

Post Adoption Services

Introduction

Post-Adoption services refers to any program or service available to anyone of the parties involved in the Adoption (Adopted person, Adoptive parent, or Birth parents) after an Adoption order is granted.

An Adoptive family may be eligible for financial or other assistance through the Department's subsidized Adoption assistance program. Adopted adults, Adoptive parents and Birth parents may be entitled to receive information from the Post-Adoption registry.

The Department of HSS may also assist the Adoptive family directly, or by referral to the appropriate agency for:

- assistance in obtaining a Birth certificate;
- registration for Indian/Inuit Status; and
- tax credits.

What is the Post Adoption Registry?

The Post Adoption Registry refers to the disclosure of information following a legal Adoption. Post Adoption services may include providing non-identifying background information, copies of legal documents and search and contact services. The Registrar of Adoption within the Department of HSS manages the Post Adoption Registry.

Who may obtain information from the Registry?

For Adoptions finalized after November 1, 1998, information may only be disclosed when the Adopted person has reached 19 years of age. Information may be disclosed to:

- Adults Adopted as children;
- Birth parents; and
- Adoptive parents.

Other persons who may be entitled to registry information include:

- Natural grandparents and adult (natural) siblings 19 years of age; and
- Former Adoptive parents and former Adoptive grandparents or adult siblings of Former Adoptive parents, who are 19 years of age.

All Adoptions must have been finalized in the Northwest Territories.

What about search and contact?

Birthparents, Adoptive parents and adults who were Adopted as children, may request search and contact services to find out if an Adopted adult or Birth parent is agreeable to contact. Identifying information is released only upon consent of both parties.

If you are an adult who was Adopted as a child, the Post-Adoption Registry may provide:

Non-identifying background information

Non-identifying background information about your Birth family includes ethnic origin, physical descriptions, occupational skills and interests. This information does not include names, addresses or other data that would identify your Birth family.

Search and contact

A search for your Birth parent after receiving your Application form, and verifying your entitlement to Registry information. Each request is placed on a waiting list. Through discreet enquiries, staff will determine if the Birth parent would agree to contact with you. Identifying information is released only upon consent of both parties. You will be advised in the event that your Birth parent declines the opportunity for contact.

Specific documents

A copy of your Adoption Order.

If you are a Birth parent (your Birth son or daughter is Adopted) the Post-Adoption Registry may provide:

Non-identifying background information

A non-identifying background summary about the Adoptive family. This information usually would have been current at the time the Adoption was finalized.

Search and contact

A search for an adult whom you had placed for Adoption as a child. These requests are placed on a waiting list. Through discreet enquiries, program staff will determine if your natural child would agree to contact. Identifying information is released only upon consent of both parties. You will be advised if he or she declines the opportunity for contact.

Specific documents

Copies of legal documents (your consent) to the Adoption of the child.

If you are an Adoptive parent (you Adopted your son or daughter) the Post-Adoption Registry may provide:

Non-identifying background information

Non-identifying background information about your Adopted child's Birth family. In most cases the information provided was obtained at the time of your child's placement in your home. It normally describes the Birth family's ethnic origins, physical descriptions, occupational skills, and their interests. The information does not contain names, addresses or other data that would identify the Birth family.

Specific documents

A copy of your Adoption order.

If you are a Birth family member (a member of your family has a Birth child who is Adopted) the Post-Adoption Registry may provide:

Non-identifying background information

Birth family members need the consent of the Birth mother to obtain a non-identifying background summary about Adoptive parents.

Can information about the Adoption be released before the Adopted person is 19 years of age?

Yes. The Registrar of Adoption has discretion to release information from the Adoption record to:

- protect the health, welfare or safety of the Adopted person (ie: such as for the diagnosis or treatment of a serious medical condition) or, to establish the aboriginal status of the Adopted person.

****A note about changes effective November 1, 1998.*

For Adoptions finalized after November 1, 1998, Adoptive parents and Birth parents will be informed at the time of the Adoption that when the child is 19 years of age, he or she and/or the Birth parent may request information from the Adoptions Registry.

What is the procedure for obtaining Registry information?

The procedure for obtaining Registry information is to make the request in writing on the Adoption Registry Application for Information form. The person requesting the information must provide proof of their identity to the Registrar, so the Registrar can verify that this person is entitled to receive information under the *NWT Adoptions Act*.

The applicant completes the form and attaches two pieces of identification (i.e. photocopy of a Birth certificate or drivers' license).

The form is sent to:

Registrar, Adoptions

Department of Health and Social Services
Government of the NWT
Box 1320, CST 6
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

When the request is received, the Registrar will acknowledge receipt. If you are requesting non-identifying information and are entitled to receive the information, the Registrar will disclose the information to you within sixty days.

If you are requesting a search or contact, your name will be placed on a waiting list. The Registrar or designate, will make discreet enquiries to obtain the consent of the party to contact. The Registrar conducts an active search for the party for up to one year. The Registrar has discretion to disclose information to the Applicant if the party (whose consent is being sought) cannot be found within a period of one year.

Fees

If you are requesting a certified copy of an Adoption Order, there is a fee of \$21 charged by the Supreme Court.

As an adoptee, how can I learn about Treaty status I may be entitled to?

Aboriginal persons Adopted under the NWT Adoptions Act or predecessor Acts, or Adopted before September 30, 1995, in accordance with Aboriginal Customary law, who want to learn more about their right to Indian status may be assisted by the Post Adoption Registry to make inquiries with the appropriate Federal authorities. To determine whether you are entitled to Registered Indian status, you must make an official enquiry to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Send a copy of the Adoption Order along with a written request to the following address:

Indian Registration and Band Lists
Registration, Revenue and Band
Governance Branch
Department of Indian & Northern Affairs Canada
Ottawa ON K1A 0H4
ATTN: Adoption Unit

For more information on Treaty status, visit the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada website at:

- http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/ywtk/index_e.html

Where can I find more information on First Nations programs and services?

Non-Status Indians and Métis who would like information about programs and services available to them should contact the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples at (613) 747-6022, and/or the Métis National Council at 1-800-928-6330. Inuit should contact Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami at (613) 238-8181. For more information about these organizations, visit the following websites:

- Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, <http://www.abo-peoples.org/>
- Métis National Council, <http://www.metisnation.ca/>
- Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, <http://www.tacirisat.ca/>

For further information:

Contact your local Health and Social Services Authority or visit www.hlthss.gov.nt.ca.

If you would like this information in another official language, contact us at 867-920-3367.
Si vous voulez ces informations dans une autre langue officielle, téléphonez-nous au 867-920-3367.