



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.

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Nonidentifying information may be released, upon request, to:

- The adult adopted person
- The adoptive parents or guardian of the child
- The legal representative of the adopted person
- If the adopted person is deceased, any adult descendants, including adopted descendants.
- Identifying information may be accessed by:
 - The adult adopted person
 - Any birth parent of the adult adopted person, including any person claiming to be the father who was not a party to the proceedings for the termination of parental rights.
 - Any adult birth sibling of the adult adopted person
 - If the adopted person is deceased, any adult descendants, including legally adopted descendants

Access to nonidentifying information is limited to:

- Nonidentifying information about the birth parents shall be provided in writing to the adopting parents prior to finalization of the adoption.
- The birth parents may access the information at any time for the purposes of verifying, correcting, or adding information.
- Information about the birth parents includes, but is not limited to;
 - Age at the time of the child's birth
 - Ethnic background and nationality
 - General physical appearance at the time of the child's birth
 - Education and occupations of the birth parents
 - Talents, hobbies, and special interests
 - Existence of any other children born to either parent
 - Health history of the birth parents blood relatives
 - Reasons for placing the child for adoption
 - Religion of the birth parents
 - Any other relevant nonidentifying information

Mutual access to identifying information:

- Any authorized applicant may, by applying in person or in writing to the child-placing agency or the department, request the release of identifying information.
 - The information should be released unless:

- The consents of every person whose identity is sought, as required by § 45a-751b, are not given.
- The release of the requested information would seriously disrupt or endanger the physical or emotional health of the applicant or the person whose identity is being requested.

Access to original birth certificate:

- Any person seeking to examine or obtain a copy of the original birth certificate must obtain a written order from the court in the jurisdiction in which the adopted person was adopted or born.
- The court will determine that the examination or issuance of a copy of the birth certificate of the adopted person by the adopting parents or the adopted person, if older than age 18, or by any other person will not be detrimental to the public interest or to the welfare of the adopted person or the birth or adoptive parents.

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Contact Info Last Updated: 26-June-2013

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