

# How to Adopt a Baby

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## Introduction

The laws and policies which regulate who are actually able to adopt a child will vary from state to state, as well as from agency to agency. But there are certain requirements that almost all adoption agencies will be looking at when they talk to those people who would like to adopt a baby.

What is important to know, however, is that, although the provisions required by laws in each state can not be either changed or ignored. But there are very few, if any, requirements or rules which are not inflexible. However, if you do find yourself during the adoption process having problems with a particular rule or guideline, then it might be advisable if you can see if that particular one can be waived.

You may be surprised that there are certain exceptions where this can occur, if the circumstances are right, or the right people have asked for it to be waived. Although you may think that you have the right to adopt, this is simply just not the case. No one in today's society has the absolute right to adopt a child, and can only do so after they have met certain criteria that both the adoption agencies and the government place.

It is therefore important that any prospective people wishing to adopt a baby should carry out as much research as possible on the subject. Learn everything about the rules, regulations and guidelines that can be imposed upon prospective adoptive parents by the various adoption agencies.

In this book, we will be taking you through the basics of what is required in order for a couple or single person to become an adoptive parent.

## **Chapter 1 –Criteria Requirements to Become an Adoptive Parent**

In this chapter, we will take a closer look at the criteria a couple, or a person, will need to meet in order to become the parent(s) of an adopted baby.

### **Mandatory Legal Requirements**

These are requirements in regard to legal and procedural matters which have been imposed by the State and County where the actual adoption will be taking place. Normally, it is the requirements of the state and county where the parents reside, rather than where the baby was born. But be aware that there are some states whose courts will allow a baby's adoption to be processed in them even if the parents are not residents in that state.

Unfortunately, you will find that it is very difficult to get any of these requirements either modified or waived by the state where they have been put in place.

### **Preferred Agency Requirements**

These are the requirements which are imposed by each adoption agency around the country. Their requirements

are ones which are above and beyond those that have been imposed by the state laws governing adoption matters. Such requirements will vary from agency to agency, and will be based on what the agency actually focuses on. Also, the requirements that these agencies have in place will depend on the type of adoptions that they handle, and what economic and human resources they have available to them. Plus, the requirements that these agencies have in place will depend upon the businesses social philosophy, and whether they have commercial, non profit or public businesses providing them with support.

What should be noted by any person wishing to adopt a child is that these agencies are allowed to set their own individual sets of criteria which must work within the framework of their charter. Plus, they also have the right, if they so wish, to make changes to, or waive certain criteria that they have in place if the circumstances call for it.

One criterion you may find that a lot of adoption agencies have in place is that they will not allow people over the age of 40 to adopt. Often there are valid reasons as to why an agency has placed certain restrictions on people who are wishing to adopt a baby. Therefore, any would-be adoptive parent(s) will need to

spend some time looking for an agency which has a set of requirements that they feel comfortable with.

## **Birthparents Requirements**

These requirements are especially important when the adoption is an independent or "open" one. We will be taking a closer look at the various kinds of adoptions that take place a little later in this book.

Today more than ever, birthparents are actually playing a role in which families are chosen to adopt their child. What this then means is that they can actually impose certain criteria on the agency to ensure that the right adoptive parents have been chosen, in order to meet their requirements.

However, it does provide those with the chance, if they want to, of walking away from any potential adoption if they do feel that they are unable to meet the requirements that have been imposed upon them by the birthparents. Certainly no parent can be forced to place a child up for adoption if they do not find the terms being provided as being acceptable. However, the requirements of the birthparents of a child who is being adopted through a public agency are often absent from such proceedings. This is because in most cases,

the rights of the child's birthparents have already been terminated by a court legally when the child comes up for adoption.

## **Adoptive Parents Limitations**

At some stage, all people wishing to adopt a baby or child will have certain limits when it comes to adopting, that they will not cross. All of these they have imposed upon themselves, and will take into consideration such factors as:

1. Financial Issues
2. Their age
3. Their health

In addition, a number of other criteria and limitations that they consider important to ensure that, when adopting a baby or child, they provide it with the best life possible. Often, the additional limitations and requirements they place upon themselves will be dependent on just how comfortable they are with regards to the adoption.

Often those parents who do not feel good about a certain situation, or the requirements that they need to meet, will often not move forward with an adoption.

## **Chapter 2 – Questions to Ask Yourself When Considering Adopting a Baby**

If you are a couple who is starting out for the first time in adopting a baby, then congratulations are in order! However, it is important that you learn as much as possible about what adoption is.

You also need to understand the commitment that you will be making, and that it is going to be for the rest of your life. Plus, it is important that you learn everything there is to know about the legal processes all would-be adoptive parents have to go through in order to adopt a baby.

Today, there are newborns, as well as teenagers who are looking to be adopted, often because their birthparents (biological parents) are unable to raise them on their own. Or it may be that these children need to be in homes where there will be loved and needed, and that time can be committed to providing them with a stable and permanent family environment.

Each year, hundreds of thousands of people across the globe have chosen to adopt a child for a number of different reasons.

1. It may be because they have wanted to adopt

a child for longer than they could remember.

2. They have decided to adopt a child, as they are unable to have a child of their own.

3. It may be because they have family connections, which provides them with the opportunity to adopt a child. Often, this happens in the cases where a couple has remarried, and has children from a previous marriage, and they wish them to take on the identity of the new family.

However, when you are considering adopting a baby, there are certain questions that a would-be adoptive parent should be asking themselves. By asking these, they will then find out if they are willing, and are prepared to face the challenges and the joys of becoming a parent to another person's baby or child. The questions any would-be adoptive parent(s) should be asking themselves are as follows:

1. Just how do they feel about not being related genetically to the child?

2. When the subject comes up, how do they feel they will be able to discuss the matter of the child's adoption at a later date?

3. How can they help the child to understand why they were placed up for adoption, especially if there is little information available about them, or they were abandoned, or their life before being adopted was very difficult?

4. As an adoptive parent, will you be willing to allow the child to maintain their own identity in relation to where they come from, and what kind of cultural background they have?

5. As an adoptive parent, will you be willing to deal with all issues relating to the baby's birthparents?

As well as the questions you should be asking yourself above, there are other questions that need to be asked in relation to trans-racial adoption, international adoption and if you are going to be a lone parent adopting a baby.

Once you have been able to answer these questions, you can now move on to the next stage, which is preparing a plan that will help you to manage the various stages of the adoption process.

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