

# ADOPTION OPTIONS

A Directory of Adoption Agencies in Texas



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Prepared as a Public Service  
by the  
Texas Young Lawyers Association  
and distributed by the  
State Bar of Texas  
Revised 2010

This handbook is not a substitute for the advice of a lawyer,  
but is designed to inform Texas citizens of their  
rights and provide guidance in the area of  
adoptions in Texas.

Originally prepared with contributions from the  
Galveston County Young Lawyers Association

# ADOPTION OPTIONS

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## **Introduction**

There are a variety of ways for Texans to enlarge their families through adoption, including placement by the state through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, placement by a licensed agency, placement by the child's birth parents ("private adoption") and international adoption. This publication is intended to help those considering adoption make informed decisions by answering commonly asked questions and by providing a list of available resources. The information should not be substituted for the advice of an attorney.

### **"Open" and "Closed" Adoptions**

Depending on the type of adoption, adoptive parents can have some, little, or no contact with the birth parents. In a completely open adoption, the parents meet each other and participate in post-placement visits. Although the adoptive parents raise the child in an open adoption, the biological parents can continue to be a part of the child's life as the child grows. Closed adoptions, on the other hand, are completely anonymous, and most commonly take place through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. In a closed adoption, the parents never meet each other and the biological parents do not receive any information on the child after the adoption is complete. Both of these types of adoptions are rare. Most adoptions are considered "semi-open," meaning that the adoptive parents meet the birth mother (and in some instances the birth father) during the adoption process, and exchange pictures and letters as the child grows. Thereafter, it is ultimately up to the child and the adoptive parents as to whether the child will have any contact with the birth parents.

### **Texas Department of Family and Protective Services**

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) has a large listing of children available for adoption. These children have been removed from their parents or guardians for abuse and/or neglect, and many have behavioral, learning, medical, or psychological issues. Many of these children are not infants and come from mixed racial backgrounds. Many loving parents have found satisfying and fulfilling solutions to their quests for enlarged families through an adoption from DFPS.

Many families looking to provide a loving and caring home for a child choose to become foster parents. When a child has to be removed from his or her home and there is not an appropriate non-custodial parent, relative or close family friend willing and able to care for the child, the court will ask DFPS to place the child temporarily in a foster care family. Some families become foster parents prior to adopting their first child and will eventually adopt a child placed in their home. Other families choose to become foster parents after adopting a child through DFPS and finding it to be a rewarding and wonderful experience. For most children, foster care is a temporary situation until the child can be placed back into the child's original home or until an appropriate relative or close family friend can be located to permanently care for the child. However, in situations where final placement with a relative or

friend cannot be secured, foster care may become permanent for the child. In those situations, foster parents can choose to adopt a child placed in their home.

Becoming a foster parent requires that a person be trained and verified by Child Protective Services (CPS), licensed by DFPS' Office of Residential Child-Care Licensing (RCCL) or verified by an RCCL-licensed child-placing agency. Among other training requirements, CPS requires a 35 hour training program, a social study and certification in first aid and CPR.

When looking to adopt a child, it is always a good idea to start by contacting the adoption supervisor at your local DFPS office. For additional information, go to [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us) and select the adoptions and foster care link.

### **Private Adoptions**

Texas law states that a child may only be placed for adoption by a person who is a natural or adoptive parent of the child, a legal guardian of the child or a licensed child placing agency. Additionally, no person, other than a parent, legal guardian or licensed child placing agency, may act as an intermediary to identify the parties to an adoption to each other or facilitate the placement of the child. Consequently, private adoptions, wherein a child placing agency is not involved, cannot be completely confidential. If an adoptive couple has found a baby, they must deal with the birth mother directly and not through an intermediary.

The reason for the authorization of private adoptions, according to legislative history, is to allow a birth parent to have some say in choosing adoptive parents. For example, a family can collectively decide that the child's grandparents, or some other close family relative, will become the adoptive parents. Private adoptions are also allowed where the birth mother herself places the child for adoption with a non-family member.

Questions surrounding private adoptions often arise regarding the expense the proposed adoptive parents can legally pay. It is a crime in Texas to "buy" a baby or to pay money for *the placement* of a child. A birth mother cannot choose adoptive parents based upon which set of proposed adoptive parents presents the most attractive financial package (car, rent, or cash, for example). Proposed adoptive parents can only pay "reasonable medical, legal, and counseling expenses" related to the health of the child. Reasonable medical expenses include doctor's fees, prescriptions, etc. Paying questionable charges may subject both the adoptive and the birth parents to possible criminal charges.

As a general rule, pay the birth mother no money. You cannot give the birth mother a \$5,000 check and simply note on it "for medical expenses." Instead of giving money to the birth mother for medical expenses, pay the medical provider directly. Although you cannot legally pay an attorney for the placement of a child, you may pay reasonable attorneys fees relating to his or her preparation of documents and representation in proceedings to terminate the birth parents' rights to the child and in the adoption proceedings. Because the law contains unanswered questions, we

strongly recommend that you secure the legal help and advice of someone experienced with and knowledgeable about the adoption field.

## **International Adoption**

In an international adoption, the child being adopted is a foreign national and there are numerous complicated legal issues that must be considered and dealt with. We highly recommend you speak with an experienced international adoption agency and/or attorney before proceeding. There are a number of steps that must be carefully completed or you may not be able to bring the child home to the United States. First, not all countries allow American citizens to adopt. If you are interested in a particular country, you can check the U.S. State Department's website to see if an adoption is even possible for that country. There is a section in the State Department's website devoted to international adoption that contains a wealth of information: [http://travel.state.gov/family/adoption/adoption\\_485.html](http://travel.state.gov/family/adoption/adoption_485.html).

Next, you need to consider whether or not the child will be able to immigrate to the United States. At least one of the prospective adoptive parents must be a U.S. citizen. In order to obtain a visa and travel to the U.S., the adoptive child must either have been abandoned by both parents or the sole remaining parent must be unable to provide for the child and be willing to irrevocably release the child for emigration and adoption in writing. In the typical international adoption, you would seek "advance processing" to obtain pre-approval to adopt internationally before identifying a specific child. This process takes a number of months but is definitely worth the time and effort. Even if you have identified a child, the advance processing route may be the better choice for a smoother adoption and immigration.

Once you have been pre-approved, you (through an agency most likely) identify a specific child and travel to the foreign country. Each country has a different process and you should talk with your agency about the process in the country you are considering. Next, an Orphan Petition is filed to obtain the child's visa. In the majority of cases, the actual adoption takes place in the foreign country, and you will receive an IR3 visa for the child. The pre-approval can certainly expedite the "orphan investigation" and the visa process. Under the Child Citizenship Act of 2000, a child that enters the U.S. under an IR3 visa is automatically a United States citizen and a certificate of citizenship will be mailed to you. If the adoption will be completed in the United States, you will need to file for an IR4 visa and the child will not become a citizen until the adoption is finalized in the United States.

If the adoption took place in a foreign country, you may choose to have the foreign adoption recognized by the State of Texas upon your return to the U.S. with the child. This court proceeding results in a Texas order formally recognizing the foreign adoption and allows you to obtain a Texas birth certificate for the child. It also allows you to change the child's name, in the event the name change in the foreign country is incorrect or you have changed your mind. If for some reason the adopting parents have not both seen the child prior to the adoption proceeding or the actual adoption cannot occur in the foreign country, the adoption must be

finalized in Texas with the same formalities as a domestic final adoption (for example, you will be required to complete postplacement supervision that meets Texas requirements). After the Texas adoption (or “readoption”) is complete, you will be able to obtain a Texas birth certificate and also a certificate of U.S. citizenship. As with any adoption, legal counsel is invaluable when navigating the complexities of international adoption, particularly with the crucial immigration aspects involved.

## **Interstate Adoptions**

If the adoptive parents and the child reside in different states, they must comply with the Interstate Compact laws for placement of children. The Interstate Compact office of each state regulates the movement of children from state to state for purposes of adoption. Generally, both the sending state and the receiving state must approve the placement before the child can leave the sending state. Failure to comply with these laws before removing a child from Texas or bringing a child to Texas from another state is a criminal offense. Once again, seek legal counsel to ensure that requirements of the law are met.

## **Terminating Birth Parents’ Rights**

In order to begin the process of adopting a child, the rights of the biological parents must first be terminated in a separate legal proceeding. Only after the birth parents parental rights are terminated can the adoption be approved by the court. Birth parents, both father and mother, generally must sign forms (called “Relinquishment of Parental Rights”) indicating their desire to place a child for adoption before a court will terminate their rights to the child. This applies whether the adoption is private, through an agency, or through DFPS. During the termination process an attorney or guardian (called an amicus attorney or an ad litem in DFPS cases) is commonly appointed by the court to report on the best interests of the child.

If the location or identity of the birth father is unknown, he is nonetheless entitled to notice of the proceedings. You must show the court that you have diligently tried to find the father before the court will terminate his rights without his agreement or appearance in the proceedings. If a diligent effort has been made to locate the father and he could not be found, he can be served with notice of the termination proceeding by publication of notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the county. The court must approve service by publication and may require publication in the county of birth and/or the county of the birth father’s last known residence. The rules for notice by publication are complex and must be strictly followed. Notice by publication always leaves the door open for the birth father to challenge the adoption, so this avenue should be used only as a last resort to personal service and termination.

The birth mother’s relinquishment must be freely and voluntarily signed after the birth of the child and after she is free of the effects of any drugs or anesthesia agents incident to the birth. Furthermore, the mother’s relinquishment cannot be signed until the child is at least 48 hours old. In a private adoption, properly signed relinquishments generally cannot be revoked for 60 days. Within this 60-day period,

the court normally decides whether to terminate parental rights. A decision to terminate is, except in very unusual situations, permanent. In an agency adoption, the relinquishment is generally irrevocable once it is properly signed. Termination is the ending of legal rights and relationships that exist between the child and the biological parents. The steps for termination vary according to whether the termination involves a private adoption or an agency adoption. In the termination order, the court will appoint someone as Managing Conservator of the child. A Managing Conservator is responsible to the court for the welfare of the child until the adoption is finalized. The adoption agency, one or both adoptive parents, or the state (in DFPS cases) commonly become Managing Conservator(s).

Check with your hospital to determine its requirements regarding what paperwork must be completed prior to the child being released to the adoptive parents. Hospitals must, by statute, accept a Third Party Release and release the child to whomever the birthmother dictates.

### **Adoption Proceedings**

The courts, agencies, and DFPS require a pre-adoptive social study be performed in the home of adoptive parents prior to the placement of the child in the home. During this process, the evaluator will visit the home and interview the prospective adoptive parents. If one or both of the adoptive parents is in the military, that fact cannot be considered as a negative factor by either the evaluator or the court. The adoptive parents must also obtain a Texas Criminal History Report. Courts generally require that the child live in the home for six months before granting an adoption. During this time, a post-placement social study will be conducted to observe how the child is doing in the home. This six-month requirement can be waived only if the court finds “good cause.” Generally, this requirement is only waived in private adoptions (including step-parent adoptions) as most agencies will not agree to waiver. In all steps of this process, the court must consider the best interests of the child.

If the child is an American Indian child, stringent federal laws must be complied with if the child falls under the Indian Child Welfare Act. The Indian Child Welfare Act is very complicated and if you suspect the child may have an American Indian heritage, you will want to seek legal counsel to ensure the requirements of the act are met.

After the social study and all other pre-adoption requirements are completed, the final Order for Adoption must be signed by the judge. The law states that a final adoption is truly final. There is generally no way a properly handled adoption can be rescinded or revoked. On the day the Order is entered, the adoptive parents will appear in court, testify briefly in front of the judge and have the Judge sign and finalize the Order for Adoption. Although it is not required, unless the child is 12 years of age or older, the adopting parents will often bring their new son or daughter to court to have the adoption entered. This is a happy occasion for all and most Judges will allow the new family to take their picture with the Judge to memorialize the day when their child legally became part of the family!

**ABC ADOPTION AGENCY, INC.**

417 San Pedro Ave.  
San Antonio, Texas 78212  
(210) 227-7820  
(800) 986-5683

Contact Person: Michael Heim, Director

**Background:**

Agency licensed since 1986.

Most adoptions are infants, ages 6-18 months.

Average time from first contact and placement is 6-18 months. Placement of an infant of Hispanic ethnic heritage is 6-12 months.

**Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Birth mother preferences are considered regarding the adoptive family.

Date of application is taken into consideration.

**Qualifications and Restrictions for Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Adoptive parents may choose the sex of their child.

Adoptive parents must be in good spiritual, moral, physical and financial health.

Adoptive parents may adopt a second child.

Religious preference is by request of the birth parents.

Adoptive parents are strongly encouraged to share pictures of adoptive child.

**Cost to Adoptive Parents:**

Cost ranges from \$14,000 to \$30,000.

**Birth Mother Services:**

Agency provides living assistance (housing, utilities, groceries and clothing) for birth mothers based on need.

Medical aid is provided through appointments with obstetricians.

**ADOPTION ADVISORY INC.**

3607 Fairmount Street

Dallas, TX 75219

(214) 520-0004

(214) 522-3502 fax

[www.adoptadvisory.com](http://www.adoptadvisory.com)

Contact Person: Mark J. Siegel, President

**Other Offices:**

Houston: (713) 520-0004

San Antonio: (210) 820-0000

Toll Free Information Line: 1-800-588-5683

**Background:**

Licensed 20 years

Most adoptions are infants

Average of 3 to 5 months between first contact and placement.

**Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Birth parent and adoptive parents are assessed for preferences and then matched together.

No priority is given to any groups.

Parents must meet state standards.

**Qualifications and Restrictions:**

Adoptive parents can specify "desired" sex of a child.

**Costs:**

Costs range from \$11,000 - \$27,500

**ADOPTION CENTER OF EAST TEXAS (ACET),  
A BRANCH OF HOMES OF ST. MARK**

602 S. John Redditt Dr.  
Lufkin, TX 75904  
(936) 639-1741  
(800) 535-0375  
[www.spydrdesign.com/acet/](http://www.spydrdesign.com/acet/)

Contact Person: Larissa Parham, Director

**Background:**

A division of Homes of St. Mark, licensed in 1955.  
Domestic adoption of infants and older children.

**Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Agency practices open adoption for infants.  
Birth parents select adoptive parents from non-identifying information.  
Method of matching older children varies by state.

**Qualifications and Restrictions:**

No age, marital, or faith restrictions.

**Costs:**

Costs range from \$0 (through DFPS)-\$24,000.

**Birth Mother and Other Services:**

Agency provides counseling, medical, and housing assistance based on need.  
Lifetime of counseling for all parties provided.

## **ADOPTION SERVICES ASSOCIATION**

5370 Prue Road  
San Antonio, Texas 78240  
(210) 699-6094  
(800) 648-1807  
[www.adoptionservicesassociates.org](http://www.adoptionservicesassociates.org)

Contact Person: Ms. Linda Zuflacht, MSW, Executive Director

### **Background:**

Licensed since 1984.  
Places mostly infants.  
Average 18 months between first contact to placement of a child.

### **Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Physical matching is not important.  
Agency considers potential adoptive parents preferences.  
Agency considers the best interests of the child.  
Birth mother has input.  
There is no "top of the list".

### **Qualifications and Restrictions for Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Adoptive parents may not choose the sex of their child.  
Adoptive parents should be between the ages of 21 and 45, however, this requirement is waived under special circumstances.  
Adoptive parents must have been married for 3 years, be in good health, and have a high school education or the equivalent. These requirements may be waived under special circumstances.  
There are no geographical restrictions.  
There are no religious restrictions.  
Adoptive parents may adopt a second child.

### **Cost to Adoptive Parents:**

Cost ranges between \$15,000 and \$25,000, depending on actual costs of case.  
Cost is not based on income of adoptive parents.  
Reduced costs for special needs children.

### **Birth Mother Services:**

Agency provides help with rent, food, utilities, and transportation if needed.  
Private medical care is provided with a doctor of choice.  
Medicaid and insurance are used when possible.  
Agency provides counseling.

## **ALTERNATIVES IN MOTION & BLESSED TRINITY ADOPTIONS**

2509 FM 1960 East, Suite B

Houston, Texas 77073

(281) 821-6508

(800) 776-6508

[www.aimadoptions.org](http://www.aimadoptions.org)

Contact Person: Ms. Jan Deets, Director

### **Background:**

Licensed since 1984.

Most adoptions are infants.

Average time between orientation and placement of a child is 6-12 months.

### **Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Birth mother participates in selection of adoptive parents.

There is no waiting list to which an adoptive couple rises, the choice is made together by reading letters.

Birth parents work with social worker in selection.

Adoptions can be open or closed at the discretion of the birth mother.

### **Qualifications and Restrictions for Potential Adoptive Parents:**

There are no age restrictions.

Adoptive couples must be open to adoption issues.

Adoptive parents may adopt a second child.

There are no geographic restrictions, but Texas families have priority.

Must be a Christian family

### **Cost to Adoptive Parents:**

Costs range from \$10,000-\$30,000.

Will not provide for cost pay out.

### **Birth Mother Services:**

Agency has private apartments for birth mothers and foster homes (shepherding homes).

Medical care is provided by private hospitals and public health care facilities.

Agency offers 24 hour support system plus group and individual counseling.

Transportation to doctors appointments is provided.

**BUCKNER ADOPTION AND MATERNITY SERVICE, INC.**

5200 S. Buckner Blvd.

Dallas, Texas 75227

1-866-236-7823

fax: 214-319-3470

[www.bucknerinternationaladoption.org](http://www.bucknerinternationaladoption.org)

Contact Person: JoAnn Cole, Director

**Background:**

Licensed since 1995.

Domestic and International Adoption (Russia, Guatemala, Ukraine, and China).

Average of 18 months to 2 years between first contact and placement of child.

**Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Buckner has personal working relationships with numerous orphanages.

Legally available children are identified after the adoptive family's approved child preference is submitted.

Works with foster care and foster-to-adopt placements. Has offices in numerous Texas locations for foster services.

**Qualifications and Restrictions:**

Couples and single female applicants must be at least 25 years old.

Couples must have been married at least one year, two years if there has been a previous marriage.

Applicants must be Christian and active members of a church.

**Costs:**

Costs range from \$25,000-\$30,000.

## **CHRISTIAN HOMES & FAMILY SERVICES**

PO Box 270

Abilene, TX 79604

(325) 677-2205

(800) 592-4725

[www.christianhomes.com](http://www.christianhomes.com)

Offices in Dallas/Ft. Worth, Abilene and Tyler

Contact Person: Angie Robinson, Intake Coordinator

### **Background:**

Licensed since 1962.

Most adoptions are infants.

Average of 18 months between entering program and placement of the child.

New parent counseling is provided.

### **Eligibility Requirements for Adopting Couples:**

Married at least 2 years\*

Be of the Christian faith and both active members of the same church, where both of you attend weekly

Be at least 21 years old

Be able to meet the financial expenses of the adoptive placement and support the child

Have not declared bankruptcy in the last 24 months

Have a normal life expectancy

Applicants must be willing to meet birth parents requests regarding openness in adoption.

\*If it is the second marriage for either party, you and your spouse must be married at least three years. If it is the third marriage for either party, you and your spouse must be married at least five years.

### **Cost to Adoptive Families:**

\$14,500-\$36,985

### **Birth Mother Services:**

Food, housing, medical care, emotional support, pre and post-adoption counseling, alcohol/substance abuse treatment (if needed), educational opportunities, and legal services provided as needed to each birthmother.

### **Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Birth mother selects the adoptive family.

**CRADLE OF LIFE ADOPTION AGENCY, INC.**

245 North Fourth  
Beaumont, Texas 77701  
(409) 832-3000  
<http://www.cradleoflifeadoption.com>

Contact Person: Mr. Mel W. Shelander, Director

**Background:**

Licensed since 1997.  
Specializes in infants.  
Average 1 year between first contact and placement of child.

**Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Meets the requests of the birth mother.  
Determines with each adoptive family what they are looking for in a child.  
Works with profiles.

**Qualifications and Restrictions for Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Adoptive parents may choose the sex of their child.  
Age is restricted to 24 to 45 years.  
Adoptive parents must be of good moral character.  
Adoptive parents may adopt a second child.  
There are no geographical restrictions.  
There are no religious restrictions.

**Costs to Adoptive Parents:**

Cost is \$5,000-\$28,000 plus medical expenses.  
Agency will provide for cost pay out.

**Birth Mother Services:**

Agency has limited living quarters.  
Agency does provide medical care depending on client's available resources.

**DePELCHIN CHILDREN'S CENTER**

4950 Memorial Drive  
Houston, TX 77007  
(713) 730-2335  
www.depelchin.org

**Background:**

In adoption business for over 100 years.  
Special Needs Children Adoption  
Serves the Houston/Southeast Texas region

**Services Provided:**

Adoption and Foster Care Services  
Birth Parent, New Parent, and Post-Adoption Counseling  
Pre-natal health care  
Infant-Birthmother Program  
Residential treatment, education and training

**Costs:**

Range from \$9,000-\$23,000  
There is no fee for adoption through Department of Family and Protective Services  
adoption program (school age children and sibling groups)

**Qualifications/Restrictions:**

Must show proof of financial stability

## THE GLADNEY CENTER FOR ADOPTIONS

6300 John Ryan Drive  
Fort Worth, TX 76107  
(817) 922-6000  
(800) GLADNEY

Office Locations Around the Country  
[www.gladney.org](http://www.gladney.org)

Contact Person: Tani Albin (800) 687-3097

### **Background:**

Gladney Center was established in 1887.

Domestic (infants) and International (infants and young children)

International includes children from China, Guatemala, Russia, Columbia, Mexico, Ethiopia, Ukazestan, Ukraine, and Vietnam.

### **Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

In domestic adoptions, attempts are made to meet the requests of the birth mother and the adoptive family.

Final selection of the family is made by the birth parents.

Method varies by country for international adoptions.

### **Qualifications and Restrictions:**

Adoptive parents must be between the ages of 24 and 45

Adoptive parents must have been married for at least one year.

Adoptive parents must make a statement of faith.

Requirements for families adopting internationally vary by country.

### **Costs:**

\$0 (adoption through DFPS)-\$39,000 depending on program and country.

### **Birth Mother and Other Services:**

Residential and non-residential programs for birth mothers.

Education, counseling, and medical provided as needed.

Independent adoption services if birth parents come to agency matched with family.

Lifetime of post-adoption services for both birth and adoptive parents.

## **GREAT WALL OF CHINA ADOPTION**

248 Addie Roy Road, Suite A-102

Austin, TX 78746

(512) 323-9595

(888) GWFAMILY

[www.gwca.org](http://www.gwca.org)

Contact Person: Anna Cooper, Adoption Specialist.

### **Background:**

Licensed in 1996.

All adoptions are international (China)

Average time from first contact to adoption (including travel) is 15-20 months.

### **Qualifications/Restrictions:**

Single women, ages 30-50

Married couples, ages 30-60

At least one spouse must be a US Citizen

### **Costs:**

\$15,000-\$20,000 inclusive of all costs, including travel, orphanage donation, etc.

### **Other Information:**

Agency coordinates all in-country travel (average of 2 weeks).

Has Beijing office; direct communication with matching officials.

Assist families with paperwork.

## **HOMES OF SAINT MARK**

3000 Richmond, Suite 570

Houston, Texas 77098

(713) 522-2800

(800) 543-2229

(713) 522-3769 fax

Offices in Numerous Locations in Texas

[www.pchas.org/ourprograms\\_HOSM.php](http://www.pchas.org/ourprograms_HOSM.php)

Contact Person: Celeste Ross, Assoc. VP for Adoption Services

### **Background:**

Licensed since 1955.

Most adoptions are infants, but also places older children from foster care program that become available for adoption.

### **Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Agency practices open adoption for infants.

Birth parents select the adoptive parents from non-identifying information.

Agency also facilitates communication and provides ongoing support for birth parents and adoptive families.

Method of matching older children varies by state.

### **Qualifications and Restrictions for Potential Adoptive Parents:**

All adoptive families meet criteria in accordance with licensing standards.

No requirements for age, length of marriage or number of children in family due to open adoption practices.

Singles may also apply.

Prefer to serve the State of Texas but will place difficult to place child out of state.

Agency serves all faiths.

Agency also participates in Designated Adoption.

### **Cost to Adoptive Families:**

Cost ranges from \$0 (adoption through DFPS) to \$23,000.

### **Birth Mother and Other Services:**

Agency provides counseling, medical expenses, and legal expenses for birth parents.

Reunites families through post-adoption program.

Lifetime counseling provided.

## HOPE COTTAGE PREGNANCY AND ADOPTION CENTER

4209 McKinney Ave.

Dallas, TX 75205

(214) 526-8721

[www.hopecottage.org](http://www.hopecottage.org)

Contact Person: Rebecca Utley, CEO.

### **Background:**

Working in adoption field since 1918.

Domestic and International Adoptions.

Domestic adoptions are usually infants; International are generally young children.

Hope Cottage's mission is to nurture and build families through education, counseling, adoption services and mentoring.

### **Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

In domestic adoptions, the process is generally birth mother driven. However, on occasion birth mothers will ask Hope Cottage to choose a family for their child.

In international adoptions, individuals and families note their preferences on their applications; however, referrals are generally made by the governing body of the country of origin.

### **Qualifications/Restrictions:**

Each program has specific requirements. Call for further information.

### **Costs:**

\$14,000-\$36,000 for full service adoption.

Based on sliding scale for domestic adoption.

Individual services are also available and are billed accordingly.

### **Birth Mother Services:**

Counseling for birth parents and their families.

Case management services and basic needs assistance.

All services are free of charge with no pressure or obligation to choose adoption.

**HOPE INTERNATIONAL**

5944 Luther Lane, Suite 875

Dallas, TX 75225

(214) 672-9399

[www.hopeadoption.org](http://www.hopeadoption.org)

Contact Person: Dawn Ford, Executive Director

**Background:**

Licensed in 1990.

International Adoptions (China, Guatemala, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Ethiopia, Russia, Liberia)

Time between initial contact and placement varies by country.

**Costs:**

Vary by country.

Hope International is a full service agency, and all costs are included.

## **INTERNATIONAL FAMILY SERVICES**

700 S. Friendswood Drive, Suite B

Friendswood, TX 77546

(281) 922-4677

Offices in Houston and Austin

[www.ifservices.org](http://www.ifservices.org)

### **Background:**

Licensed since 1996

International Adoptions (Guatemala, India, China, Russia)

### **Qualifications and Restrictions:**

Varies by country. Some countries have age, financial and other requirements.

### **Costs:**

Varies by country. Costs include social services, governmental fees, travel, legal fees, etc.

Costs range from \$15,000-35,000 (cost factors in \$10,000 tax credit).

### **Other Information:**

IFS also hosts Family Hope, a camp for older children (age 5 and up) from Russia. The children spend a week at camp in hopes of finding adoptive families. Camps are held throughout the U.S., and over 500 children have been found permanent homes through this program.

IFS will also conduct home studies for domestic adoptions.

IFS provides foster services.

## METHODIST MISSION HOME

6487 Whitby Road  
San Antonio, Texas 78240  
(210) 696-2410  
(800) 842-5433  
www.mmhome.org

Contact Person: Helen Huff, Adoption Services Director

### **Background:**

Licensed since licensing began.  
Places approximately 50 to 60 children per year.  
Specializes in infants.  
Works with from 50 to 75 potential adoptive families at one time.  
Average 18 to 24 months between first contact and placement of child.

### **Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Birth parents select adoptive family. Open adoptions.

### **Qualifications and Restrictions for Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Adoptive parents may not choose the sex of their child.  
No limits on length of marriage.  
Geographic restrictions to Texas and New Mexico.  
No age limits.  
No limit in number of children in home already.

### **Cost to Adoptive Parents:**

Charges are based on a sliding scale.  
Agency fee currently slides from \$5,000 to \$12,500 depending on gross income.  
Other fees include payment of medical, legal and birth mother expenses.

### **Birth Mother Services:**

Living quarters are provided in a maternity residence in San Antonio, or in the residence of choice in own community.  
Medical care is provided by an OB/GYN in San Antonio, or through doctor of their choice.

**SPAULDING FOR CHILDREN**

8582 Katy Freeway, Suite 100

Houston, Texas 77024-3832

(713) 681-6991

(800) 460-6298

Offices in Corpus Christi and McAllen

[www.spauldingforchildren.org](http://www.spauldingforchildren.org)

Contact E-mail: [familycoordinator@spauldingforchildren.org](mailto:familycoordinator@spauldingforchildren.org)

**Background:**

Provides foster care, adoption, and post-adoption services to special needs children and their adoptive families. Special needs children are those who may have physical, mental, and/or emotional handicaps, may be older and/or may be a member of a sibling group. Most of the children are in the custody of DFPS and are in the foster care system as a result of abuse and/or neglect.

Licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Member of Texas Association of Licensed Children's Services.

Associate member of Child Welfare League of America.

Member agency of the United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast.

**Method of Matching Children with Potential Adoptive Parents:**

Parents participate in the selection of their child(ren).

There is no waiting list for adoptive parents.

**Qualifications and Restrictions for Potential Adoptive Parents:**

The agency places with single or married people, minimum age is 21 years.

Families must complete required educational curriculum and home study.

The agency conducts criminal background checks on all applicants.

Geographic restrictions to Houston and surrounding areas.

Corpus Christi office serves South Texas area.

**Cost to Adoptive Parents:**

No fee is charged for adoption services.

**Birth Mother Services:**

No maternity program.

## SUGGESTED READING

- *Adopting after Infertility* by Patricia Irwin Johnston
- *Adopting on Your Own, The Complete Guide to Adopting as a Single* by Lee Varon
- *The Adoption Option Complete Handbook* by Chris Adamec
- *The Open Adoption Experience* by Lois Ruskai Melina & Sharon Kaplan Roszia
- *The Adoption Resource Book*, 4th Ed. By Lois Gilman
- *Reaching Out: The Guide to Writing a Terrific Dear Birthmother Letter* by Nelson Handel
- *Breastfeeding the Adopted Baby* by Debra Stewart Peterson
- *Dim Sum, Bagels, and Grits: A Sourcebook for Multicultural Families* by Myra Alperson
- *Inside Transracial Adoption* by Gail Steinberg & Beth Hall
- *Secret Thoughts of an Adoptive Mother* by Jana Wolff
- *Talking with Young Children about Adoption* by Mary Watkins, Ph.D., and Susan Fisher, M.D.
- *Twenty Things Adopted Kids Wish Their Parents Knew* by Sherrie Eldridge

## ONLINE LINKS

- www.adoptionattorneys.org** org – American Academy of Adoption Attorneys  
–A well-regarded organization of adoption attorneys across the United States and Canada.
- www.cradleofhope.com** – Can provide information about designated adoptions.
- www.naic.acf.hhs.gov** – National Adoption Information Clearinghouse (NAIC)  
–A resource put out by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children & Families.
- www.adoptivefamilies.com** – *Adoptive Families*  
–Award-winning national adoption magazine.  
–Dedicated to providing information for families before, during, and after adoption.  
–Publishes free Adoption Planner.
- www.adoption.com** – The largest adoption website with articles and helpful information and links.
- travel.state.gov/family/adoption/adoption\_485.html** – U.S. State Department's International Adoption webpage from which you can link to country-specific pages to obtain information on adopting internationally.

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