or concerns the adoptive parents may have.



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**CONVICTION STATEMENT**

***Please sign and return to the Agency.***

If you cannot sign this sworn statement honestly, please list all convictions and attach all records pertaining to the disposition of the charges.

We, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, hereby state that we have never been arrested or convicted of any crime, including child abuse or neglect, other than minor traffic violations. We understand that this includes arrests or convictions for any offenses in our state of \_\_\_\_\_, or any other state in the United States, any federal offenses or any conviction of a crime committed in a foreign country. Further, there are no charges pending against us for the commission of a criminal act.

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Adoptive Father

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Adoptive Mother

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



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## **Facts on Maternal Substance Abuse and other Factors Effecting Birth**

### **Facts about Birth Defects:**

The population background risk that any baby will be born with a birth defect is 3% to 5%. Of these babies, only 6 to 10 will have a birth defect that is associated with an exposure during pregnancy

### **Facts about Marijuana:**

1. No known birth defects
2. Heavy use can increase the risk of low birth weight and/or premature birth
3. Light to moderate use indicates no long-term effects on learning and mental ability
4. Temporary withdrawal at birth can occur with moderate to heavy use near term

### **Facts about Heroin:**

1. Most exposed fetuses will not be affected
2. Heavy use can cause birth defects
3. Moderate to heavy usage can increase the risk of low birth weight and/or premature birth
4. Moderate to heavy use can cause long-term, developmental delay and/or learning problems
5. Can lead to withdrawal in the newborn
6. Can be associated with decreased head size (not visibly noticeable)





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### **Facts about Cocaine:**

1. The popular perception is that any prenatal exposure to cocaine is almost certainly associated with devastating effects on the child. The truth actually is that at least 70% will not have any known effects.
2. Can cause miscarriage in the first trimester and still births later on
3. Does increase the risk for birth defects by 1 to 2% when used in the first trimester
4. Can cause the placenta to detach from the uterus, cutting off all blood to the fetus- this due to a gradual build-up of the drug in the placental wall, it will only build up to this point after 6<sup>th</sup> months
5. Can cause strokes in babies whose mothers use high doses at the end of pregnancy- placenta does not metabolize drug in the last month
6. Moderate to heavy usage can increase the risk of low birth weight and/or premature birth
7. If mother is using at the end of pregnancy it can cause withdrawal- baby is jittery and irritable up to one month
8. There is a risk for learning problems and can be as high as 30% with heavy use.

### **Facts about Methamphetamines and Amphetamines:**

1. Most exposed fetuses will not be affected
2. Heavy use does have a small increased risk for birth defects and miscarriage
3. Can be associated with increases in maternal blood pressure
4. Can be associated with low birth weight, especially among women who do not gain adequate weight
5. May be associated with premature birth, particularly if maternal high blood pressure is present
6. There is a 10% increased risk for learning problems with moderate to heavy use.



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### **Facts about Methadone:**

1. Methadone is mainly used in the treatment of opioid dependence. So most women are in a program and are taking prescribed dosages.
2. Oral doses of methadone can stabilize patients by mitigating opioid withdrawal syndrome. Higher doses of methadone can block the euphoric effects of heroin, morphine, and similar drugs. As a result, properly dosed methadone patients can reduce or stop altogether their use of these substances.
3. Baby may experience some side effects from methadone. The most common are smaller-than-normal head size, low birth weight, and withdrawal symptoms. As babies born dependent on methadone grow, they usually will fall in the normal range for size and development.
4. Pregnant women have been treated with methadone for more than 25 years and neither methadone nor other opiates have not been shown to directly cause birth defects.

### **Facts about Benzodiazepines:**

1. Benzodiazepines are a class of psychoactive drugs often used to treat depression, anxiety and panic disorders.
2. Specifically we are seeing the drug Xanax which has become a popular "party drug". It is being used recreationally, often times not being reported but showing up in the occasional drug test.
3. Most exposed fetuses will not be affected
4. Heavy use does have a small increased risk for birth defects
5. If mother is using near time of delivery it can cause withdrawal
6. Heavy use does have a small increased risk of low birth weight and/or premature birth
7. There is a small increased risk for learning problems with moderate to heavy use.



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## **Narcotics/Painkillers**

1. Narcotics/Painkillers are prescription opioids.
2. These to have become a popular “party drug” being used recreationally, but it can also become more addictive.
3. Most exposed fetuses will not be affected
4. Heavy use does have a small increased risk for birth defects
5. Some babies do have withdrawal signs. Depending on the length of time and amount used can influence the likelihood of withdrawal
6. There is a small increased risk for learning problems with moderate to heavy use.

## **Sexually Transmitted Diseases: All are treatable**

1. Chlamydia can cause premature birth- treatable
2. Ghonarrea can cause blindness in the baby- Silver Nitrate automatically put in baby’s eyes at birth to treat an outbreak during a vaginal birth- if known, the baby can be taken through cesarean
3. Syphillis can also cause blindness- treated with Silver Nitrate
4. Herpes can be transmitted to the child if there is an active outbreak during a vaginal birth- if known, the baby can be taken through cesarean section to avoid any risk of exposure

Sources: MotherToBaby North Texas, Lori Wolfe, Director, C.G.C Texas Teratogen Information Services  
lori.wolfe@unt.edu, Phone: 940-565-3892, Toll: 1-800-733-4727, Fax: 940-565-2222, MotherToBaby North Texas,  
[www.mothersbaby.org](http://www.mothersbaby.org), [pregnancyexperts@mothersbaby.org](mailto:pregnancyexperts@mothersbaby.org)