



## Frequently Asked Questions About Private Adoption

### Can a Step-Parent adopt my child?

- Yes, a Step-Parent may adopt their step-child. In some situations, the biological parent's rights may need to be terminated to adopt the child. The Department of Health and Human is not involved in a private stepparent adoption and encourages the family to reach out to an adoption attorney in your area.

### Can an Adult be Adopted?

- Yes, an Adult may be adopted by a person or person(s), for further clarification please reference 43-101 (2), on other eligibility requirements. The Department of Health and Human is not involved in adult adoption and encourages the family to reach out to an adoption attorney in your area.

### How long does a child have to be placed in our home, until the adoption is finalized?

- A child must reside in the family home for at least 6 months before finalization of the adoption. See 43-109 (a) for more clarification.

### What are the laws and qualifications for adopting a child in Nebraska?

- Any adult individual may adopt a child. Except in the case of a stepparent adoption, married couples must adopt jointly. Individuals must complete background checks and an adoption home study that will be approved by the court to finalize the adoption. To complete a home study individual would need to reach out to a Licensed Child Placing Agency in Nebraska. A list of Agencies is provided later.

### What adoption expenses can be paid by adoptive families in Nebraska?

- Cost can vary for each adoption, and adoptive families are responsible for these costs. Some Costs may include attorney fees, application fees, home study costs, and post-placement supervision.

### Are children adopted from private agencies in Nebraska eligible for adoption assistance?

- Yes, but only for federal Title IV-E assistance. Children adopted from private agencies are not eligible for state-only adoption assistance. Families will need to contact the adoption program specialist to determine eligibility and approval for adoption assistance. This must be done before the adoption is finalized.

## Adopting in Nebraska from Out-of-State

- If you are adopting a child from another state, you will need to receive permission from the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) office in the state where the child is from. Your agency or attorney will send the office copies of your home study and some other paperwork. They will need to approve your packet before you can bring your child home.

## Who in the State of Nebraska can complete an Adoption Home Study?

- Licensed Child Placing Agencies in Nebraska that can complete Adoption Home Studies
  - Adoption Consultants [Adoption Consultants, Inc | \(adoptionconsultantsinc.org\)](http://adoptionconsultantsinc.org)
  - All About U Adoptions [Adoption Agency in South Dakota, North Dakota, and Nebraska \(aauadoptions.org\)](http://aauadoptions.org)
  - Bethany <https://bethany.org/locations/us/ne/omaha>
  - CSI <https://childsaving.org/>
  - Holt <https://www.holtinternational.org/usa/central-branch/>
  - LFS of Iowa <https://lutheranfamilyservice.org/>
  - LFS <https://www.onelfs.org/>
  - Jewish Family Service <https://www.jfsomaha.com/>

## What background checks are needed to be included with the Adoption Home Study?

- Background checks must be completed on the applicant and all other members of the household.
  - Finger-print based National Criminal History Check with the Identification Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation for individuals 18 or older.
  - Local law enforcement agency for individuals 18 or older
  - Nebraska Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry and of any similar registry for every state and United States jurisdiction in which the individual has lived within the past five years for individuals 13 or older
  - The Nebraska Adult Protective Services (APS) Central Registry and of any similar registry for every state and United States jurisdiction in which the individual has lived within the past five years for individuals 13 or older
  - State Patrol Sex Offender Registry for every state and United States jurisdiction in which the individual has lived for the past five years for individuals 18 or older

## I'm an Adoption Attorney, who do I contact regarding the Father Registry in Nebraska?

- Father Registry
  - DHHS Father Registry [dhhs.fatherregistry@nebraska.gov](mailto:dhhs.fatherregistry@nebraska.gov)