

WAITING CHILD ADOPTION PROCESS

CSSW provides services to any member of the community over the age of 18 who wishes to be considered as a prospective adoptive parent for children who are legally available for adoption.

INQUIRY, ORIENTATION, AND APPLICATION

The second Wednesday of every month a public information meeting is held at the agency. The two hour meeting offers detailed answers to Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Adoption and highlights the philosophy and services provided by CSSW. Applications are available at this meeting as well as online.

A registration form for this information meeting can be found at our website. An intake meeting with the Adoption Specialist is scheduled within two weeks of the receipt of the application.

FAMILY ASSESSMENT PROCESS

A meeting to assist in assessing the critical issues in parenting through adoption so that individuals may make an informed decision about the how, why, and when of adopting. All paperwork is given at this time.

This is a two-part process. The first part consists of gathering information from the individuals such as birth certificates, marriage license, references, criminal clearance and fingerprinting request, medical clearances and reports, financial records, and any other pertinent information that will assist the adoption worker in completing the assessment.

The second part of the process is scheduling an in-home visit to assess the physical structure in order to maintain compliance with the agency's licensing policies and procedures. Two additional home visits or office visits are conducted to interview the family and other household members. The adoption worker obtains information relating to the family history and relationships, home and environment, parenting styles, assessment of strengths and weaknesses, community, and preparing families for adoption.

PREPARATION FOR ADOPTIVE PARENTING CLASSES

We value the importance of exposing adoptive parents to the unique challenges and additional parenting tasks they will face when parenting by adoption. Adoptive parents must complete 12 hours of PRIDE training. This training covers the importance of working together towards permanency, meeting the developmental needs of children, loss, attachment, discipline, and transitioning children. These classes are offered in many of the surrounding counties including Washtenaw. Classes are generally offered four times a year.

PLACEMENT OF A CHILD OR CHILDREN

Once a family is matched with a child(ren), the family is notified. Sometimes families are searching for children on the MARE website or ADOPT US website. Other times the family has a license as a foster home which already has the child placed in their home. Information is updated if needed and additional information is completed by the adoption worker.

Placement of a child cannot occur until Support Subsidy and a consent from the State of Michigan are completed. Once this is in place, legal paperwork including the petition for adoption is submitted to court. The court will review the paperwork and notify the adoption worker when the order is signed for placement. A child must be in the home 6 months before an adoption can be finalized.

SUPERVISION AND FINALIZATION

Michigan law requires Agency supervision of an adoptive family to assist with the adjustment to adoptive parenthood. This is a 6 month period but can be extended to 18 months if necessary. There are usually 3 visits with the adoption specialist over this time period. Written reports are submitted at 3 months and 6 months to the court. At the end of the 6 months, the adoption can be finalized with a hearing in front of a Judge or Referee. This is usually a significant day for the family, and they are encouraged to take pictures or videotape, and invite family and friends to this celebratory event.

SUPPORT SUBSIDIES

Most children will qualify for a support subsidy. Support subsidy paperwork is completed by the adoption worker and the family. There are eligibility criteria that enable children to be approved for support subsidy. If support subsidy is approved, the child automatically becomes eligible for Medicaid.

Medical Support Subsidy is an additional support that helps family care for children with significant medical issues, mental health concerns, developmental and learning difficulties, or specific conditions such as asthma or ADHD. Documentation will have to be obtained in order to apply for this subsidy.

Non-recurring expense subsidy may also be granted to help cover adoption expenses up to \$2,000.00. This would include the fees paid for the court filing and copies of the child's birth certificate.

Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw County

SPECIAL NEEDS Adoption Services Fee Schedule

Adoption Services:	Fee: If income is <\$70,000	Fee: If income is >\$70,000	When Due
<u>Orientation Meeting</u>	Free	Free	N/A
<u>Application and Intake Consultation</u> First meeting with Adoption Counselor to discuss adoption process and collect information from the applicants.	Free	Free	N/A
<u>PRIDE</u> Education to become licensed.	Free	Free	N/A
<u>Pre-Placement Assessment (PPA)</u> Individual, couple and family interviews in the home and office; collateral contacts and documentation as needed to complete a written assessment meeting legal requirements; safety assessment of the home.	Free	Free	N/A
Additional Fees (as needed)			
Annual PPA Update	Free	Free	N/A
Total:	Free	Free	