

ADOPTION SERVICES, INC.

a Division of
Catholic Charities of Arkansas
Diocese of Little Rock

2500 North Tyler Street, Little Rock, Arkansas 72207 (501) 664-0340

INFORMATION FOR BIRTHPARENTS

1. No one at Adoption Services, Inc. will try to force you to place your child for adoption. We are here to help you with your decision by providing individual and family counseling, adoption information, and medical support during your pregnancy.
2. If you do decide to place your child for adoption through Adoption Services, Inc., you will need to contact us when your child is born.
3. If you do call us, a worker from Adoption Services, Inc. will visit with you in the hospital to make sure that after giving birth, you are still committed to a plan for adoption. If you choose to proceed with placing your child, a worker from Adoption Services, Inc. will bring a “Relinquishment of Parent and Child Relationship and Consent to Guardianship and Adoption” form to the hospital for you to sign, generally no sooner than twenty-four hours after your child is born. If you are placing an older child, the form is usually signed in our office. This consent form must be signed in the presence of a notary public.
4. After you sign the consent form, you have ten (10) days to be sure about your decision. You may choose to sign a waiver so your child can be placed sooner with the adoptive family. If you sign the consent waiver you will have five (5) days instead of ten to be sure about your decision. If the fifth or tenth day occurs on a weekend or legal holiday the last day will then be counted as the next working day of the week. We start counting the days from the day after you sign the consent. During this waiting period we will be available to provide you with support and counseling services.
5. After these five or ten days are over you will not be able to change your mind to have your child back. An adoption can be overturned only if you can prove force, bribery, deception, or fraud on the part of Adoption Services, Inc. We will take every precaution to ensure that your rights are protected.
6. The consent form you sign allows Adoption Services, Inc. to obtain temporary legal guardianship of your child. This same consent form will give Adoption Services, Inc. the right to place your child for adoption, unless you change your mind within five or ten days from the date on which you sign the consent and notify Adoption Services, Inc. within those days that you have changed your mind. You may also withdraw your consent to the adoption by filing a written affidavit with the clerk of the probate court in the county that is named on your consent to the adoption.
7. When you sign the consent form and the medical authorization form Adoption Services, Inc. will be responsible for your child’s medical care until your child is legally adopted or returned to you within your five or ten day period.

8. If you place your child with our agency, then Adoption Services, Inc. will pay agency approved pregnancy related medical expenses for you and your child that are not covered by Medicaid or insurance. If you do not have Medicaid or insurance Adoption Services, Inc. will pay approved medical expenses that are directly related to your pregnancy and childbirth. If you choose to parent your child, you will be responsible for all medical expenses.

9. Adoption Services Inc. is a division of Catholic Charities of Arkansas of the Diocese of Little Rock. The teachings of the Catholic Church do not allow our agency to arrange or pay for any artificial means of birth control or sterilization procedures.

10. Although we are supported by the Catholic Church we do not place only with Catholic families. We make an effort to honor birthparent's requests regarding a family whenever possible while considering the best interests of the child being placed.

11. You will not know the last name or address of the family who adopts your child, nor will they know your last name or address. Yours will be a confidential agency adoption. However you may choose to meet the adoptive family and receive a profile (without identifying information) of the family who adopts your child.

12. You will not be able to have any ongoing direct contact with your child, unless you and the adoptive parents both agree to this contact. In many adoptions further contact through visits, emails, pictures, letters, and calls may be possible. Generally the agency will assist in these contacts for support and to maintain confidentiality. Regardless of the level of contact you and the family choose, you are certainly welcome to receive reports about your child from your adoption worker.

13. You will generally have the opportunity to receive pictures of your child until the child's eighteenth birthday. You will need to be responsible for giving us your current mailing address. If you choose not to receive these pictures, Adoption Services, Inc. will keep them for you with your records and you may decide to receive them at a later date. We believe receiving these pictures can be a very important part of the healing process for you and your family. Pictures can also help to reassure you that your child is well cared for and deeply loved

14. You will not be able to inherit money or property from your child or your child's adoptive family. She or he will inherit from the adoptive family and will be their legal responsibility.

15. Your child will not be able to automatically inherit from you or your family, although sometimes arrangements can be made to give something to your child through a will.

16. When you sign the consent form you are agreeing that you will not be appearing in court about the adoption. You may be required to sign an affidavit (legal statement) stating that the information you have given us is true to the best of your knowledge.

17. An additional attorney called a "Guardian Ad Litem" will be assigned by the court to represent you if you are less than eighteen (18) years of age or if there are special legal concerns. This attorney will meet with you and ask you if you are making your decision to place your child for adoption of your own free will and will sign the consent form with you. This is for your protection as a minor. Your parents or guardian do not sign the consent form with you.

18. You must be eighteen (18) years old or older to sign the consent form by yourself. If you are under eighteen, the Guardian Ad Litem must sign with you. You will not be charged a fee for the services of the Guardian Ad Litem.

19. If anything in this paragraph describes you or your child then the father of the child may need to agree to this adoption:

- (a) The birthparents are married to each other at the time the child was conceived or any time after that.
- (b) The birthparents are separated, but are not divorced.
- (c) The birthparents divorced after the child was conceived.
- (d) The father had custody of or adopted the child
- (e) The father has otherwise legitimated the minor according to the laws of the place where the adoption will take place.

20. If the birthmother is married to someone other than the birthfather of her child, then her husband's legal rights must also be terminated by the court. This is usually done by the husband signing his consent to the adoption.

21. Whenever possible, Adoption Services, Inc. has the birthfather sign a relinquishment and consent form. This shows the court that everyone who has an interest in the child's future agrees to the adoption. It also provides extra protection for the child, for the birthparents and for her or his family.

22. There are some circumstances where the birthfather's consent is not required. Since each case is different, the attorney for Adoption Services, Inc. or the guardian ad litem will explain the legal requirements in your particular situation. You will usually be required to sign an affidavit regarding the putative father of your child.

23. Adoption Services, Inc. will provide an attorney for the legal work for the adoption. If you are over eighteen (18) years of age you have the right to hire an additional attorney of your own choosing. You will be responsible for the fees for any attorney you hire.

24. You will not be charged for any of our attorney's services, even if you decide to parent your child.

25. You will not be charged for any of our counseling services or foster care expenses, even if you decide to parent your child.

26. Adoption Services, Inc. will not pay you a fee for your child. Your child is priceless and must be a gift from your heart to the very grateful adoptive parents.

27. All information and records are kept in the strictest confidence. Our adoption records are safely stored and secured at the offices of Adoption Services, Inc. and at the attorney's office. They will be kept for 99 years, as required by law.

28. You can stay in contact with your child by sending letters, gifts and pictures to the adoptive family through our agency. We hope you will choose to write a non-identifying letter to your child for us to give her or his adoptive parents to keep until your child is older. (We cannot accept a letter to your child if you put your last name or other identifying information on the letter).

29. Adoption Services, Inc. requests that you provide us with future important medical information about yourself or about your child's biological relatives. This information could be very helpful for your child's future medical needs.

30. When your child reaches the age of eighteen (18), or anytime after that, you may notify us that you would like to have contact with your child. If your child also informs us that she or he would like to have contact with you, then we will help you make contact. This contact can be by mutual voluntary consent only.

31. You may call, write, email, or visit Adoption Services, Inc. at anytime after your child is placed for adoption if we can be of assistance to you. There will be no charge for these services.

I understand that this form is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be a legal document.