

Adopting a Child from the United States

The United States implemented the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption in April 2008 and all adoptions between the United States and Alberta must now meet the requirements of the Hague Convention.

If your family is considering adopting a child from the United States, it's important that you understand what provisions need to be in place to prevent a delay in the adoption process.

Questions and Answers

1. Can I still arrange a private adoption from the United States?

No. All adoptions between the United States and Alberta must be processed according to the requirements of the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption.

2. What is the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption?

The Hague Convention establishes international standards of practice which protect the child, birth parents and adoptive parents. It aims to prevent the abduction, sale of, or trafficking in children and recognizes inter-country adoption as a means of offering a permanent home to a child, when a suitable family has not been found in the child's country of origin.

3. What are the requirements of the Hague Convention?

The Hague Convention requires the following:

Receiving jurisdiction (Alberta)

- accepts the adoption registration from the adoptive applicants;
- ensures the adoptive applicants have received training on preparation for international adoption;
- determines the applicants are eligible and suited to adopt;
- sends the applicants' adoption dossier (home study and supporting documents) to the US Central Authority or delegated agency;
- receives the matching referral on the child from the US Central Authority or delegated agency;
- agrees the adoption of the proposed child may proceed;
- proposes the child to the adoptive applicants; and
- ensures that the child will be able to enter Canada as a permanent resident.

Sending jurisdiction (United States)

- establishes the child is adoptable;
- determines, after considering placement of the child within the United States, that inter-country adoption is in the child's best interests;
- ensures the consent of the child's guardian(s) has been given;
- provides a matching referral on the child;

- agrees the adoption may proceed; and
- finalizes the adoption order.

4. Are there procedures in place between the United States and Alberta to process adoption of US children by Alberta families?

Alberta has a process in place to meet all requirements for a receiving jurisdiction.

- a) The US Central Authority has authorized specific US agencies to arrange outgoing adoptions of US children. These agencies are listed at adoption.state.gov. Adoptive families may select one of these authorized agencies.
- b) Alberta has:
 - Contacted three US agencies to negotiate a working arrangement;
 - Provided the agencies with DRAFT procedures and requested the agencies' response regarding payment of birth parent expenses and agency fees, custody status for the child to enter Canada prior to adoption finalization, medical and foster care fees for the child, confirmation that US adoptive families were first considered for the adoption of the child, selection of the adoptive family prior to the birth of the child, contact between the birth and adoptive parents and finalization of the adoption order.

These working arrangements are currently being reviewed by Legal Services to ensure all requirements of Alberta's *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* and the Hague Convention has been met.

5. What should I do to adopt a child from the United States?

- 1) Complete the International Adoption Application Form (CS2777) and forward it to Alberta Adoption and Permanency Services;
- 2) Obtain international adoption training and a home assessment report from a private licensed adoption agency in Alberta;
- 3) Obtain provincial approval of the assessment from Adoption and Permanency Services; and
- 4) Submit your adoption dossier (home assessment report and supporting documents) to Alberta Adoption and Permanency Services and provide the name of the US agency you have chosen to facilitate your adoption.

6. What will the Alberta government do when I submit my adoption dossier to Adoption and Permanency Services and provide the name of the US agency I selected?

- A:**
- a) Ensure the selected agency is authorized by the US Central Authority to process outgoing adoption cases under the Hague Convention;
 - b) Establish an adoption process with the agency which meets the requirements of Alberta's legislation and the Hague Convention;

- c) Courier your adoption dossier to the agency; and
Process your adoption according to the established process with the agency.

7. Where can I get more information if I need further clarification?

A: Contact Alberta Adoption and Permanency Services at Adoption.Services@gov.ab.ca.