

Adoption in the UK

Deciding to adopt a child can be an exciting and wonderful experience for a new parent but there are things that need to be done before the process can be started, and steps that need to be followed to ensure the process is done correctly.

To adopt a child in the U.K., first choose a region. Due to each region having its own separate adoption criteria, choose where in the UK, or the world, you would like to adopt a child. Once you choose a region, find out the requirements and begin fulfilling them. You need to then choose representation. You have to choose an approved adoption agency to arrange your adoption, or you can use the adoption services provided by the authorities of the region you chose. You can visit the Adoption Guide's website to find a list of agencies located all around the world. You will then need to send a letter to the chosen agency telling them of your qualifications as an adoptive parent. The letter should include your ethnic origin, age, length of marriage, occupation and details of any other children you may have. You should also include the specifics of the child you would like to adopt (newborn, teenager, etc.).

As of July 2013 there is now a two stage adoption process in England which takes about 6 months to complete. At the first stage allows you to explore in more detail what will be involved in adoption through attending training provided by your agency, doing relevant reading and beginning some exploratory work which you will be asked to complete with support from the agency. At the same time your agency will complete all the statutory checks so they can be confident about progressing you through to a full assessment. At the second stage, a social worker from the adoption agency

will then make several visits to you in your home or sometimes in their offices. They will speak to you about your past experiences. At the end of this assessment the social worker will prepare a written report which you can see and comment on and then this will be presented to the agency's independent adoption panel who will consider the report and recommend whether or not you should be approved as adopters. You will be given the opportunity to meet with the panel to assist them with their recommendation.

Once approved, the agency will try and match you with a child. When a child has been found that is compatible with you and your situation, apply to the court for an adoption order. The child must have lived with you for at least 10 weeks before you apply. Adoption Orders are granted through County Courts of England and Wales and there are two types of orders: Full Adoption Orders for "parents" residing here and Provisional Adoption Orders for those temporarily residing here. The child has to be cleared by his/her own government to leave the country. You must also apply to the nearest British Embassy or Consulate to obtain clearance for the child to enter the U.K.

Whatever your situation, it is strongly recommended you obtain as much information as possible in advance about the various requirements and formalities. This may allow you to have some of the necessary documentation prepared, thereby limiting unnecessary delay.

Adopting as a Non-Resident vs. Resident

If you are temporarily residing in the U.K. with the intention of returning to the U.S. with your adopted child, you will also need to contact U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to gain entry clearance to the United States. You

should contact USCIS directly for the details of the petition procedure at <http://www.uscis.gov/aboutus>. (United States Embassy, 24 Grosvenor Square London, England W1A 1AE (Telephone: Operator assisted Visa information 09042-450-100). (Email: uscis.london@dhs.gov). Please review the website for specific information pertaining to your situation. (Your adopted child does not have an immediate claim to U.S. citizenship.)

Organization Assistance

The following reference sources may be able to provide further information and advice:

The Adoption Guide

<http://www.theadoptionguide.com/>

Learn more about adoption and assisted reproductive technologies and find the answers to your questions.

British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) <http://baaf.org.uk/>

This organization has several helpful publications and can advise on how to locate a child for adoption in England and Wales.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

<http://www.uscis.gov/adoption>

Help define the process and provide information to help you make informed decisions for you and your family.

This handout is for basic information on topic covered as it relates to military personnel stationed in the United Kingdom. It is not intended to take the place of legal advice from a Judge Advocate. There may be important exceptions in some states to the information presented here. Please contact the Legal Office for questions and further information. You may view more information on various legal topics at the Air Force Legal Assistance website found at <https://aflegalassistance.law.af.mil>. Additionally, complete legal worksheets for Wills, Living Wills, Powers of Attorney (General, Special, and for Health Care), and access to the Online Survey are found on the Air Force Legal Assistance website.

Scan Below to Access the:

RAF Mildenhall Legal Office Website
www.mildenhall.af.mil/Info/Legal-Office



Legal Assistance Website
<https://aflegalassistance.law.af.mil>



Legal Assistance Information Series

ADOPTION OF CHILDREN WHILE OVERSEAS



Hours of Operation (Walk-ins)
Notary Public & Powers of Attorney
Monday – Friday: 800-1630 hrs

Legal Assistance
By Appointment Only

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