

ADOPTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
of
CHRISTIAN FAMILY SERVICES, INC.

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*Please review the following before making an inquiry.
Contact us with any questions.*

Thank you for your interest in Christian Family Services' adoption program. Christian Family Services, Inc. is a Christ centered, non-profit, licensed, child-placing agency supported by individuals, Churches of Christ and Christian Churches. Christian Family Services, Inc., (CFSI) has been licensed since 1978, placing newborns and children in loving adoptive homes throughout the US. The basic requirements for applicants: They must be dedicated Christians, living by New Testament principles, attend group worship regularly (health permitting), follow scriptural teaching with regard to alcohol, and do not use tobacco or use drugs illegally. They must have a deep love for God, His church, and have a Christ-centered marriage. After review and prayerful consideration, applicants must be able, in all good conscience, to sign the enclosed Statement of Faith.

Applicants must have good health including the absence of high-risk health factors. Applicants with special health concerns must submit a statement, with their application, from their doctor stating how their health will or will not interfere with their ability to parent. Applicants must also agree to place the child under the regular supervision of a licensed physician, agree to carry out any treatment and/or vaccinations recommended by the physician and to administer medication as prescribed by him/her.

The age guidelines state that both should be between 25 and 45 for a first time adoption and no more than 50 for a second child. Couples should be married at least three years before making an application for adoption. After placement, adoptive mothers are strongly encouraged to not work full time outside the home, at least for the child's first two years. CFSI must approve any arrangement for child-care outside the home prior to finalization.

Due to the increase of couples seeking to adopt and the decrease of healthy infants and toddlers, all couples that meet the qualifications may still not have the opportunity to adopt. As a Christian adoption agency, Christian Family Services is committed to supporting birth parents that make the decision to place their child for adoption. CFSI will make every effort to place with all approved families; however birth parents are now much more actively involved in choosing the adoptive parents for their child. More and more birth parents are requesting a face-to-face meeting with the prospective adoptive parents, as well as pictures and updates until the child reaches 18 years of age. Only the profiles of adoptive applicants who are willing to provide this level of contact will be shown to them. Post placement child updates and pictures can be sent to the agency and then mailed on to the birth parents unless other arrangements have been agreed to by all parties involved unless all parties involved have agreed to other arrangements.

Posting of pictures that reveal the baby's face via Social Media, etc, are discouraged until after the court has officially granted Termination of Parental Rights. Families may however share pictures with family and close friends with the admonition for them not to share the photos via Social Media until given permission to do so.

Confidentiality of both the adoptive couple and the birth parents is always maintained unless both parties mutually agree.

UPDATED 7/2021

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Couples considering adoption are encouraged to read material from a reading list that Christian Family Services will provide. The books on this list are excellent in giving the different perspectives and feelings of both birth and adoptive parents. Upon request we will mail you the list and an Adoption Book Catalog from Tapestry Books.

Couples considering adoption will be required to complete an adoption training program (1) consisting of required reading material provided by CFS and some web-based material. The prospective adoptive family will be required to reflect on the training and reading during an informal interview with a CFS caseworker to ensure a thorough understanding of the adoption process.

If you are interested in adopting with Christian Family Services, review all the documents provided on our website with this inquiry. If we can consider your inquiry to adopt, we will email you one more document to be completed and returned. If we can offer you an application, we will send an invoice (2) via email. Once payment for and the application are received, your references will be processed and if favorable references are received, applicants will be notified and instructed how to proceed.

Florida residents will need to submit the complete adoption packet at which time Christian Family Services will arrange to conduct the home study; half of the home study fee (3) is due at the initial visit, the remainder is due at the final visit.

Out of state residents will need to submit the completed adoption packet. They must also contact a licensed individual or agency in their state to conduct their training, homestudy and post placement visits. Fees for this service vary widely; we suggest that you contact several agencies before deciding which one to use. Once the homestudy is completed, the applicants' in-state agency must forward the written homestudy and background clearances to Christian Family Services. They must also provide proof of adoption training completion with a description of training material covered.

A homestudy consists of one or more visits to cover the adoption process, family of origin history, family life, attitudes and motivation to adopt, parenting skills as well as spiritual and personal interests.

Each family member will need to have a complete physical examination (Christian Family Services will provide forms for the physicals). Every person in the home over the age of 12 will be asked to complete a child abuse registry and backgrounds screens on the local, state, and national levels (forms and directions provided by Christian Family Services. Screens may incur additional costs). Couples need to provide a copy of their marriage license and copies of divorce decrees if applicable. A diagram of the floor plan of your home is also needed for your file. Each family is asked to write a *birth parent letter* and to put together a "profile book" (scrapbook/photo album), which will be shown to birth parents that are choosing an adoptive family for their baby. These albums need to show what your family is like, how you live, the things you do for fun, etc. Christian Family Services will provide further instructions for completing both of these items.

Once the written homestudy is completed and all forms are complete and in the applicants' file, the family will then be approved. The family will be notified and the Social Service Fee (4) will be requested along with the Financial Agreement. Once this fee is received, the family will be placed on the active waiting list. There will be an additional Adoption Placement Fee (5) **due on the day of placement**. As a baby can come at any time with little or no warning, after a couple is placed on the waiting list, families must make arrangements to assure that the necessary funds are available and easily accessed for payment at the time of placement. If funds are not available at the appropriate time, the child may be placed with another family.

Out of state families must prepare ICPC paperwork and be prepared to stay in Florida two weeks or more at time of placement. The ICPC fee (6) is due at time of placement.

After Christian Family Services has achieved the court order of the Termination of Parental Rights (TPR), the CFS attorney will contact you to prepare for finalization. Your adoption will be finalized in Florida using the CFS attorney (7).

Christian Family Services Adoption Fees Breakdown

Service	Fee	Due
(1) Adoption Training <i>(Florida families only)</i>	\$350.00	When training is scheduled
(2) Application Fee File set-up, References Financial Coach	\$450.00	With Application
(3) Homestudy Fee <i>(Florida families only)</i> Preliminary Homestudy Update and/or Addendums as needed Post-Placement Visits (3) & Studies Each additional Post Placement Visit will be an additional \$150 plus mileage Final Homestudy	\$1500.00	½ Due at Initial Visit Remainder Due at final visit
(4) Social Service Fee Advertising on your behalf Unlimited Birth parent contact Travel, unlimited adoptive family contact Paperwork Notarization & Processing Parent Finder Basic Service Optional – Parent Finder Full Service	\$3000.00 (+\$500)	When Approved for Waiting List
(5) Placement Fee Legal Expenses, Court and Filing Costs Diligent Search and Publishing Attorney Fees <i>(not including Finalization)</i> Birth Parent Expenses <i>(not to exceed \$5000 without court approval) <u>Not passed on to adoptive family</u></i> Rent, Utilities, Food, Clothing, Transportation, Insurance, or Medical Costs Indirect Expenses Travel Paperwork Notarization Preparation of Finalization Packet	14% of Annual Gross Income: Minimum \$7,500 Not To Exceed \$18,000.00 ***	Due at Placement
<p>*** Does not apply to placements and/or terminations of parental rights involving CFSI Intervention in a dependency action, or a contested adoption, including without limitation a birth parent's attempt to withdraw or set aside his or her consent or affidavit of nonpaternity. Under such extraordinary circumstances, client will be expected to pay all legal fees and court costs incurred litigating the contested matter.</p>		
(6) Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Paperwork preparation and submission	\$750	Out of State Families
(7) Finalization Fee	\$1,150.00 <i>(paid directly to CFS attorney)</i>	Approximately 3-4 Months After Placement

All families will receive and sign a Financial Agreement (FA) when approved for the waiting list. The FA will outline your family's specific fees (based on your completed Financial Statement, Tax Returns and/or Homestudy), and the services covered by those fees.

Fees Disclaimer: Christian Family Services, Inc. reserves the right to change their fees at any times. Your fees will be set when CFSI receives your signed Financial Agreement. This set rate will be fixed for "one year." Once placed on our waiting list your fees will be finalized and not subject to change, with the exception noted above.

We are excited that you are considering adoption. Because of frequent requests like yours, many applications are initiated, but we never know how many will actually follow through. Christian Family Services makes every effort to keep our waiting list at a manageable level so that potential adoptive families do not have to wait any longer than necessary to adopt. Therefore, we reserve the right to close our waiting list at any time we deem necessary.

If you would like to work with Christian Family Services towards an adoption, and have read and agree with these Policies and Procedures, you are welcome to make an inquiry to adopt. Our process is not automated or immediate. A follow up email will provide another document for you to complete and return for the inquiry.

You are welcome to call our office to speak with staff about adoption; we also offer appointments to meet with prospective adoptive parents to discuss the process.