

**HANDBOOK
FOR PERSONS
THINKING ABOUT
INTERNATIONAL
ADOPTION**

June 2008

**Division of Children and Family Services
Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Selecting an Adoption Agency

Selecting a Placement

Legal Issues

- Laws of the Other Country
- U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Laws
- Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
- Wisconsin Adoption Laws

International Adoption Process

Other Helpful Information

Adoption Records

- Child Adopted Abroad
- Child Adopted in Wisconsin

Post Adoption Services

Glossary

Wisconsin Licensed Adoption Agencies

INTRODUCTION

This handbook gives basic information for Wisconsin families about adopting a child from another country. It gives you some information to start the process and suggests other information resources.

Before deciding to adopt a child from abroad, you should determine that a local adoption is not appropriate for your family. Local adoptions can be less complex and you may receive more background information about the child. For Wisconsin children with special needs and at risk of developing special needs, Adoption Assistance can help the family meet adoption expenses and future care costs. This financial support is not available for inter-country adoptions. Some families become foster parents for this county social service department, providing temporary care to help a child return home. For information about foster care and older child adoption, call 1-800-947-8074.

International adoption is complex, but you can complete this process successfully with the help of your Wisconsin licensed adoption agency. International adoption may involve Wisconsin agencies, international adoption agencies located in another state, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the U.S. State Department, and adoption agencies or other organizations in your child's native country. You will need patience and a determination not to become discouraged with complex procedures. It may be easier if you remember that these requirements exist to protect your interests and those of your child, as well as those of the United States and your child's native country.

You will want to rely on information from your Wisconsin agency about requirements of Wisconsin statutes and procedures of the local INS office. If you have questions about the adoption process, do not hesitate to ask the worker in your Wisconsin adoption agency. You will want to understand the process you will use and your agency is there to help you.

SELECTING AN ADOPTION AGENCY

It is important that you select a licensed Wisconsin adoption agency specializing in international adoptions to meet both state and INS requirements. A list of Wisconsin agencies involved in international adoption is located at the back of this publication.

Some agencies specialize in adoptions from specific nations and may offer expertise in that area. Other agencies study families for adoption from many different nations and coordinate their knowledge of Wisconsin laws with the expertise of a licensed international agency in another state. You will want to compare the availability, experiences, reliability and fees of several agencies before making a choice.

Some activities in an inter-country adoption, like setting up international contacts, may be completed by either a Wisconsin licensed agency, by the family working on its own or through an agency in another state. While a family may reduce some costs by completing tasks on their own, this choice increases the risk of delays and extra costs if any of the complex procedures are not accurately completed.

Review the section related to allowable payments in various types of international adoption on the Department of Health and Family Services web site at www.dhfs.state.wi.us. If you are making payments or providing anything of value to an individual or organization that is not a licensed adoption agency, use care to determine that you and the provider are not in violation of the felony provisions related to payments for adoptive placements.

SELECTING A PLACEMENT

Throughout the adoption process, the prospective adoptive family will want to seek information about the child, the child's background and health of the birth family members. This information may be essential to meet the child's needs in the future. You should receive thorough and recent medical and social history information and discuss that information with your adoption agency and other professionals before accepting the referral of a child.

Occasionally prospective adoptive parents will consider adopting two or more unrelated children at the same time. The placement of more than one child simultaneously reduces the opportunity for each child to be integrated into the new family as an individual. Standards for good adoption practice allow placement of siblings, but not unrelated children, at the same time into an adoptive family. Of course, adoptive parents may pursue the adoption of another child following the legal adoption and integration of an earlier adopted child in their family. Post-placement services from your adoption agency can assist in the integration of an adopted child.

LEGAL ISSUES

In adopting a child from another nation, you will be dealing with adoption and emigration laws of the other country, U.S. immigration laws and Wisconsin adoption laws. Some nations are members of the Hague Convention, an international agreement that established standards for adoptions between member nations. The United States is currently not a member of the Hague Convention.

Laws of the Other Country

Countries differ widely in the way they view the emigration of their children to the U.S. for the purpose of adoption. Some have very strict stands while others barely have a process in place in their laws. A nation experiencing political unrest may ban international adoption. Requirements about single parent adoptions, age of the adoptive parent(s), age of the child, background of the adoptive parents and the number of children in the adoptive home are established by some countries.

A family considering an international adoption should seek information about the laws of the child's country before proceeding too far in the adoption process. A thorough understanding of the country's laws can prevent misunderstandings and disappointments later on. Information about international adoption and procedures for specific nations is available at the web site of the U.S. State Department at www.travel.state.gov. Adoptive parent groups, Wisconsin adoption agencies and international adoption agencies are also good sources of information. A glossary of adoption terminology at the back of this publication may be helpful.

U.S. Immigration Laws

Children in other nations who are orphans may immigrate to the United States to be adopted or as the adopted child of an U.S. citizen. Various requirements have to be met and the prospective adoptive parent must petition the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for an 'orphan' visa.

During the visa application process you will undergo an extensive background investigation. This will include proof of citizenship and marital status, an adoption assessment (home study) by a Wisconsin licensed adoption agency, a statement of financial status and a check of records based on your fingerprints. The two-part process includes approval of the family's qualifications to adopt and approval of a petition to bring a specific child to the United States (forms I-600a and I-600). For information about fees and to download forms, use the INS web site at www.ins.usdoj.gov.

Completion of the prior approval of your qualifications to adopt is no guarantee that a petition for a specific child will be approved. Visa approval for a specific child is usually issued from the INS office in Milwaukee when you are named as the child's guardian in the foreign court or when an adoption occurs abroad before both parents personally see the

child. The visa approval usually occurs overseas when both parents travel abroad, see the child and then complete a final adoption.

The Department of State Consular Officer will conduct an investigation prior to issuing an immigrant visa for the child. The purpose of this investigation is to verify the orphan status of the child and determine that the adoptive family has been notified of and are willing to accept any known medical conditions of the child.

Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children

If the placement of a child is arranged through an agency in another state, whether or not the agency has legal guardianship of the child, the placement must occur under the provisions of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children. The purpose of the Compact is to assure that the child has the protection of the laws of both states. The Interstate Compact on Placement of Children is not needed if the adoption occurs abroad and the child enters the United States under an IR-3 visa as an "immediate relative."

Wisconsin Adoption Laws

Several sections of Wisconsin law pertain to international adoptions. Varying procedures are designed to allow Wisconsin families to adopt in accordance with immigration requirements and the adoption laws of most nations.

Agency Guardianship, Adopt in Wisconsin

One of these statutes (s. 48.833, Wis. Stats.) permits a Wisconsin licensed adoption agency to place a child for adoption who is in the guardianship of a licensed adoption agency in this state or another state. Adoption of a child from Korea often occurs under this provision. The approval of a petition to bring a specific child to the United States usually will occur in the INS office in Milwaukee under an IR-4 immigration process. A petition to adopt may be filed in your county court after the child has been in placement for at least six months.

Guardianship Abroad, Adopt in Wisconsin

Another portion of state laws (s. 48.839, Wis. Stats.) assists a Wisconsin resident who was appointed by a court of another country as the legal guardian of a child. The child must be legally available to be adopted. Among other requirements, the prospective adoptive parents must post a \$1,000 bond for each child to assure that the child does not become dependent on public funds for support or services.

The adoptive parent(s) may travel abroad to be appointed as guardians or they may assign power-of-attorney to someone else to represent them. This statute also may be used when an adoption abroad does not meet the federal requirements for an immediate visa because both parents of a married couple or a single adoptive parent did not see and observe the child prior to the adoption. Under this IR-4 immigration procedure, the approval of a

petition to bring a specific child to the United States usually occurs in the INS office in Milwaukee.

Under this provision, the prospective adoptive parents must file a petition with their county court to adopt the child within 60 days after the child's arrival in this state. The petition is filed with the court in the county where the family lives. Sometimes the actual adoption hearing will be delayed to await the approval of an agency in the child's homeland or to assure adequate time for the child's integration into the adoptive family.

Recognition of an Adopt Abroad

Another law (s. 48.97, Wis. Stats.) recognizes adoptions completed abroad if the placement has received the prior approval of the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services. Under this IR-3 immigration process, the approval of a petition to bring a specific child to the United States usually occurs in the U.S. State Department Consulate abroad. Children adopted abroad with this prior approval may be readopted in Wisconsin.

Fees and Payments

The Department of Health and Family Services charges a fee of \$75 per child (s. 48.838, Wis. Stats.) for review of international adoption documents and for providing necessary certifications and approval about a planned adoption. Two statutes (s. 48.913 and s. 948.24, Wis. Stats.) govern payments by adoptive or prospective adoptive parents to or on behalf of a birth parent or child and define unauthorized placement for adoption that can result in a felony conviction. More details about Wisconsin adoption laws, related procedures and allowable payments are available on the Department's web site at www.dhfs.state.wi.us.

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION PROCEDURES

Various adoption steps apply depending on your adoption plans. The numbered items below identify steps that apply in some or all international adoption situations for Wisconsin families. A table at the end of this list summarizes typical steps for various adoption procedures. If you change procedures during your adoption process, you may need to complete additional steps.

1. Approved Assessment (Home Study):

All international adoption procedures for Wisconsin residents require a home study completed by a licensed private adoption agency in Wisconsin. A list of licensed agencies that will complete a home study for an international adoption is provided in the back of this Handbook. The home study must specify the nation where the family intends to adopt and the age, sex and special needs of any child appropriate for this family. Home study requirements in Wisconsin require background record checks that are different from those required by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

If a Wisconsin resident lives abroad, the home study may include portions completed by an authority abroad with power in that nation for completing home assessments. However, a Wisconsin agency must complete all possible steps here (e.g. background checks including a criminal records check, references, foster home licensing of any Wisconsin residence of the family) and assure that the Wisconsin agency will provide post-placement services upon the return of the family to Wisconsin.

2. Foreign Adoption Fee:

The Department charges a fee of \$75 per child for each planned adoption to review international adoption documents and/or provide necessary certifications and approvals required by state and federal law. A check for the fee should be made out to the "Division of Children and Family Services."

3. Plan for Post-Placement Services

Post-placement supervision is needed for each international adoptive placement where an adoption in Wisconsin is required before the child can obtain U.S. citizenship. In other situations, there should be either a plan for post-placement supervision or a statement in the agency's adoption file signed by the adoptive parents that they do not intend to re-adopt in Wisconsin and do not want post-placement supervision services to assist in integrating the child into the new family.

4. Original Legal Documents:

The prospective adoptive family or licensed adoption agency that has been named as guardian of the child in a foreign court shall submit to the Department original legal documents (and English translations) that indicate that the adoptive parents (or licensed agency) have been named as guardian of the child. In addition, the original legal documents

must include a court determination that has the effect under the laws of the foreign jurisdiction of legally freeing the child for adoption. If the instrument is not a judgment or order of a court, the guardian shall also submit the laws of the foreign jurisdiction (with English translations) under which the instrument was issued.

5. Foreign Adoption Bond:

When the parent(s) are named as guardian of a child, they shall submit a foreign adoption bond for each child. A foreign adoption bond form is available through your licensed Wisconsin adoption agency. Bonds are issued through an insurance agency or a surety company.

6. ICPC:

When a licensed adoption agency in another state is the international adoption agency, the referral of the child for placement with a Wisconsin family under the supervision of a Wisconsin adoption agency should be sent under the provisions of the Interstate Compact on Placement of Children (ICPC). All states are members of the ICPC and have similar state laws requiring use of the ICPC whenever an agency places a child across state lines for foster care or adoption. If the licensed agency in the other state accepts financial responsibility on the ICPC forms, the requirement for the family to take out a foreign adoption bond will usually be waived.

7. Agency Statement:

The Wisconsin licensed adoption agency will provide a written notice stating the plan of the family to complete an adoption abroad, identifying the country of the adoption and indicating that the agency is confident that the family will complete necessary steps to bring the child into the United States as an immediate relative (IR-3) adopted child. This notice is to reduce the possibility that the family will travel abroad and then learn that they are unable to return with the child until approvals for a guardianship placement (IR-4) are completed.

8. Any Other Legal Documents:

The family must submit original legal documents and English translations if not provided already. This will allow the Department to comment on the adoptability of the child. Also, these documents will link any prior approval to the actual adoption of a specific child.

9. Agency Recommendation to the Court:

The agency should submit a copy of the agency's recommendation to the court about this adoption. This copy will inform the Department on the appropriateness of this proposed adoption in light of the adoption agency's supervision of the placement.

TIMING OF INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION STEPS

TYPE OF ADOPTION	STEPS BEFORE PLACEMENT	STEPS FOR ADOPTION/RE-ADOPTION IN WISCONSIN
Agency Guardianship, Adopt in Wisconsin (IR-4)	1 through 5, 6 if applicable	8 and 9
Guardianship Abroad, Adopt in Wisconsin (IR-4)	1 through 5, 6 if applicable	8 and 9
Recognition of Adoption Abroad, optional re-adoption in Wisconsin (IR-3)	1 through 3, 7	8 and 9

OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION

Seals and Notarized Copies:

If necessary, notarized letters from the Department of Health and Family Services can be requested. Please have your Wisconsin adoption agency specify the request for a notarized letter in writing when the agency submits the home assessment and related papers.

Sometimes an international agency will request that the family submit “sealed” or apostille papers. The Wisconsin Secretary of State’s Office can provide a seal that verifies that the person who notarized the document is an authorized notary in Wisconsin. More information on this process is available on the internet at www.badger.state.wi.us/sos/authen.htm. A prospective adoptive parent can make arrangements for this process by calling the Office of the Secretary of State at 608-266-5594.

Immunizations:

Prospective adoptive parents planning to travel abroad during the adoption process are advised to check with their medical care provider to assure that they have necessary and up-to-date protection against health risks they might encounter during travel. The following information about Hepatitis A and B addresses some health concerns.

Hepatitis A: Each year, the Wisconsin Division of Public Health receives reports of hepatitis A occurring in persons involved with overseas adoptions. Typically, the adoptive parents become ill several weeks after returning home with their new baby. The most frequently involved countries of origin are in Eastern Europe and Center/South America.

Hepatitis A is caused by a virus and can cause fever, nausea, profound fatigue, abdominal pain, and jaundice. The illness usually persists for several weeks, but on occasion can last for months. Children tend to be less severely ill than adults. In fact, very young children often have no noticeable signs of illness, but can still easily spread the hepatitis A virus to others. The virus is present in very high concentrations in the stool of infected waste, or when a person’s hands come in contact with feces (e.g. through changing diapers) and the hands subsequently touch the mouth or contaminate food, drink, or cigarettes that will, in turn, contact the mouth. Hands need not be grossly soiled to transmit the virus.

Hepatitis A infection is extremely common in developing countries, where most of the population contracts the infection at a very early age. This is why adoptive parents are at risk during the foreign adoption process – susceptible adults from the United States can become infected from their new baby who is shedding the hepatitis A virus in the stool, or they may contract the infection from eating contaminated food while overseas.

Fortunately, safe and effective vaccines are available to protect against hepatitis A, even if one does get exposed to the virus. The vaccine is almost 100% effective if it is given at least

one month prior to exposure. The first dose of the vaccine will protect for about one year. A second dose, given 6-12 months later, will provide immunity for decades. If there is not enough time prior to travel for the vaccine to become effective (i.e. – less than four weeks), another product called immune globulin can provide immediate protection from hepatitis A, but will not last as long as the vaccine.

There is no need for the joyful arrival of a new child to be marred by a serious illness like hepatitis A. persons considering foreign adoptions in countries where hepatitis A is prevalent are urged to receive the hepatitis A vaccine themselves and to immunize other children who are already in the household. The Centers for Disease Control has information on all vaccination recommendations for foreign travelers available on their web site at: www.cdc.gov/travel. Selecting the “geographic health recommendations” option will identify countries in which hepatitis A is prevalent. Further information on hepatitis A can be obtained from the Wisconsin Division of Public Health at 608-267-7321.

Hepatitis B: Hepatitis B is also a concern for parents who adopt children from other countries, particularly children from Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe. About 5% of all international adoptees have current hepatitis B infections when they arrive in the United States. The symptoms of hepatitis B are similar to those caused by hepatitis A, but the way the virus is spread and the possible duration of infection are different. The hepatitis B virus is present in high concentrations in blood and in lower concentrations in other body fluids. Infants and children usually acquire hepatitis B through blood contact with an infected mother during birth or with another infected child during the first years of life. Some people who are infected with hepatitis B never fully recover and carry the virus in their blood for the rest of their lives. The risk of chronic infection depends on the age when infection occurs – the younger the age the higher the risk. For an infant infected during the first year of life, the risk is 80-90%. People with chronic hepatitis B are a source of infection for others and are at risk for eventually developing chronic liver disease, cirrhosis and liver cancer.

Families adopting a child from an area where hepatitis B is common should have the child tested as soon as possible after arrival in the U.S. Hepatitis B in children cannot usually be detected by looking or by physical exam because symptoms will not be present. Previous testing done in the child’s country of origin may not be reliable.

If the child is found to have a current infection (hepatitis B surface antigen [HBsAg] positive), family members, childcare providers and anyone else with close, intimate contact should be immunized against hepatitis B. some experts even recommend that families contemplating foreign adoption receive hepatitis B vaccine before the child arrives. Like the hepatitis A vaccine, hepatitis B vaccine is safe and effective. It is given in a 3-dose series with a minimum of 1 month between the first and second doses and 4 months between the first and third doses. The hepatitis B vaccine is recommended for all children 0-18 years of age and for adults at high risk of exposure to hepatitis B.

An infected child will need lifelong medical follow-up to detect the early development of liver disease. More information about hepatitis B and adoption can be found on the Immunization Action Coalition web site at www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4152.htm or the International Adoption Medical Consultation Services web site at www.members.aol.com/jargonmink. Other questions about hepatitis B can be directed to the Wisconsin Division of Public Health at 608-266-8621.

Medical Tests

You will want to have a thorough physical examination for your child soon after arriving in Wisconsin. You will want to discuss with your physician whether tested for possible lead poisoning is appropriate. Some research has indicated high lead levels among some children adopted from China and Russia.

ADOPTION RECORDS

Parents of a child adopted abroad have the same needs for a 'birth certificate' as do other parents. Documentation of birth may be necessary to apply for a social security card, enter school, join some sports teams and obtain a driver's license. The adopted person will need documentation of birth throughout adulthood. The information below explains how you can seek documentation of the child's birth.

Child Adopted Abroad

If the adopted child was born abroad to birth parents who are not U.S. citizens and the adoption by Wisconsin residents occurred abroad, an application for records indicating the child's birthplace and date can be made to:

Immigration and Naturalization Service
517 East Wisconsin Avenue
Room 186
Milwaukee WI 53202

Either a parent or the child can request copies of any information on file with the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The State of Wisconsin cannot issue a "Certificate of Birth Facts" in this situation unless the child is re-adopted in Wisconsin.

Also, adoptive parents can seek a birth certificate or similar document from the nation where the child was born and adopted.

Child Adopted in Wisconsin

If the child was born abroad to birth parents who are not U.S. citizens and an adoption occurred in Wisconsin, the clerk of court in the county of adoption will submit to the Wisconsin Section on Vital Statistics when the child is adopted the following:

- Report of Adoption (Form DOH 5022);
- A fee paid by the adoptive parent(s);
- Proof of birth facts from the nation of birth, such as a birth certificate (with translations, if necessary) or an extract from the 'family register' of the country of origin; or a notarized statement that no such document is available;
- If no proof of birth facts is available, the adoptive parent should provide a certified letter from a medical doctor with the estimate age and/or birth date and documentation of country of birth;
- If the child has been naturalized, proof of naturalization should be provided; and

- If the adoptive parent wishes to receive a certified copy of the “Certificate of Birth Facts,” an additional fee is submitted.

The “Certification of Birth Facts” can be amended if naturalization occurs later. The adoptive parent(s) should submit the following to the Wisconsin Section on Vital Statistics, room 158, 1 West Wilson Street, Madison WI 53707:

- Proof of naturalization;
- A Report of Naturalization form (DOH 5027) or a Report of Citizenship form (DOH 5027A);
- An amendment; and
- An additional fee if the adoptive parent(s) wish to receive a certified copy of the amended “Certificate of Birth Facts.”

Any questions about the procedures for the “Certificate of Birth Facts” should be addressed to the Division of Health, Section on Vital Records at 608-267-7166.

Locating Other Records

Families are reminded of the importance of obtaining and keeping important records pertaining to a child adopted from abroad. If replacement copies of any documents are needed in the future, the following procedures are currently available:

For a person adopted in Wisconsin:

- Adoptive parents or an adopted person age 18 or older may request non-identifying social history and medical/genetic information from the Wisconsin agency that completed the home study. A search to obtain needed updated medical information is possible. The availability of updated information in the other country will depend on the laws of that country and the records of the organization or individual that originally arranged the adoption abroad.
- Identifying information in the records of the adoption agency can be released prior to the time the adopted person reaches age 18 with the written consent of both an adoptive parent and a birth parent. It may be unlikely for a birth parent abroad to know about and implement a request to the Wisconsin adoption agency.
- Current Wisconsin statutes allow the release of identifying information to the adopted person age 21 or older if there is a signed affidavit of consent from both birth parents. Locating birth parents abroad to obtain this consent at a future date may be costly if possible at all. The adopted person bears the cost of this effort. Identifying information may also be released by court order.

For a person adopted abroad:

The adoptive parent or adopted person may contact the Wisconsin adoption agency and any international agency for assistance. The law of the other nation will apply.

POST-ADOPTION SERVICES

All adoptive families have unique issues that do not occur in families with birth children. In addition, a child born abroad may be interested in information related to their nation of origin or the opportunity to meet other adopted persons from that nation. Wisconsin has regional Post-Adoption Resource Centers to support adoptive families in our state. The goals of these Post-Adoption Resource Centers are:

1. Provide education, support activities and services to adoptive families living in the identified service area;
2. Improve community awareness of adoption, promoting a positive image of adoption and an increased understanding of the unique issues facing adoptive families, especially among public and private human service providers, schools and medical care providers to enable these professionals to better serve adoptive families;
3. Increase the availability of services for adoptive families, including respite care, crisis intervention, day care, after-school care, legal help, family counseling, support groups related to adoption, access to Title XIX service providers and planning for the transition of an adopted child to adulthood; and
4. Establish collaborative efforts among public and private organizations and the general public to address the needs of adoptive families in the Post-Adoption Resource Center area.

The Post-Adoption Resource Centers can be contacted at the addresses below:

REGION OF WISCONSIN

Northern: Catholic Charities Diocese of LaCrosse
866-344-2500
www.friendsofadoptio.org

Northeastern: Family Services of NE Wisconsin, Inc.
800-998-9609
www.familyservicesnew.org

Southeastern & Milwaukee County: Adoption Resources of Wisconsin
800-762-8063
www.wiadopt.org

Southern: Catholic Charities Diocese of Madison
888-485-7385
www.catholiccharitiesofmadison.org

Western: Catholic Charities Diocese of LaCrosse
800-227-3002
www.friendsofadooption.org

GLOSSARY

Adoption: A legal procedure creating between a child and adult(s) the same relationship as exists between a child and the child's birth parent(s). Adoptive parents and adopted children have the same rights, duties and other legal privileges as birth parents and their children.

Adoption assessment (home study): An evaluation by a child welfare agency to determine the readiness of the applicant to be an adoptive parent and to determine the type of child who could benefit from parenting by the applicant.

Adoptive placement: The process of physically moving a child who is legally free to be adopted into the home of the family which will eventually adopt the child.

Agency licensed to accept guardianship: A child welfare agency licensed under Wisconsin Statute 48.61(5) that specifically permits the agency to accept guardianship of a child.

Certification: The statement from the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, required by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, that a proposed international adoption has met the pre-adoptive requirements of the state.

Child welfare agency: An agency licensed by the state to provide a variety of services for children. These may include the authority to receive custody of children, to provide counseling to children and their families, to license foster homes, to place children in foster homes and to place children for adoption.

Guardianship: The responsibility assigned by the court to an individual or a child welfare agency to care for and look after the best interest of a child, sometimes including the right to consent to adoption.

Immediate relative: As used by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service for the Form I-600, an orphan classified as next of kin for the purpose of entering the United States to be adopted.

International adoption: The process by which a married couple or a single person from one country adopts a child from another country.

International agency: An agency which has the ability to arrange adoptive placements from abroad, generally by contract with an entity in another country.

Interstate Compact on Placement of Children (ICPC): A written agreement regarding movement of a child from one state to another as required by the laws of each state.

Orphan visa: The visa issued by the American Consulate in a foreign country upon approval of the Petition to Classify an Orphan's Immediate Relative (Form I-600).

Power of Attorney: Authority given to another person to act as the attorney or agent of the grantor in a legal matter.

Termination of parental rights: The permanent severance by the court of all rights, privileges and obligations that normally exist between the parent and child.

Wisconsin adoption statutes: This refers to portions of the state statutes that relate to adoption. Many of the statutes related to adoption are found in Chapter 48, Subchapter XIX, entitled Adoption of Minors, Guardianship. State statutes may be found at <http://www/legis.state.wi.us/rsb/statutes.html>.

ADOPTION AGENCIES LICENSED BY THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

Adoption Advocates, Inc.
2317 International Ln., Ste 119
Madison, WI 53704
(608) 246-2844

Adoption Choice, Inc.
924 East Juneau Ave., Ste 410
Milwaukee, WI 53202
(414) 276-3262
(800) 255-6305

Adoption Option
1804 Chapman Dr.
Waukesha, WI 53186
(262) 544-4278

Adoption Services, Inc.
2314 N Grandview Blvd., Ste 205
Waukesha, WI 53188
(262) 513-0443
(888)686-0443

Adoption Services, Inc.
10500 N. Port Washington Rd.,
Ste 201
Mequon, WI 53092
(262)241-8755

Adoptions of Wisconsin, LLC
434 S Yellowstone Dr.
Madison, WI 53719
(608) 834-3300

Bethany Christian Services of WI
2312 N Grandview Blvd., Ste 210
Waukesha, WI 53188
(262) 547-6557
1-800-551-0505

Bethany Christian
Services of WI
14 Western Ave., Ste. 2
Fond du Lac, WI 54935
(920) 923-6577

Bethany Christian
Services of WI
2508 S 8th St.
Sheboygan, WI 53081
(920) 457-2907

Catholic Charities
Diocese of Green Bay
1825 Riverside Dr.
PO Box 23825
Green Bay, WI 54305
(920) 437-7531

Catholic Charities
Diocese of La Crosse
204 E Grand Ave., 4th Floor
Eau Claire, WI 54701
(715) 832-6644

Catholic Charities
Diocese of La Crosse
128 S 6th St.
La Crosse, WI 54601
(608) 782-0710
(800) CARE-002

Catholic Charities
Diocese of La Crosse
129 E Blackhawk #3
Prairie du Chien WI 53821
608-326-1616

Catholic Charities
Diocese of La Crosse
1317 College Ct., Ste 1
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 344-2500

Catholic Charities
Diocese of La Crosse
401 5th St., Ste 443
Wausau, WI 54403
(715) 849-3311
(866) 849-3311

Catholic Charities
Diocese of Madison
426 S Yellowstone Dr., Ste 100
Madison, WI 53744
(608) 833-4800

Catholic Charities
Diocese of Milwaukee
2021 N 60th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53208
(414) 771-2881

Children and Families First
583 D'Onofrio Dr., Ste 220
Madison, WI 53719
(608) 826-0498

Children's Home Society & Family Services
1605 Eustis St.
St Paul, MN 55108
(952) 646-6393
(800) 952-9302

Children's Hope Network, Inc.
1297 Trail Way Dr.
Grafton, WI 53024
(262) 377-7700

Children's Service Society of WI
1212 S 70th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53214
(414) 453-1400
(800) 653-2779

Community Adoption Center, Inc
120 S Quincy St.
Green Bay, WI 54301
(920) 435-5025

Community Adoption Center, Inc
101 East Milwaukee St., #424
Janesville, WI 53545
(608) 756-0405

Community Adoption Center, Inc
3701 Kadow St.
Manitowoc, WI 54220
(920) 682-9211
1-800-236-7863

Crossroads Adoption Services
911 4th St., Ste 214
Hudson, WI 54016
(715) 386-5550

Evangelical Child & Family Agency
1524 University Ave., Ste 100
Green Bay WI 54302
(920) 430-1050

Evangelical Child & Family Agency
1617 S 124th St.
New Berlin, WI 53151
(262) 789-1881
1-800-686-3232

Pauquette Children's Services
315 W Conant St.
PO Box 162
Portage, WI 53901-0162
(608) 742-8004

HOPE Adoption & Family Services
5850 Omaha Ave. N
Oak Park Hts, MN 55082
(651) 439-2446

LDS Family Services
1711 University Ave.
Madison, WI 53705
(888) 445-5257

Lifelinks
5705 W Lacy Rd.
Fitchburg, WI 53711-5321
(608) 278-4011

Love Basket
3902 Minnesota Ave.
Duluth, MN 55802-2553
(218) 720-3097

Lutheran Counseling & Family Services
3800 North Mayfair Rd.
Wauwatosa, WI 53213
(414) 536-8333

Lutheran Social Services
1101 W Clairmount Ave., Ste 2H
Eau Claire, WI 54701
(715) 833-0992

Lutheran Social Services
2350 South Ave., Ste 213
La Crosse, WI 54601
(608) 788-5090
(866) 787-1899

Lutheran Social Services
3003A N Richmond
Appleton, WI 54911
(920) 734-4326

Lutheran Social Services
5 Odana Ct.
Madison, WI 53719
(608) 277-2970

Lutheran Social Services
1545 S Layton Blvd., Floor 3
Milwaukee, WI 53215
(414) 671-5950

Lutheran Social Services
2231 Catlin Ave.
Superior, WI 54880
(715) 394-4173

Lutheran Social Services
516 McClellan St.
Wausau, WI 54403
(715) 849-3344

Special Children, Inc.
15285 Watertown Plank Rd., Ste 3
Elm Grove, WI 53122
(262) 821-2125

Sunshine Adoptions, Inc.
910 Elm Grove Rd., Ste 34
Elm Grove, WI 53122
(262) 796-9898

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:

Division of Children & Family Services
International Adoptions
P.O. Box 8916
Madison WI 53708-8916
608-266-9358

Or

www.dhfs.state.wi.us