



## State-by-State Information about How to Find Family Members Who Have Been Separated by Adoption

**Mutual Consent Registry:** This is how all parties involved in adoption provide information on whether they are willing or unwilling to have identifying information disclosed. These registries vary from state to state but generally the consent is needed from one birth parent and either the adoptive child or adoptive parents depending on the age of the child to release this information. In most states, the parties need to file an affidavit in order to release the information.

**Non identifying Information:** This is information about birth parents and children that does not give away the identity of the individuals. This information could include this different information: when and where the adoptive child was born, how old the birth parents are and a brief physical description, race, ethnicity, medical information and religion of the birth parents, how much schooling the birth parents have, why the child was put up for adoption and any other children each birth parent may have. All states have provisions in place about who can obtain this information and when. Usually it is given to adoptive parents at the time of adoption. Adoptive children can request to receive this information generally once they turn 18 years of age.

**Identifying Information:** Information that reveals a person's identity, such as last name, address, phone number and detailed family history. In the field of adoption search and reunion, information allowing a birth parent, adoptive parent or an adoptee to be identified and located.

# ARKANSAS

## **Nonidentifying information may be released, upon request, to:**

- The adoptive parents of the child or the child's guardian
- The adopted person
- If the adopted person has died:
  - The adopted person's children
  - Widow or widower
  - The guardian of any child of the adopted person.
- The birth parent of the adopted person
- Any child welfare agency having custody of the adopted person
- Access to identifying information is available any person related within the second degree through the Adoption Registry.

## **Access to nonidentifying information is limited to:**

- Nonidentifying information is available upon request to any person listed above.
- Nonidentifying information includes the health, genetic, and social history of the child.

## **Mutual access to identifying information:**

- A person eligible to register may request the disclosure of identifying information by filing an affidavit with the adoption registry that includes the following:
  - The person's current name and address
  - Any previous name by which the applicant was known
  - The original and adopted names, if known, of the adopted person.
  - The place and date of birth of the adopted person
  - The name and address of the adoption agency or other entity, organization, or person placing the adopted person, if known.
- The applicant shall notify the registry of any change in name or location that occurs subsequent to his or her filing the affidavit.
  - The registry shall have no duty to search for an applicant who fails to register his or her most recent address.
- The administrator of the mutual consent voluntary adoption registry shall process each affidavit in an attempt to match the adult adopted person, the birth parents, or other relatives.

- The processing shall include: research from agency records, when available, and when agency records are not available, research from court records to determine conclusively whether the applicants match.
- The administrator shall determine that there is a match when the adult adopted person, a birth parent, or other relative have filed affidavits with the adoption registry; and have each received the required counseling.

**Access to original birth certificate:**

- The original birth certificate is available only upon a court order or as provided by regulation.

**Arkansas Mutual Consent Voluntary Adoption Registry**

Contact Info Last Updated: 20-August-2009

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