

Adoption Information Guide

The following information within this adoption information guide is designed to help you better understand the process of adoption through the necessary steps, available resources, and family references. All information is subject to change.

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STARTING THE INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION PROCESS

China, India, and other Hague Countries

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) adoption form packet: I-800A (a.k.a. *Application for Advance Processing of an Orphan Petition*) Available on line is the Guide for Prospective Adoptive Parents. (PAPs)

http://adoption.state.gov/pdf/PAP_Guide-1.pdf

www.uscis.gov/forms

<http://www.dss.virginia.gov/pub/pdf/intercountryguide.pdf> (This is where you find the answer to VA pre-adoption requirements.) The preadoptive requirements include the following:

- Home study
- Social and background information on the child and birth family
- Legal documents on the child
- Statement of financial responsibility. ACW has this for you to sign.

Immigration Forms

www.uscis.gov/forms

Russia and Other Eastern European Countries

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) adoption form packet: I-600A (a.k.a. *Application for Advance Processing of an Orphan Petition*) [Immigration](#)

Forms

www.uscis.gov/forms

1. or download from our website at:

<http://www.adoptioncenter.com/GettingStarted/start.htm>

- Complete as much as you can of the I-600A form, mail this form along with \$670 plus \$80 (checks payable to US Citizenship and Immigration Services) for the fingerprint fee for each adult household member. It is advisable to mail this form even before you have chosen your agency, country, or have completed your home study.

D.C. and Northern VA residents:

Mail form and fees to: USCIS, 2675 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031-4906

MD residents:

Mail form and fees to: Baltimore ASC, George H. Fallon Federal Building, 31 Hopkins Plaza, Baltimore, MD 21201

Southern VA residents:

Mail form and fees to: CIS, 5280 Henneman Drive,
Norfolk, VA 23513

FAQ'S (Frequently Asked Questions regarding answers to the I-600A form)

Q: What is the name and address of the organization or individual assisting you in locating or identifying an orphan? (#10 on form)

A: Adoption Center of Washington, 100 Daingerfield Road, Suite 101, Alexandria, VA 22314

Q: Do you plan to travel abroad to locate or adopt a child? (#11 on form)

A: Yes

Q: Does your spouse, if any, plan to travel abroad to locate or adopt a child? (#12 on form)

A: If adopting from Russia, both spouses must travel. For some other countries only one parent needs to travel.

Q: If the answer to the above questions is "yes", give the following information: your date of intended departure, your spouse's date of intended departure, and the city, province you are traveling to. (#13 on form)

A: To be determined

Q: Will the child come to the United States for adoption after compliance with the pre-adoption requirements, if any, of the state of proposed residence? (#14)

A: No

Q: If the answer to the above question is "no", will the child be adopted abroad after having been personally seen and observed by you and your spouse, if married? (#15 on form)

A: Yes

Q: Where do you wish to file your orphan petition (#16 on form)?

A: **If you do not know which country** you are adopting from: put Arlington (if you live in VA or DC), or put Baltimore (if you live in Maryland) where it says, "The Service office located at" and then leave the next line blank.

If you know which country you are adopting from, leave the first line blank and fill in the line that says, "The American Consulate or Embassy at".

Moscow (if adopting from Russia)

Guangzhou (if adopting from China)

Hanoi (if adopting from Vietnam)

Kiev (if adopting from Ukraine)

Guatemala City (if adopting from Guatemala)

2. Fingerprinting

Once the I-600a or I-800 form has been received at USCIS, a fingerprint letter will be sent to you with an appointment time and place to be fingerprinted. A nationwide number to check the status of fingerprints is: (304) 625-5590.

DC & Northern VA residents:

Fingerprinted at 8850 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, VA,
Monday through Thursday 9-8 and Friday 9-5.

MD residents:

Fingerprinted at 31 Hopkins Plaza, Baltimore, MD 21201.

Southern VA residents:

Fingerprinted at 5280 Henneman Drive, Norfolk, VA 23513

3. Choose your child placement agency
Why choose the **Adoption Center of Washington?**
 - a. Hague Accreditation
 - b. Personalized and committed professional service
 - c. Assistance with dossier preparation
 - d. Parent preparation classes
 - e. Continuity of home study & placement in D.C and VA

4. Begin your home study

HOME STUDY GUIDELINES

The home study is a necessary part of any adoption process. It is a 6-7 page document for sharing information about your family and home life. It should reflect your personality as well as your history. We believe the home study should be a positive experience for all involved. One of the positive aspects of the home study process is that it gives you time to reflect on the issues of adoption and parenting. We do not expect families to have all of the answers. Some topics that will be covered in the home study are:

- a. Biographical description of adoptive parents
- b. Health history
- c. Criminal and child abuse clearances
- d. Marital history
- e. Infertility and adoption issues
- f. Neighborhood and home
- g. Finances
- h. References

For families using ACW social workers in Virginia and Washington, DC

1. You will be given guidelines to write an autobiography. This will be helpful to the social worker and should be completed by each adoptive parent and sent to the social worker before the individual meeting is conducted.

2. Please provide the following documents to your social worker
 - a. Birth Certificate for each member of the family
 - b. Marriage Certificate
 - c. Divorce Decree(s) or Death Certificate of spouse
 - d. Employment Letter (on company letterhead) stating your position, salary, and length of employment. This must be notarized.
 - e. Four references using the guidelines given. These references must be notarized and only one can be from a relative.
 - f. Police clearance:
 - If you live in Washington DC
 - Go to: 300 Indiana Avenue, 3rd floor
Washington, DC
(202) 727-4245
 - Bring proper id, valid drivers license, passport, birth certificate and \$10.00 processing fee (per adult household member)
 - If you live in Virginia the agency will file for your clearance with the State Police for the fee of \$20.00 (per adult household member)
 - If VA residents, you must also complete FBI fingerprints for an additional clearances, \$50 per adult household member over age 18.
 - g. Medical Reports verifying that you are in good health. You will use a form provided by the agency for all household members. Children also must have a statement of health status from their doctor verify absence of communicable diseases. It should say that your child is in general good health, free of communicable diseases, and is up to date on all immunizations. This statement must be signed by the pediatrician, on their letterhead, and notarized.
 - h. Monthly Budget and Financial Statement.
 - i. Child Abuse Central Registry Check – ACW will do this through state registry.
In Washington DC there is no charge
In Virginia there is a \$5.00 fee
 - j. Fire Escape Plan
 - k. Copies of most recent W-2
 - l. Photograph of family
 - m. DMV records – you can do this online at www.dmv.state or go to your local DMV office and request a copy of your DMV record.

If the information is well organized and given to the social worker in a timely manner, it could be possible to complete a home study within a few weeks. The home study is composed of four interviews. The first interview takes place in the

office (both spouses must be present). Each spouse meets with their social worker individually for their second interview in the office. The last visit is a home visit in which both spouses and all other members of the household must be present. If the adoptive parent is single, there are three visits total.

HOME STUDY FEE SCHEDULE

(Updated 12/7/08)

1. Application fee \$300 ****Please note that this fee is non-refundable ****
 - a. This fee is due upon submission of your application & photo of your family. Please send to:
100 Daingerfield Road, Suite 101
Alexandria, VA 22314
 - b. This fee covers the processing of your application.
2. Home study fee \$1,500 plus clearance fees (non refundable*)
 - a. To be paid at or before the first home study meeting with your social worker.
 - b. Clearances are for VA residents only and include:
 - i. VA Child Protective Clearance \$5/person
 - ii. FBI Fingerprint Clearance \$50/person
 - iii. Additional VA Police Clearance \$20/person (if needed for dossier)
 - iv. Each of the above clearances is necessary for all household members over the age of 18.
3. Post-adoption services fee \$1,000
 - a. To be paid before the completion of the home study.
 - b. This money will be escrowed until you return home with your child.
 - c. This fee covers the cost of 3 visits; 2 at ACW's Alexandria office and 1 at your home. Any additional visits deemed necessary by the foreign country or ACW will cost \$200/visit. Refundable if you do not adopt.
 - d. Consulate Registration deposit is \$500 and will be returned once completed less the cost of registration (approximately \$75)
 - e. All post-adoption fees will be refunded if adoption is not completed*.
4. Post-adoption and Consulate Registration deposits (for Russia only)
 - a. Consulate Registration deposit \$500; is escrowed & less the cost of registration, will be returned once Consulate Registration is completed and proof is provided to ACW within 90 days from your court date
 - b. Post Adoption deposit \$1,500; \$500 per required report for Russia. This money is escrowed to ensure that your child's post-adoption reports are provided to ACW in a timely manner. Upon completion of each report, you will be refunded \$500.

- c. All Post-adoption and Consulate Registration deposits will be refunded once requirements are met by the client or will be refunded entirely if an adoption is not completed.*

REFERENCES

Adoption Center of Washington

Families who have recently adopted from our agency:

Vivian Greblo and Dan Wolf Home # (703) 549-5876 danjwolf@mac.com	Adoption: July 08 vgreblo@yahoo.com	Vietnam
Stephanie Miller Home #703/913-7375	Adoption: 07	Russia
Lauren Thompson Home # (703) 299-8717	Adoption: July '02	Russia
Charles & Amy Bailey Home # (703) 490-1532	Adoption: Dec. '03	Russia Email: candabailey@aol.com
Mark & Brenda Bolton Home # (703) 591-6390	Adoption: Mar. '99, Jan. '00, & Dec. '02	Russia Email: boltonfamily@mac.com
Tonya & Timothy Koslo Home # (540) 720-6581	Adoption: Aug. '01, & Sept. '04	China Email: tkoslo@cox.net
Moira Higgins Home # (732) 974-9788	Adoption: Dec. '01, & May. '04	China Email: mhiggins@att.net
Lori and Scott Welsby Home # (703) 670-7209	Adoption: Nov. '05 Email: slwelsby@hotmail.com	China
Ken and Michelle Der	Adoption: Mar. '05 Email: mkder@aol.com	China
David Goodman Home # (301) 460-8393	Adoption: May '02 & July '06 Email: davidmarkgoodman@yahoo.com	Vietnam
Laura & Eddie Tan Home: # (703) 920-4792	Adoption: May '05 Email: lauratan@umd.edu	China

Denise & Frank Wallace

Adoption: 3 girls

China

Email: denisewallace@cox.net

Titi & Hung Hoang

Adoption: Dec '06

Vietnam

Email: titi_ho_hoang@yahoo.com

SUPERVISED PROVIDERS

Adoption agencies may collaborate to assist you with your adoption. If you are using one agency to provide placement services and another agency/individual to provide home study and post placement services, in most cases the home study agency is considered a supervised provider.

The placement agency is responsible for monitoring the supervised provider's services. For this reason, the Adoption Center of Washington has contractual relationships established with home study providers across the United States. Information regarding the supervised providers that work with the Adoption Center of Washington is available upon request.

If you would like to work with a home study agency that ACW does not have an existing supervised provider relationship with, ACW is willing to accommodate. Please give ACW sufficient time to establish this relationship.

RESOURCES FOR FINANCING AN ADOPTION

FEDERAL TAX CREDIT

- U.S. Treasury Department (information on adoption tax credit):
<http://www.treas.gov/offices/tax-policy/>

EMPLOYER BENEFITS

Making adoptive family building an employee benefit more equal to birth benefits, allows the employer to build loyalty.

Contact the National Adoption Center help line at 1(800) TO-ADOPT.

-OR-

National Adoption Center 215 735-9988

Military Adoption Benefit is around \$2,000.

STATE TAX CREDIT

Contact your State Adoption Specialist to ask about credits for families adopting children from public child welfare systems.

NON-RECURRING ADOPTION EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT

After finalization of the adoption of a child with special needs from public child welfare system, they may be able to apply for reimbursement of expenses they paid related to the adoption, which may include home study fees, travel expenses, attorney fees, etc. Cap of \$2,000.

GIFTS

Accept a gift from the prospective grandparents to defray costs. They are gaining a grandchild from this adoption and may be overjoyed to take part in this process.

Adoption Internet Web Sites & Adoptive Parent Resources

General Adoption Information Sites: (Excellent)

- <http://www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/>
- [Karen's Adoption Links - International Adoption Parenting](http://www.karensadoptionlinks.com/parent.html)

Links to many Parenting sites, groups, listservs dealing with issues important to parents of children adopted internationally.

www.karensadoptionlinks.com/parent.html - 64k -

- Adopt: Assistance, Information, Support: <http://www.adopting.org/>
- The Adoption Exchange: <http://www.adoptex.org/>
- Adopting.Com: <http://www.adopting.com/>
- Adoption Network: <http://www.adoption.org/>
- The National Adoption Center: <http://www.adopt.org/>
- Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption: <http://www.davethomasfoundationforadoption.org/>
- National Adoption Information Clearinghouse (NAIC): <http://naic.acf.hhs.gov/>
- American Academy of Adoption Attorneys: <http://www.adoptionattorneys.org/>
- Adoption Search: <http://www.adoptionsearch.com/>
- Adoption.com: <http://www.adoption.com/>
- Adoption Agency Guide (International): <http://www.theadoptionguide.com/>
- Adoptive Families Together: <http://www.adoptivefamilies.org/>
- PACT, An Adoption Alliance: <http://www.pactadopt.org/>

ADOPTION POLICY AND LEGISLATION:

- The Joint Council on International Children's Services: <http://www.jcics.org/>
- Adoption Policy Resource: <http://www.fpsol.com/adoption/advocates.html>
- Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute: <http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/>

- North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC): <http://www.nacac.org/>

MEDICAL ISSUES:

- <http://www.russianadoption.org/>
- www.peds.umn.edu/iac/
- Orphandoctor.com

Between 1992 and 2000, she was the Chief of Pediatric Infectious Diseases and Director of the **International Adoption Medical** Consultation Services at ...

- INOVA International Adoption Services: <http://www.inova.org/inovapublic.srt/ifhc/adoption/index.jsp?tStatus=31>
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome: <http://come-over.to/FAS/>

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION SITES:

- moscow.usembassy.gov/adoptions08.html
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services: <http://uscis.gov/graphics/index.htm>
- Families with Children from China (FCC): <http://www.fwcc.org/>
- Eastern European Adoption Coalition: <http://www.eeadopt.net/site/eeac/>
- Families for Russian and Ukrainian Adoption: <http://frua.org/>
- Adoptions from Russia: <http://www.russianadoption.org/>
- Adoptive Parents Vietnam: <http://www.FamiliesInVietnam.org>

PUBLICATIONS:

- Adoptive Families Magazine (AFA): <http://www.adoptivefamilies.com/>
- Tapestry Books <http://www.tapestrybooks.com/>