

# INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION

## A Guide for Alberta Families

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# Part 1: General Information

## Introduction

Adoption is the process that gives a child a new family and is intended to provide permanence and security for the child. The most important consideration in the adoption process is the child's well-being. A successful adoption requires maturity, empathy, understanding and patience from the adoptive parents.

PLEASE REFER TO OUR WEBSITE FOR COUNTRY SPECIFIC ADOPTION INFORMATION ([www.adoptionalberta.gov.ab.ca](http://www.adoptionalberta.gov.ab.ca)).

## THREE TYPES OF INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS AVAILABLE IN ALBERTA

### Private International Adoption (See Procedures – Part 2)

#### Is the process when:

- Child's country has not implemented The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption.
- Adoption is finalized in child's country as it cannot be finalized in Alberta, unless permanent residency status is obtained for the child by the parents. **Note: Immigration Regulations require that a permanent resident visa be obtained before the child enters Canada.**
- Child is not in government care.
- Child's country does not have an adoption process with Alberta.

### Government Adoption for Non-Hague Countries (See Procedures – Part 2)

#### Is the process when:

- Child is in government care or in care of a licensed adoption agency authorized by government.
- There is an adoption process established between the child's country and Alberta.
- The child's country processes the adoption through government channels or through licensed agencies.

### Hague Convention Adoption (See Procedures – Part 2)

**Governments of the sending and receiving jurisdictions must be fully involved in all aspects of the adoption process through the designated Central Authorities.**

#### Must be the process when:

- The child's country has implemented The Hague Convention.

## PRIVATE GUARDIANSHIP ORDERS

Private Guardianship applies to children originating from countries where there is no domestic legislation to process an adoption. A Private Guardianship Order may be issued in the originating country and the adoption may be finalized privately in Alberta when the adoptive parent obtains permanent residency status for the child. **Note: Immigration Regulations require that a permanent resident visa be obtained for the child for the purpose of entering Canada to finalize an adoption in these circumstances.**

**Families who obtain Private Guardianship Orders for children who live abroad must deal directly with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to obtain permanent residency status for the child.** Once permanent residency status is obtained, applicants may file a petition for a private adoption in Alberta. Alberta Children and Youth Services has no role in obtaining permanent residency status for children or in finalizing an Adoption Order in Private Guardianship or Private International adoption cases.

**THE CHALLENGES**

Adopting a child from another country is complex. In order to comply with legislative requirements of the child’s country of origin, the Government of Canada’s immigration regulations, The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption and Alberta’s *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*, applicants should be aware of the following:

- Ever-changing legislation, regulations and policies in the child’s country of origin. If the child’s country has implemented The Hague Convention, it is not possible to process a private adoption.
- Lack of infrastructure, procedures and manpower in some countries of origin, which delay or prevent processing of intercountry adoptions.
- Highly sensitive and political issues which countries face when their children are adopted by foreigners.
- Problematic adoption practices which are uncovered in the child’s country of origin. These may include baby selling, child trafficking and forging of documents.
- Technical difficulties in reaching officials in foreign jurisdictions, as well as differences in languages, cultures and interpretation of procedures.
- Lack of information on the child proposed for adoption.

For these reasons, Alberta Children and Youth Services is unable to provide timelines for a matching proposal or guarantee that the child will not have medical, developmental, behavioural or learning challenges.

Due to high volumes of correspondence relating to the international adoption program and complicated document requirements, prospective adoptive families must allow sufficient time at all levels to process their adoption.

Families requiring information on the status of their adoption should contact their Alberta adoption agency. Adoption and Permanency Services licenses, monitors and acts as a resource for the Alberta adoption agencies.

Prospective adoptive parents should make travel arrangements to the child’s country ONLY after they receive confirmation that all documents are in place and the child is able to travel to Canada or they have been advised by Adoption and Permanency Services.

**THE HAGUE CONVENTION ON INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION**

The Hague Convention is a multi-lateral treaty that regulates adoptions between contracting states and provides safeguards and procedures to ensure the adoption is in the best interests of the child, biological parents and adoptive parents. The child’s country must try to place the child domestically before considering an international adoption.

Alberta implemented The Hague Convention in 1997. For an updated listing of Hague jurisdictions go to: [www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net) The Convention concerning intercountry adoption is Convention # 33.

Albania	Costa Rica	Latvia	Slovenia
Australia	Cyprus	Luxembourg	Spain
Austria	Czech Republic	Madagascar	Sri Lanka
Belarus	Denmark	Mexico	Sweden
Belgium	Ecuador	Netherlands	Switzerland

Bolivia	El Salvador	Norway	Thailand
Brazil	Finland	Panama	Turkey
Bulgaria	France	Peru	United Kingdom
Burkina Faso	Germany	Philippines	United States
Canada	Hungary	Poland	Uruguay
Chile	India	Portugal	Venezuela
China	Israel	Romania	
Colombia	Italy	Slovakia	

The Hague Convention applies to every adoption, including relative adoptions, where the child lives in a Hague country and the adoptive parents live in Alberta. This is the case even when the adoptive parents are citizens of the child's country and own property in that country. **Privately arranged adoptions finalized in the child's country of origin do not meet the requirements of The Hague Convention, the Alberta *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* or Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.**

Adoptive applicants, who wish to adopt a child residing in a Hague country, must first apply to Adoption and Permanency Services, for authorization from the delegated Central Authority for Alberta under The Hague Convention, to begin the process.

The Central Authority of the child's country must determine that the child meets The Hague Convention eligibility criteria for an international adoption and that there are no suitable families in the child's country willing/able to adopt the child. The Central Authority of the receiving country must determine that the adoptive parents have been trained and are suited to adopt. Both the sending and receiving Central Authorities must agree that the proposed adoption should proceed.

**Failing to comply with the requirements of The Hague Convention will prevent the child from entering Canada as a permanent resident since Canada's immigration legislation and Alberta's *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* require compliance with The Hague Convention.**

## ***CHILDREN AVAILABLE FOR INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION***

Countries of origin determine which children are eligible for international adoption. Newborns are not available because efforts must first be made to place them for adoption in their country of origin. The majority of children arrive in this province when they are 12 – 48 months old.

Due to social policy or customs in some countries, there may be more girls or more boys available for adoption. For example, in India and China, girls outnumber boys in orphanages but in Eastern Europe and Central America, boys outnumber girls.

When adopting from another country, you can expect that the race of the child will match that of the dominant racial group. Asian children will be available in China. Black children will be available in Ethiopia and Haiti. Most countries have ethnic minorities and sometimes these minorities are over represented in orphanages and foster homes.

## ***SPECIAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN***

Some Canadian applicants turn to international adoption to avoid the potential risks of domestic "special needs" placements. Be aware that in all countries children come into care for a variety of reasons. Children placed for international adoption may have been prenatally exposed to drugs, alcohol or environmental toxins or they may have received poor nutrition pre/postnatally. Many children are placed in care by parents who are unable to accommodate their medical or developmental disabilities. Some children may have experienced neglect and abuse and may have been exposed to contagious diseases while in an institution. These situations do not apply in all cases, but adoptive applicants need to be

aware of these possibilities. Malnutrition, physical and emotional deprivation may lead to long-term problems, despite receiving loving care in adoptive homes.

All international adoptions should be considered special needs adoptions and adoptive applicants must understand that all medical, developmental, behavioural or emotional problems will not be known at the time of the matching referral.

Alberta has Guidelines for Case Review of international adoption referrals of children with complex needs (See page 9– Review and Acceptance of International Matching Proposals).

## ***SELECTING A COUNTRY***

The international adoption process requires that applicants specify a choice of country at the time of application. There are a number of factors to consider when choosing a country.

**Eligibility:** Do you meet the eligibility requirements for the country desired? These may include age, marital status or length of marriage, religion or the number of children you are already parenting. Country profiles are posted on the Adoption Website ([www.adoptionAlberta.gov.ab.ca](http://www.adoptionAlberta.gov.ab.ca)).

**Children Available:** Do the children available for adoption match the criteria of age, gender, race and special needs that you have specified in your “child desired”? Check the country profiles, statistics and ages of foreign children who were adopted by Alberta families.

**Proven Program:** While some applicants like to “break new ground”, there is much less risk in using a process that has proven to be effective in the past. Does the country have an agreement with Canada? Is there a coordination service available to help? Are there families in the community who have successfully completed an adoption from the country? Adoption programs from many countries have been suspended due to practice irregularities.

**Cost:** An international adoption is a costly proposition. You can expect to pay \$15,000 to \$30,000 USD. Get a breakdown of actual costs and a schedule for remittance from the Alberta agency, coordinator and country of origin.

Approximate costs are included in the country profiles ([www.adoptionAlberta.gov.ab.ca](http://www.adoptionAlberta.gov.ab.ca)).

**Travel and Residency Requirements:** Most families realize the benefit of travelling to the child’s country of origin to receive a child. For some families, it is difficult for two parents to travel for extended periods of time. Can a Power of Attorney be provided on behalf of the non-travelling parent? How many times do you have to travel to the country of origin? Can residency requirements be waived?

**Finalization and Post Finalization Report Requirements:** Where will the adoption be finalized and which documents support the adoption petition? Are there requirements to provide progress reports to the child’s country of origin after adoption finalization?

Families may have concurrent adoption applications, but may accept only one child or sibling group placement within a period of twelve months. Other applications must be withdrawn or put on hold at the time of acceptance of a referral.

## ***USE OF COORDINATOR***

Due to the complexity of requirements, the majority of families adopting internationally in Alberta find it an advantage to use a coordinator for services that do not facilitate the adoption placement. These services include:

- Preparation of all required documentation on the family’s behalf including translation, notarization, certification and authentication of the Home Assessment Report and supporting documents.

- Obtaining travel visas and making travel/hotel arrangements for adoptive parents who travel to the child's country of origin.
- Arranging for a translator who is knowledgeable about the events which must occur upon the applicants' arrival in the child's country.

Alberta does not license, monitor or endorse individuals/agencies that arrange international adoptions in foreign countries.

- Families can hire an individual/agency of their choice to help prepare their family's dossier and make travel and legal arrangements however; it's up to the families to ensure they choose a reputable resource that is authorized to finalize adoptions in the country they are adopting from.

**Agencies licensed in other provinces to facilitate international adoptions do not have the authority in Alberta to arrange adoptions. They are considered to be coordinators in Alberta's process and are only able to provide services as indicated above.**

## ***SUSPENSION OF ADOPTIONS FROM SPECIFIC COUNTRIES***

From time to time, Alberta receives information from the Canadian government or directly from countries of origin about serious irregularities involving the international adoption program. Problems may include incidents of child theft, baby selling, child trafficking or fraudulent documentation.

Alberta's Regulation with respect to the above is as follows:

- Where Alberta has a role in the process (Hague or government adoptions) complete adoptions for children who have been matched and accepted by the province and adoptive families, provided that the adoption can be processed in a legal and ethical manner. Adoption and Permanency Services will work with the Canadian Foreign Post abroad and the child's country of origin to expedite the child's placement and entrance into Canada.
- With the Minister's approval, suspend all new applications, including private adoptions, for adoptions to the specific country of origin until irregularities are addressed, unless the applicant is a relative of the child to be adopted and Citizenship and Immigration Canada will consider the child's entry into Canada.

## ***LEGAL ISSUES***

The child's country of origin determines where the adoption will be finalized. However, privately arranged adoptions cannot be finalized in Alberta, unless the adoptive parents obtain permanent residency status for the child. **Note: Immigration Regulations require that a permanent resident visa be obtained before the child enters Canada.**

Adoptions that are finalized in Alberta are governed by the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*, and federal immigration legislation. To finalize an adoption in Alberta, the child must have permanent residency status or must be a Canadian citizen. Adoptions that are finalized in the child's country of origin are governed by the laws of the child's country.

**The provisions of The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption apply to all adoptions where the child's country has implemented The Hague Convention and, therefore, include all relative adoptions. (See [www.hcch.net/e/authorities/caadopt.html](http://www.hcch.net/e/authorities/caadopt.html)).**

**Private adoptions cannot be processed if the child's country has implemented The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, regardless of the applicant's citizenship or ownership of property in the originating country. All international adoptions must comply with federal immigration legislation.**

## **IMMIGRATION**

If you are adopting a child internationally you are responsible for arranging for the child's admission to Canada. You must contact Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) for information about the regulations and procedures required to sponsor a child who will be adopted abroad, or will be adopted after he or she has been placed in your home. (Private international adoptions cannot be finalized in Alberta, unless the adoptive parents obtain permanent residency status for the child through Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Note: Immigration Regulations require that a permanent resident visa be obtained before the child enters Canada. Children and Youth Services has no role in obtaining permanent residency status for privately arranged adoptions or for children who enter Canada under Private Guardianship).

The immigration process begins with completing an Undertaking of Assistance (sponsorship application) which must be submitted to the Case Processing Centre of Citizenship and Immigration Canada in Mississauga, Ontario. This can be done on behalf of an unnamed child who has not yet been proposed.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT BEING APPROVED AS A SPONSOR DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE IMMIGRATION OF THE CHILD TO CANADA HAS BEEN APPROVED. THE VISA APPLICATION IS A SEPARATE PROCESS FROM THE SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION. FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS REGARDING ANY IMMIGRATION ISSUES, CALL CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION TOLL FREE 1-888-242-2100.**

You or the child's agency must also complete the application for a visa and arrange for the medical examination report that must be submitted to the Canadian visa office responsible for the child's country.

For all international adoptions, regardless of the process, Citizenship and Immigration Canada requires written confirmation from the Government of Alberta, through Adoption and Permanency Services, that a home assessment report has been completed on the adoptive applicants and that the assessment has received provincial approval. Home assessment reports are also required by the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* for all private, government and *Hague Convention* adoptions. The assessments are completed by licensed adoption agencies in Alberta and are approved by Adoption and Permanency Services.

Alberta provides to Citizenship and Immigration Canada Notification of Agreement Letters for Hague Convention adoptions, Letters of No Objection for government-facilitated adoptions and Letters of No Involvement for privately arranged adoptions finalized in the child's country. The Notification of Agreement and No Objection Letters are provided by Adoption and Permanency Services when the proposed match is accepted by the province and by the adoptive parents. Letters of No Involvement are provided when the adoptive parents forward a copy and translation of the Adoption Order (obtained in the child's country) to Adoption and Permanency Services. Alberta Children and Youth Services has no mandate in international Private Guardianship cases. **Applicants must deal directly with Citizenship and Immigration Canada in all Private Guardianship matters. There are no immigration provisions to allow children under private guardianship to enter Canada unless it is for the purpose of adopting the child once they are in Canada. For these cases, Immigration Regulations require that a permanent resident visa be obtained before the child enters Canada.**

## **COSTS**

Although there are no fees for services provided by Adoption and Permanency Services, an international adoption is expensive. You can expect to pay \$15,000 to \$30,000 USD. You are responsible for the following:

- Fees for the adoption agency in Alberta to manage the file, prepare the Home Assessment Report , provide Parent Preparation Training, propose the adoption matching referral, prepare post placement reports and finalize the adoption (if required)
- Fees for translation, notarization, verification and authentication of documents
- Federal immigration fees for visa applications, medical examinations, etc.
- Travel and living expenses for you and your child
- Visa and passport for the child from the child's country of origin
- Fees in the child's country
- Legal fees
- Courier fees

Due to the high volume of cases, Adoption and Permanency Services is not able to review dossiers for completeness and compliance. While you may make your own arrangements to prepare your adoption dossier and travel arrangements, you are encouraged to use an adoption coordinator to ensure all documentation and travel requirements are met. Translation services must be provided by professional, qualified translators to ensure the accuracy of the Home Assessment Report and child proposal documents.

## ***THE HOME ASSESSMENT REPORT***

A home assessment is a process in which a licensed agency social worker meets with you and your family to determine your suitability to adopt a child. The assessment also provides an opportunity for you to learn about the challenges and rewards involved in parenting a child born to others and to determine if international adoption is appropriate for you. The home assessment is required by the *Alberta Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* and the federal immigration authorities.

During the home assessment process you will be encouraged to examine your own values and feelings in relation to parenting. The social worker will explore the reasons why you want to adopt a child, your expectations for the child and the strengths and skills you have to meet a child's needs. Older children often have had difficult experiences in their early years. Malnutrition, emotional and physical trauma are issues in many children's lives. These present important challenges to be explored with any family considering adoption.

Discussions will also focus on parenting a child who may have experienced deprivation or institutional care, where there may be limited social and medical information available and where the child will have to adjust to a new country and language. Longitudinal research indicates that children placed for adoption prior to age 2 have the best outcomes with respect to adjustment and development.

The adoption agency will ask you to review your assessment, and to sign it if you are in agreement that it accurately represents your circumstances. The social worker and agency director also sign and stamp your assessment. The Home Assessment Report is then sent to Adoption and Permanency Services for provincial approval. The Home Assessment Report is required by both provincial and federal legislation and regulations.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Parent Preparation Training is a mandatory requirement of the Home Assessment process.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Home Assessment Report is not valid until signed, under seal, by Adoption and Permanency Services. It remains in effect for one year after provincial approval, unless there are significant changes in the lives of the adoptive family or in their "child desired". Applicants must advise Adoption and Permanency Services of these changes.

**ADOPTION AND PERMANENCY SERVICES REQUIRES APPROXIMATELY 20 WORKING DAYS TO REVIEW YOUR HOME ASSESSMENT REPORT. Assessments are reviewed in the order in which they arrive.** Upon review, Adoption and Permanency Services may:

- a) **approve the home assessment report if:**

- all Alberta requirements are met,
- the assessment was completed no more than 6 months preceding its submission,
- the applicants meet the eligibility requirements of the child's country,
- the applicants have completed a course on preparation for international adoption.

**b) request additional information:**

- from the applicants, or
- from any source concerning the eligibility requirements (applicants are responsible for obtaining this information and for covering the costs).

**c) refuse to approve the home assessment report**

**The decision of Adoption and Permanency Services to refuse to approve a Home Assessment Report may be appealed to an Appeal Panel by serving a Notice of Appeal as prescribed in the *Alberta Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act Regulations*.**

***UPDATE TO THE HOME ASSESSMENT REPORT***

- Updates to the home assessment report are required every 12 months after provincial approval was provided, until an adoption placement is received. A matching proposal may not be made unless the information on the applicants is up-to-date.
- If there are no major changes, updates may be completed by the applicants using Form 4. These forms are available from your Alberta agency.

***ADDENDUM TO THE HOME ASSESSMENT REPORT***

If there are major changes or issues that need to be addressed, Adoption and Permanency Services requests a thorough Addendum to be completed by an Alberta licensed adoption agency. Costs are the responsibility of the adoptive family.

***NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES***

Adoptive families must inform Adoption and Permanency Services of any significant changes during the international adoption process that might affect eligibility or suitability to adopt, including pregnancy, birth of a child, adoption of a child, changes in the "child desired", absence from Alberta, poor health, changes in financial circumstances, and changes in marital or adult interdependent relationships.

***PREPARATION OF ADOPTION DOSSIER***

Prepare your adoption dossier (all required documents) according to the specifications of the child's country of origin as outlined in the country profiles ([www.adoptionAlberta.gov.ab.ca](http://www.adoptionAlberta.gov.ab.ca)), or information provided by your coordinator, or the country of origin, and provide the number of copies required. Forward the dossier to Adoption and Permanency Services. **Adoption and Permanency Services does not review dossiers for accuracy.**

The majority of families use an adoption coordinator to prepare the adoption dossier due to the complexities involved. Private licensed adoption agencies in Alberta may also be used to prepare dossiers. All expenses are the responsibility of the applicants.

Adoption and Permanency Services forwards the dossier to the child's country of origin by courier, at the expense of the applicants.

## ***MATCHING PROCESS***

When Alberta has a role in the adoption matching process, the foreign adoption authority is responsible for identifying, selecting and placing children for adoption. In doing so, it will follow its own laws and policies. When a child is selected for you, the foreign authority forwards the child's description, photograph, medical and background information to Adoption and Permanency Services.

**Please Note:** Alberta Children and Youth Services does not have a role in the matching process of privately arranged adoptions.

## ***REVIEW AND ACCEPTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL MATCHING PROPOSALS (Hague Convention and Government Adoptions)***

If the matching referral does not indicate a medical concern, Adoption and Permanency Services reviews the referral information and makes the decision to accept the proposal, or requests more information from the child's country. When complete, the information is referred to the family's Alberta agency for presentation to the family.

If the matching referral indicates that the child has a medical concern, Alberta Children and Youth Services involves the Edmonton or Calgary Adoption Clinic and representatives from Ministries of Health and Wellness and Education to make a decision regarding acceptance of the referral. The acceptance is based on the adoptive parents' ability to care for the child and the availability of community resources to meet the needs of the child.

## ***PRESENTATION OF THE ADOPTION PROPOSAL***

The presentation of a proposal to adopt a specific child is an important stage in the process. Only an applicant who has been approved by the Ministry and has provided the required updates/addendums may be presented with a specific child proposal.

The proposal will include information about the child's background and family history. Medical information will also be provided, however, the quantity and accuracy of medical information is variable. The Edmonton and Calgary adoption clinics can help interpret the referral medical and families are urged to consult with them.

Studies have indicated that approximately one-third of children adopted internationally have serious medical problems and developmental delays, which were not recognized before adoption. Medical concerns included undetected birth defects, congenital heart abnormalities, genetic abnormalities, active hepatitis B, active hepatitis C, active tuberculosis, syphilis and hemophilia A. Many children are anemic or have intestinal parasites and may have been affected by malnutrition, physical or emotional trauma. Predictions are difficult to make with the limited information provided in the referral medical, although some abnormalities, such as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, can be detected if their characteristics are present. Photographs of the child are valuable tools in evaluating the referral.

You are encouraged to involve professionals in reviewing the child's information. Your family doctor or pediatrician and a child psychologist will be helpful in the process. Adoption clinics have been established in Edmonton and Calgary to assist children and families involved in international adoptions. Dr. Cecilia Baxter (Edmonton) and Dr. Katherine Smart (Calgary) provide reviews and consultation services regarding international adoption proposals, and follow-up services after children enter Alberta.

**Adoptive applicants must understand that not all medical conditions will be detected based on the matching referral, child's medical or physician's review of information.**

## ***APPROVAL OF ADOPTION PLACEMENT***

Adoption and Permanency Services may approve the adoption placement of the child with the applicant, if:

- Adoption and Permanency Services and the adoption authority in the child's country have agreed that the adoption may proceed,
- a valid home assessment report, update or addendum is in place, and
- the applicant has agreed to the adoption placement.

Adoption and Permanency Services will not approve an adoption placement of more than one child with an applicant in a 12-month period, unless:

- the children to be placed with the applicants are siblings (related by blood), or
- Adoption and Permanency Services is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances supporting the placement of more than one child. Financial considerations related to the cost or timing of the application do not qualify as exceptional circumstances.

The decision of Adoption and Permanency Services to refuse to approve an adoption placement proposed by adoption authorities in the child's country may be appealed to an Appeal Panel by serving a notice of appeal as prescribed in the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Regulation.

## ***IMMIGRATION***

Complete a sponsorship application – called "An Application to Sponsor and Undertaking" and submit it to Citizenship and Immigration Canada. You may do this after your suitability to adopt has been approved by the Ministry or at the time you have accepted an adoption proposal.

When the sponsorship application has been approved, Citizenship and Immigration Canada will send it to the Visa Office at the Canadian Embassy which is responsible for your child's country of origin.

Once a match has been approved between you and a child you must then submit an application for Permanent Residence. Immigration Regulations require that a permanent resident visa be obtained before the child enters Canada.

## ***PRE-PLACEMENT***

It is important to get to know the proposed child, and to allow the child to know you and your family prior to placement. How this is done will depend on a number of factors, such as the age and circumstances of the child, the distance involved, and the laws of the child's country.

## ***TRAVEL***

You are responsible for the transfer of the child from the country of origin to your home in Alberta. The transfer must take place in secure and appropriate circumstances. You should accompany your new child on this journey. Some countries allow an agent to transport the child to Canada.

**Please DO NOT make travel arrangements until you receive confirmation that all documents are in place for travel to Canada or you are advised by Adoption and Permanency Services. Immigration Regulations require that a permanent resident visa be obtained before the child enters Canada.**

Advise Adoption and Permanency Services of the date you will be travelling and in cases of a Hague or government adoption, contact Adoption and Permanency Services if you are experiencing any difficulties with the processing of your adoption abroad.

## **ADOPTION FINALIZATION AND POST-PLACEMENT**

It is strongly recommended and generally required that you travel to the child's country to complete the legal adoption and bring the child home to Alberta. This provides an opportunity for a pre-placement process and helps you to gain an understanding of the child's background and culture.

Few international adoptions are finalized in Alberta as most are completed in the child's country of origin. Court sanctioned foreign adoption orders are recognized under the *Alberta Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*, as long as they form a permanent child-parent relationship.

When required, the child is supervised in the adoptive home by a licensed adoption agency. In Hague or government international adoptions, the Alberta adoption agencies are given delegation to prepare and complete legal documents with the adoptive parents and their references, and to file the adoption petition in Court. A Justice processes the adoptions without the need for a court hearing; unless extra-ordinary issues need to be addressed.

**Privately arranged international adoptions cannot be finalized in Alberta, unless the adoptive parents obtain permanent residency status for the child through Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Note: A permanent resident visa, for the purpose of finalizing an adoption in Canada, must be obtained before the child enters Canada. Alberta Children and Youth Services has no responsibility in this process. As well, Alberta Children and Youth Services has no role in international Private Guardianship matters. If the adoptive parents are successful in obtaining permanent residency status, they can process a private adoption in Alberta.**

In order to finalize an international adoption through the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench, you must provide:

- A Home Assessment Report completed by a licensed adoption agency and approved by the Ministry. Original signatures are required for Court purposes.
- Post-placement reports as required, completed by a licensed Alberta adoption agency.
- Confirmation from Citizenship and Immigration Canada that the child is a permanent resident.
- Documents specified in Section 63 of the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*.

Post-placement reports before and after completion of the adoption may be required by the child's country of origin. These are completed by the licensed adoption agency social worker. Families are responsible for arranging for and translating the report, if required. The report, translation and photographs are forwarded to the child's country by Adoption and Permanency Services.

**Alberta cannot undertake to countries of origin to provide supervision, complete post-placement reports or to register the child with the consulate or embassy of the originating country after the adoption order is granted. Adoptive families may prepare a document that outlines their commitment to obtain supervision and post-placement reports through a licensed Alberta adoption agency, and to register the child with the consulate/embassy.**

International adoptions involve the laws of the child's country, Alberta and Canada. It is necessary to respect the requirements of all jurisdictions. Failure on the part of some adoptive parents to comply with foreign requirements could result in the discontinuation of adoptions from that country. Countries are very concerned about the well being of their children who are adopted internationally, and wish to be assured that the children continue to do well in their new families during the post-adoption period.

## **ARRIVAL IN ALBERTA**

Steps to complete:

- Advise Adoption and Permanency Services of your child's arrival in Alberta.
- Add the child to your Alberta Health Care and Employee Benefit packages.
- Visit your family doctor and have a complete medical exam conducted. Update your child's immunizations.
- Name a guardian for your child and have your lawyer prepare the necessary documents.
- Arrange for a developmental assessment and therapy, if needed, through an early intervention program.
- Change your child's name, if needed.
- Apply for Canadian citizenship through the Court of Canadian Citizenship (federal government).
- Apply for parental leave benefits.

## **ADOPTION OFFENCES**

For both domestic and international adoptions, there are restrictions on payments associated with the adoption.

For adoptions completed in Alberta and governed by the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*, applicants must take note of section 83 as follows:

- Prohibition 83** (1) No person shall give or receive or agree to give or receive any payment or reward, whether direct or indirect,
- (a) to procure or assist in procuring, or
  - (b) to place or facilitate the placement of a child for the purposes of an adoption in or outside Alberta.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not apply to reasonable fees, expenses or disbursements paid to
- (a) a qualified person in respect of the preparation of a home assessment report pursuant to this Part,
  - (b) a lawyer in respect of legal services provided in connection with an adoption,
  - (c) a physician in respect of medical services provided to a child who is the subject of an adoption, or
  - (d) a licensed adoption agency, if the fees, expenses or disbursements are prescribed in the regulations.
- Prohibition 84** No person other than the following shall place or facilitate the placement of a child for the purpose of an adoption:
- (a) a parent of the child;
  - (b) a director;
  - (c) a licensed adoption agency;
  - (c.1) the Minister
  - (d) a person authorized by the Minister in accordance with the regulations
- Offence 86(1)** Any person and any officer or employee of a corporation who contravenes Section 83 or 84 is guilty of an offence and liable to a penalty and fine.

**Prohibition 62(1)(3)**

No petition for an adoption order shall be filed in respect of a child unless the child is a Canadian citizen or has been lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

**Licensed or approved parties may receive payments for expenses permitted under Alberta law, but may not receive gifts, rewards, or inducements. It is illegal for a birth parent or an unlicensed or unapproved third party intermediary to receive any payment, gift, reward or inducement in regard to the adoption. Similarly, it is illegal for an adoptive applicant to give or offer to give any payment, gift, reward or inducement to a birth parent or any unlicensed or unapproved intermediary in the adoption.**

***SEARCHING ADOPTION RECORDS***

Later in life your child may want more information about his or her birth parents. Alberta Children and Youth Services, operates a Post Adoption Registry that provides this information for adoptees whose adoption was finalized in Alberta.

If the adoption was not finalized in Alberta, when your child is an adult, he or she may contact the province or country where the adoption was granted. Information will be provided in accordance with the laws of that province or country.

## **PART 2: Adoption Procedures**

The international adoption process is complicated by the fact that different jurisdictions have different laws and procedures. The majority of adoptions are finalized in the child's country of origin. A small number of Hague Convention and government facilitated adoptions are finalized through the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench.

**PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS MUST BE FINALIZED IN THE CHILD'S COUNTRY OF ORIGIN UNLESS THE ADOPTIVE PARENTS OBTAIN PERMANENT RESIDENCY STATUS FOR THE CHILD THROUGH CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION CANADA. A permanent resident visa, for the purpose of finalizing an adoption in Canada, must be obtained before the child enters Canada.**

### ***ADOPTION APPLICATION***

- Complete the International Adoption Application (CS2777) and send or fax it to Adoption and Permanency Services. (Address/fax numbers are on the front cover of this booklet.)
- Adoption and Permanency Services will accept the application, unless the Minister has declared the country unacceptable for the purpose of international adoption.
- Adoption and Permanency Services will advise you of the requirements of your adoption.
- Adoption and Permanency Services will provide authorization for the applicants to obtain a home assessment report from a licensed adoption agency in Alberta (see [www.adoptionAlberta.gov.ab.ca](http://www.adoptionAlberta.gov.ab.ca) for listing of agencies).

### **PROCEDURES FOR PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION**

**Private international adoptions can be processed only under the following circumstances:**

- the child's country of origin has not implemented The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption,
- the adoption can be finalized by the court in the child's country of origin (***Private Guardianship Orders are not Adoption Orders***),
- the child is not in government care,
- the child's country does not require any involvement from Alberta Children and Youth Services in the adoption process.

#### Process:

1. Adoptive family applies on Form CS2777 International Adoption Application and forwards it to Adoption and Permanency Services. This form is available through adoption agencies or through the website [www.adoptionAlberta.gov.ab.ca](http://www.adoptionAlberta.gov.ab.ca) (click Application Forms).
2. Adoption and Permanency Services determines if the application is acceptable and advises applicants of issues that may impact the privately arranged adoption. (Additional issues may become apparent during the adoption process.)
3. If the application is accepted, Adoption and Permanency Services authorizes the applicants to obtain a Home Assessment Report from a licensed adoption agency.
4. Applicants complete the agency's training for international adoptive families.
5. Licensed adoption agency completes the Home Assessment Report and, once reviewed and signed by the adoptive parents and agency staff, forwards the report to Adoption and Permanency Services for provincial approval.
6. Adoption and Permanency Services reviews the Home Assessment Report.

7. If Adoption and Permanency Services approves the applicants for international adoption, the original Home Assessment and two letters of approval are forwarded to the applicants by Registered Mail. (Applicants will need to claim the registered mail at the Post Office or at another designated site.) **Please Note: Approval of the Home Assessment Report does not constitute approval of the adoptive match.**
8. The applicants arrange the adoption directly with the child's country of origin, according to the legislation of that country. Alberta Children and Youth Services has no role in the facilitation, matching, processing or finalization of the adoption.
9. Applicants must finalize the adoption and obtain the adoption order in the child's country. The Adoption Order must have the same effect as one granted in Alberta. The order cannot be finalized in Alberta, unless the adoptive parents obtain permanent residency status for the child. A permanent resident visa, for the purpose of finalizing an adoption in Canada, must be obtained before the child enters Canada. Alberta Children and Youth Services does not assist adoptive families in obtaining permanent residency status for a child.
10. Applicants must complete a sponsorship application called "An Application to Sponsor and Undertaking" and submit it to Citizenship & Immigration Canada. Sponsorship approval means that the applicants have sufficient income to sponsor a child. It does not mean that the child will be allowed to enter Canada as a permanent resident.
11. Adoptive family sends a copy and translation of the Adoption Order obtained from the court of the child's country, to Adoption and Permanency Services (Fax: 780-427-2048). Private Guardianship Orders are not Adoption Orders.
12. Adoption and Permanency Services issues a "Letter of No Involvement" and faxes it to the Canadian Embassy abroad that is responsible for the child's country. A copy of the letter is provided to the family by registered mail.
13. An application for permanent residence (separate from the sponsorship application) must be submitted for the child and the child must meet all Citizenship & Immigration Canada requirements to enter Canada as a permanent resident. The adoptive family is responsible for obtaining the passport, medical and Canadian visa for the child and for making travel arrangements.

### **PROCEDURES FOR GOVERNMENT ADOPTION FOR NON-HAGUE COUNTRIES**

1. Adoptive family applies on Form CS2777 International Adoption Application and forwards it to Adoption and Permanency Services. This form is available through adoption agencies or through the website [www.adoptionAlberta.gov.ab.ca](http://www.adoptionAlberta.gov.ab.ca) (click Application Forms).
2. Adoption and Permanency Services determines if the application is acceptable and advises applicants of issues that may impact the adoption. (Additional issues may become apparent during the adoption process.)
3. If the application is accepted, Adoption and Permanency Services authorizes the applicants to obtain a Home Assessment Report from a licensed adoption agency.
4. Applicants complete the agency's training for international adoptive families.
5. Licensed adoption agency completes the Home Assessment Report and, once reviewed and signed by the adoptive parents and agency staff, forwards the report to Adoption and Permanency Services for provincial approval.
6. Adoption and Permanency Services reviews the Home Assessment Report.
7. If Adoption and Permanency Services approves the applicants for international adoption, the original Home Assessment and two letters of approval are forwarded to the applicants by Registered Mail.

(Applicants will need to claim the registered mail at the Post Office or at another designated site.)  
**Please Note: Approval of the Home Assessment Report does not constitute approval of the adoptive match.**

8. The applicants gather the Home Assessment Report and all other required documents and compile them into an adoption dossier, or the applicants obtain the services of an adoption agency/coordinator to assist them in compiling the dossier.
9. The applicant/agency/coordinator arranges for the dossier to be translated, notarized, authenticated and verified according to the legal requirements of the child's country of origin.
10. The applicants/agency/coordinator forwards the completed dossier, along with the required number of copies, to Adoption and Permanency Services.
11. The applicants complete a sponsorship application called "An Application to Sponsor and Undertaking" and submit it to Citizenship & Immigration Canada at this time. An application must be submitted for each child being adopted. There is a fee for each application. Approval for sponsorship confirms that the applicants have sufficient income to sponsor a child. It does not approve a child's entry to Canada as a permanent resident.
12. Adoption and Permanency Services forwards the dossier by courier to the government authority in the child's country of origin and requests the dossier be released to an agency approved by the child's country to facilitate an international adoption. All costs are the responsibility of the adoptive family.
13. Adoption and Permanency Services corresponds with the applicants and the child's country until all the information required by the child's country is complete. Please note that there may be delays in obtaining log-in dates from the country of origin.
14. The originating country selects a child to be matched with the applicants in Alberta.
15. The matching proposal, which includes the child's description, a photograph, medical and background information, is forwarded by the agency in the child's country to Adoption and Permanency Services.
16. Adoption and Permanency Services will contact the coordinator or the translator if the "match" requires translation. The family is not identified to the coordinator or translator.
17. Adoption and Permanency Services reviews the "match" to ensure consistency with the Home Assessment recommendation or begins Alberta's review process for a child with medical concerns.
18. If appropriate, Adoption and Permanency Services provides the referral information to the family's Alberta agency. The agency proposes the match to the applicants and forwards all information to them, including a "Letter of Acceptance/Decline".
19. The applicants are asked to discuss the information with their family doctor and/or appropriate specialists at the Edmonton or Calgary Adoption Clinics.
20. The applicants advise Adoption and Permanency Services of their decision regarding adoption of the proposed child by completing the Letter of Acceptance/Decline. The original signed letter is required.
21. Adoption and Permanency Services advises the child's country of Alberta's and the applicant's decision regarding the match. If accepting the match, Adoption and Permanency Services by forwards the appropriate documents (Letters of No Objection) to the Canadian Embassy abroad that is responsible for the child's country. The applicants receive a copy of the letter by registered mail.

22. If Adoption and Permanency Services approves the match, and if the applicant agrees to the adoption of the child, the child's agency or coordinator arranges for the finalization of the adoption order abroad and obtains the immigration medical for the child as well as the child's passport and visa.
23. If not done previously, the applicant must complete a sponsorship application. A separate application for permanent residence must also be completed and submitted.
24. When the sponsorship application has been approved, Citizenship & Immigration Canada sends it to the Visa Office of the Canadian Embassy responsible for the child's country of origin. This is matched with the application for permanent residence and when all criteria have been met a permanent resident visa is issued.
25. Adoption and Permanency Services encourages the applicants to travel to the child's country to receive placement. Applicants must advise Adoption and Permanency Services of the date they plan to travel. Travel arrangements should not be made until all documents are in order and the child's country has confirmed that the parents can travel, and a permanent resident visa has been issued to the child.
26. When the applicants arrive in Alberta, they advise Adoption and Permanency Services of the child's arrival in Alberta.
27. Post placement/post adoption follow-up reports, as required by the child's country of origin, are provided by licensed adoption agencies. These must be arranged by the adoptive family.
28. If the adoption is being finalized in Alberta, the child's placement is supervised by a licensed adoption agency.
29. The child's country provides consent to the adoption and the petition is prepared and filed in Court by the Alberta agency.

### **PROCEDURES FOR HAGUE CONVENTION ADOPTIONS**

1. Adoptive family applies on Form CS2777 International Adoption Application and forwards it to Adoption and Permanency Services. This form is available through adoption agencies or through the website [www.adoptionalberta.gov.ab.ca](http://www.adoptionalberta.gov.ab.ca) (click Application Forms).
2. Adoption and Permanency Services determines if the application is acceptable and advises applicants of issues that may impact the adoption. (Additional issues may become apparent during the adoption process.)
3. If the application is accepted, Adoption and Permanency Services authorizes the applicants to obtain a Home Assessment Report from a licensed adoption agency.
4. Applicants complete the agency's training for international adoptive families.
5. Licensed adoption agency completes Home Assessment Report and once reviewed and signed off by adoptive parents and agency staff, forward the report to Adoption and Permanency Services or provincial approval.
6. Adoption and Permanency Services reviews the Home Assessment Report.
7. If Adoption and Permanency Services approves the applicants for international adoption, the original Home Assessment and two letters of approval are forwarded to the applicants by Registered Mail. (Applicants will need to claim the registered mail at the Post Office or at another designated site.)  
**Please Note: Approval of the Home Assessment Report does not constitute approval of the adoptive match.**

8. The applicants gather the Home Assessment Report and all other required documents and compile them into an adoption dossier, or the applicants obtain the services of an adoption agency/coordinator to assist them in compiling the dossier.
9. The applicant/agency/coordinator arranges for the dossier to be translated, notarized, authenticated and verified according to the legal requirements of the child's country of origin.
10. The applicants/agency/coordinator forwards the completed dossier, along with the required number of copies, to Adoption and Permanency Services.
11. Adoption and Permanency Services forwards the dossier by courier to the Central Authority in the child's country of origin and requests the dossier be provided to an agency approved by the Central Authority to facilitate an international adoption.
12. The applicants may complete a sponsorship application called an "Undertaking of Assistance" and submit it to Citizenship and Immigration Canada at this time. An application must be done for each child being adopted. There is a fee for each application. The sponsorship approval confirms that the applicants have sufficient income to sponsor a child. It does not provide approval for the child to enter Canada as a permanent resident.
13. Adoption and Permanency Services corresponds with the applicants and the child's country until all the information required by the child's country is complete.
14. The Central Authority or delegate in the originating country selects a child to be matched with the applicants in Alberta.
15. The matching proposal, which includes the child's description, a photograph, medical and background information, is forwarded by the agency in the child's country to their Central Authority, who, in turn, forward the proposal to Adoption and Permanency Services in Alberta. On occasion, the match will come directly from the agency in the child's country.
16. Adoption and Permanency Services will contact the coordinator or the translator if the "match" requires translation. The family is not identified to the coordinator or translator.
17. Adoption and Permanency Services reviews the "match" to ensure consistency with the Home Assessment recommendation or begins Alberta's review process for a child with medical concerns.
18. If appropriate, Adoption and Permanency Services provides the referral information to the family's Alberta agency. The agency proposes the match to the applicants and forwards all information to them, including a "Letter of Acceptance/Decline".
19. The applicants are encouraged to discuss the information with their family doctor or appropriate specialists.
20. The applicants advise Adoption and Permanency Services of their decision regarding adoption of the proposed child by completing the Letter of Acceptance/Decline. The original signed letter is required.
21. Adoption and Permanency Services advises the Central Authority in the child's country of Alberta's agreement and the applicant's decision and Alberta's position by forwarding the appropriate Notification of Agreement Letter.
22. If Adoption and Permanency Services approves the match and the applicant agrees to the adoption of the child, the child's Central Authority proceeds with obtaining an immigration medical on the child, arranging for the child's travel and finalizing the adoption in the court.
23. If not done previously, the applicant must complete a sponsorship application. A separate application for permanent residence must also be completed and submitted.

24. When the sponsorship application has been approved, Citizenship and Immigration Canada sends it to the Visa Office of the Canadian Embassy responsible for the child's country of origin. This is matched with the application for permanent residence.
25. If the child passes the medical and other requirements for admission to Canada, the Visa Office will issue a letter that confirms that the child meets immigration requirements and a visa will be issued once the adoption procedures are finalized according to the country's requirements. In a minority of cases, adoption orders are finalized in Alberta.
26. Adoption and Permanency Services encourages the applicants to travel to the child's country to receive placement. Applicants should advise Adoption and Permanency Services of the date they plan to travel.
27. Upon the adoption order being granted in the child's country, the applicants advise the Canadian Embassy who provides a Visa to allow the child to travel. The child's country will also need to provide a passport for the child.
28. The agency will also arrange travel documents for the child when all the legal requirements are met and the court proceedings complete.
29. When the applicants arrive in Alberta, they advise Adoption and Permanency Services of the child's arrival in Alberta. (See page 12 of International Adoption Guide).
30. Post placement/post adoption follow-up reports, as required by the child's country of origin, are provided by licensed adoption agencies, at the request and cost of the adoptive parent.

### **Responsibilities of the Sending and Receiving Central Authorities**

#### **Sending Country (child's country of origin):**

- Determines that the child is eligible for an international adoption and that there are no suitable families for the child domestically.
- Obtains consent to the adoption from child's parents/guardians.
- Selects the adoptive parents for the child from the documentation provided by the Receiving Central Authority (Alberta).
- Forwards the child's matching referral to Alberta's Central Authority.
- Places the child with the adoptive family.
- Finalizes the Adoption Order in the majority of cases.
- Ensures the child has the required documentation to travel to Canada.

#### **Receiving Country (Alberta):**

- Provides training and approves family for adoption according to provincial standards.
- Sends adoptive parent's dossier to the child's country of origin.
- Receives the matching proposal and agrees to the match.

- Provides authorization for an Alberta agency to propose the child to the adoptive family.
- Provides documentation to Citizenship and Immigration Canada to allow the child to enter Canada as a permanent resident.
- Provides authorization for an Alberta agency to finalize Adoption Orders when required.

### ***INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION BY CANADIAN CITIZENS / HABITUAL ALBERTA RESIDENTS TEMPORARILY LIVING ABROAD***

Prospective adoptive parents must be residents of Alberta in order to process an international adoption through the Government of Alberta.

If you are Canadian citizens temporarily living abroad for a short period of time and wish to process an international adoption as Alberta residents, you must provide evidence that you are habitual residents of Alberta. This allows the Ministry to determine whether Alberta has the jurisdiction to deal with your application.

The following documents will assist in determining your status of residency in Alberta:

- Documentary evidence with your name and an Alberta address showing you were Alberta residents in the past.
- Property tax bills showing that you currently keep a residence in Alberta or own property here.
- A letter from your employer showing you are planning to return to Alberta in a relatively short period of time (1 to 2 years).

Once the “habitual residents of Alberta” status is established, the following process will be in place for privately arranged and government facilitated adoptions:

- If you have not lived in Alberta for 3 or more years, you will not be considered a habitual resident.

a) **Privately arranged adoptions, finalized in the child’s country of origin:**

Fax a copy and translation of the finalized adoption order to:

Adoption and Permanency Services  
 Alberta Children and Youth Services  
 11<sup>th</sup> Floor, Sterling Place  
 9940 – 106 Street  
 Edmonton AB T5K 2N2  
 FAX: (780) 427-2048

Adoption and Permanency Services will fax a Letter of No Involvement to the Canadian Embassy/High Commission responsible for your child’s country. You will receive a copy of this letter for your records.

b) **Adoptions under The Hague Convention or those facilitated by the government:**

You need to arrange for a bona fide agency in the country where you are currently residing to conduct your Home Assessment Report (according to Alberta’s requirements). The Ministry of Children and Youth Services must be in agreement that the agency selected may complete the assessment. The Ministry must also review the assessment and provide provincial approval.

Send the adoption dossier and all other required documentation to Adoption and Permanency Services for forwarding to the child's country of origin.

The country of origin proposes the match to Adoption and Permanency Services who will contact you with respect to the referred child. Please be aware that some countries are not willing to place their children with "habitual residents" who do not reside in the provincial jurisdiction. It is the responsibility of applicants to confirm that the child's country is willing to place a child in a third country.

If in agreement, Adoption and Permanency Services will provide the Letter of No Objection or Notification of Agreement (Hague Convention) in support of the child's entry into Canada.

You will need to obtain the necessary documents for the child's entry into the country where you currently reside.

You will need to satisfy the child's country that the child will be supervised in the adoptive home by a competent authority and that post-placement reports will be provided.

**Please be aware that arranging international adoptions on behalf of habitual residents of Alberta who are living abroad is extremely complex. It is strongly recommended that you wait to process the adoption until you return to Alberta. If you still wish to proceed, please be advised that there will be significant time delays, as you must allow Adoption and Permanency Services sufficient time to respond to numerous questions/issues that will arise in various jurisdictions.**

**If you have been living abroad for three years or more, you will not be considered as habitual residents of this province.**

**Expatriate Albertans living abroad, who adopt overseas, may apply to the appropriate Canadian Embassy to obtain Canadian citizenship for their adopted child.**

## Part 3: Resources

### ***WHERE TO FIND HELP***

The International Adoption Families Association (IAFA) is a non-profit organization composed of over 200 Alberta families who have successfully completed an international adoption or who are in the process of completing an international adoption.

#### **Goals of the IAFA:**

- To support, educate and inform families about international adoption.
- To act as a resource to the general public regarding international adoption.
- To educate and exchange information with stakeholders in the international adoption area.

#### **IAFA Programs and Services:**

##### ***Co-ordination Program***

The Co-ordination Program provides interested members with assistance and guidance through the adoption process. This is a fee-based service offered by experienced and ethical consultants who are governed by the IAFA.

##### ***Support Group Meetings***

Support group meetings are held in Edmonton and Calgary and provide an opportunity to meet other members, share experiences and exchange information.

##### ***Lending Library***

Members may borrow materials from the IAFA's library of books and videos on adoption, international adoption, adoption from specific countries, raising adopted children and other related topics.

##### ***Social Events***

Social events are held regularly in Edmonton and Calgary for members of the IAFA, their families and friends.

##### ***Buddy Matching***

New members can be matched with buddy members who have successfully completed the international adoption process, and are willing to share their experience and provide information and support on a one-to-one basis.

##### ***Newsletter & Membership Roster***

A newsletter is published three times a year. It contains a schedule of support group meetings and social events, as well as articles on international adoption issues.

#### **Contact IAFA at:**

Calgary (403) 270-2474

Edmonton (780) 452-7624

Web Site: [www.iafa.ca](http://www.iafa.ca)

## Useful addresses and telephone numbers:

### ***(For more information about international adoption)***

Adoption and Permanency Services  
Alberta Children and Youth Services  
11<sup>th</sup> Floor, Sterling Place  
9940 – 106 Street  
Edmonton AB T5K 2N2  
Tel: (780) 422-0178; E-Mail: [adoption.services@gov.ab.ca](mailto:adoption.services@gov.ab.ca)  
Website: [www.adoptionalberta.gov.ab.ca](http://www.adoptionalberta.gov.ab.ca)

### ***(For more information about adoption disclosure)***

Post Adoption Registry  
(same address as above)  
Tel: (780) 427-6387; E-mail: [postadoption.registry@gov.ab.ca](mailto:postadoption.registry@gov.ab.ca)  
Website: [www.child.gov.ab.ca](http://www.child.gov.ab.ca)

### ***(To apply to sponsor an adopted child for permanent residence in Canada)***

Citizenship and Immigration, Case Processing Centre  
P. O. Box 6100, Station A, Mississauga, Ontario L5A 4H4  
Tel: Toll Free 1-888-242-2100

### ***(For information regarding adoption leave/employment insurance)***

Employment Insurance: Tel: 1-800-206-7218

### ***(For lawyer referral service)***

Law Society of Alberta  
Tel: 1-800-661-1095

### ***(For information and bibliographies of available books on telling children they are adopted; audio tapes, newsletters, videotapes)***

The Adoption Council of Canada  
#329, 180 Argyle Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K2P1B7  
Telephone: (613) 235-0344 Website: [www.adoption.ca](http://www.adoption.ca)

### ***(For information regarding authentication of documents or adoption requirements in the child's country through foreign embassies in Canada)***

Reference Canada  
Tel: 1-800-667-3355 30

International Adoption Families Association (IAFA)  
Suite 1016, 246 Stewart Green SW  
Calgary, Alberta T3H 3C8  
Calgary: (403) 270-2474  
Edmonton: (780) 452-7624  
Website: [www.iafa.ca](http://www.iafa.ca)

## **Licensed Adoption Agencies in Alberta**

### **Adoption By Choice:**

250, 3115 – 12<sup>th</sup> Street N.E.  
Calgary, AB T2E 7J2  
Telephone: (403) 245-8854  
Fax: (403) 245-8897  
E-mail: [calgary@adoptionbychoice.ca](mailto:calgary@adoptionbychoice.ca)  
Program Director: Ramone Kindrat, B.S.W., R.S.W.  
355 Burton Road  
Edmonton AB T6R 2J1  
Telephone: (780) 448-1159  
Fax: (780) 454-9391  
E-Mail: [edmonton@adoptionbychoice.ca](mailto:edmonton@adoptionbychoice.ca)  
Contact: Sheila Feehan, M.S.W., R.S.W.  
  
Toll Free: 1-800-570-2835  
Internet: [www.adoptionbychoice.ca](http://www.adoptionbychoice.ca)

Adoption by Choice has contract professionals located in Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, Edmonton, Edson, Camrose, Red Deer, Calgary, Canmore/Banff, Lethbridge, St. Paul, Vermilion, Lloydminster, Bonnyville and Vegreville. This agency has the ability to serve other communities on an individual basis as the need arises.

### **Adoption Options:**

#304, 10109 – 106 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3L7  
Telephone: (780) 433-5656  
Fax: (780) 447-4763  
E-Mail: [aoedm@adoptionoptions.com](mailto:aoedm@adoptionoptions.com)  
Program Director: Barb Keppy  
Toll Free: 1-800-770-3023

Macleod Place II, #207, 5940 Macleod Trail S  
Calgary AB T2H 2G4  
Telephone: (403) 270-8228  
Fax: (403) 270-3929  
E-Mail: [aocal@adoptionoptions.com](mailto:aocal@adoptionoptions.com)  
Program Director: Liz Gifford

Toll Free: 1-888-277-8228  
Internet: [www.adoptionoptions.com](http://www.adoptionoptions.com)

Adoption Options has contract workers in Fort McMurray, Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary, Lethbridge, Peace River, Canmore, Hinton and Drayton Valley. This agency is able to serve all areas as need arises.

### **Christian Adoption and Permanency Services:**

201B Horton Road SW  
Calgary AB T2V 2X5  
Telephone: (403) 256-3224  
Fax: (403) 256-8367  
Email: [info@christianadoption.ab.ca](mailto:info@christianadoption.ab.ca)  
  
Internet: [www.christianadoption.ab.ca](http://www.christianadoption.ab.ca)

Program Director: Wendy Robinson, B.S.W.  
Services province wide.

**LDS Family Services, Canada:**

7040 Farrell Road SE  
Calgary AB T2H 0T2  
Telephone: (403) 255-0153  
Fax: (403) 255-2440  
Toll Free: 1-800-661-8256  
Program Director: Brad Harker.

1625 Cedar Road South  
Lethbridge AB T1K 4W6  
Telephone: (403) 328-8263  
Fax: (403) 328-0383  
Toll Free: 1-800-563-9956  
Program Director: Gloria Robbins

For Adoptive Couples – This agency is prepared to serve members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints who are in good standing.

For Birth Parents – This agency provides services to birth parents throughout the province of Alberta regardless of religious orientation. Classes and counselling are offered free of charge to assist birth parents in exploring the options of marriage, parenting or adopting into a home with Christian values.