

Adoption Policy Guidelines for Couples

COMPACT Family Services is the adoption agency for the Assemblies of God, licensed and operated under the laws of the State of Arkansas. COMPACT is an affiliate ministry of the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

Adoption Information/Application Packet

Contact our office at 501-262-1660 or E-mail: highlands@compactfamilyservices.org for the COMPACT Adoption Information Packet. Once you receive your information packet, a \$50.00 non-refundable application fee, along with a recent photograph, is due with your Preliminary Application form. Highlands is not able to guarantee a placement of a child into every home. COMPACT reserves the right at any time to discontinue working with a prospective adoptive couple.

Basic Requirements and Preferences – Couples must meet the following requirements for an application to be mailed:

1. Each applicant must be a "Born Again" Christian and preference is given to those who attend an Assemblies of God church. This is because COMPACT Family Services is an affiliate ministry of the Assemblies of God. Assemblies of God general standards of conduct and Christian living are a priority in selecting prospective adoptive couples.
2. It is suggested that applicants be between the ages of 21-40, married for a minimum of 3 years and financially able to care for a child. Each applicant must be in good mental and physical health. There must be no use of tobacco, alcohol, or any controlled substance by either applicant.
3. COMPACT prefers that there be no divorce in the background of either applicant. If a divorce exists in an applicant's background, a letter of explanation concerning the reasons for the divorce is required.

Preliminary Application

Each couple will be expected to complete a Preliminary Application for initial evaluation. Please send the completed Preliminary Application form along with a recent photograph and the non-refundable \$50.00 application fee.

Adoption Application

If the Preliminary Application is approved, the couple will be expected to complete a more thorough adoption application. A \$75.00 adoption application fee must accompany the return of this information. If, for any reason, Highlands is unable to continue processing your application, the \$75 fee will be refunded upon request.

The Adoption Application includes the following:

- * Application
- * Autobiographies on each applicant
- * Financial Statement, Monthly Expense Form, Tithing Record, W-2 Forms
- * Medical Forms on each member of the household

- * Marriage Certificate and Birth Certificate
- * Pictures of Inside and Outside of Home
- * References (including pastor, employers, relatives and personal references)

A prospective adoptive applicant is not added to the COMPACT/Highlands adoptive couple list until the Second Application Packet, references, and home study are received, reviewed, and accepted.

Second Application Packet

Once COMPACT accepts the Preliminary Application, a Second Adoption Packet is sent to prospective adoptive couples. The Second Adoption Packet includes suggestions and information for the adoptive couple to focus on during the time of waiting for a child. COMPACT requests that an adoptive couple strive to educate themselves on adoption and be active in their endeavors to adopt a child.

Home Study

The law requires each couple have a home study completed. The home study refers to the process of several interviews, both together and individually, with a licensed adoption agency worker and a thorough inspection of the home. The social worker visits the home in order to formulate a written report to approve the couple being prospective adoptive parents. Couples residing in states other than Arkansas must have their home study conducted by a licensed agency in the state in which they live. The home study fee is an additional expense and is the responsibility of the adoptive couple.

Adoptive Couple Portfolio Packet

Once your home study has been completed and approved, each couple will complete an Adoptive Couple Portfolio. An expectant mother who is choosing an adoption placement plan for her child views the portfolio. The portfolio serves as a tool to present your life story as a couple to the expectant mother selecting a family.

Highlands Adoption Fee And Expenses

In keeping with the purpose and spirit for COMPACT as a ministry, the Board of Directors has established an equitable adoption fee of \$8,000.00. COMPACT's fee helps to recover only a part of the expenses incurred at Highlands. You will be expected to pay your total adoption fee by the time of placement.

In addition to the COMPACT adoption fee, you are also responsible for the following fees at the time of temporary custody:

1. ATTORNEY/LEGAL FEE: The attorney fee and court costs are approximately \$2,500. The attorney fee is payable directly to the attorney at the time of placement.
2. PUBLICATION FEE: This is a publication made for any unknown birth fathers. The cost is \$110.00 and is payable to the attorney.

3. **WAIVER OF CONSENT FEE:** This fee is for the court hearing for the birth mother and/or birth father to make the child legally available for adoption. Presently, the cost is approximately \$500.00 to \$600.00 and is payable to the attorney.
4. **HOME STUDY FEE:** This will depend on charges by the local agency completing your home study.
5. **CHILD'S MEDICAL BILL:** The hospital requires a \$2,500 deposit on the baby's medical bill before discharge from the hospital.
6. **OTHER FEES:** Additional fees include the following: Garland County Probate Clerk Fee (\$165), Arkansas Dept. of Health Fee (\$27), Putative Father Registry Letter (\$5).

Highlands Adoption Fee Payment Options

The adoption fee must be paid in full when you come to Hot Springs, Arkansas, for the Temporary Custody Placement. Several methods of acceptable payments are detailed below. You may choose any one of these methods or you may choose to save for the adoption fee on your own. If you choose to save or have the funds available to cover all the adoption fees, it is imperative that you contact **COMPACT** and let us know you are financially ready for the adoption.

The following are acceptable methods of paying the adoption fee:

1. **In Full at the time of Temporary Custody** - This includes the adoption fee, attorney's fee, court costs, publication fee, and waiver of consent fee. If this method of payment is made, the adoptive couple must alert Highlands when they have the finances available to complete the adoption.
2. **Monthly** – The adoptive couple may make \$225.00 monthly payments until the \$8,000.00 adoption fee has been submitted, or until the Temporary Custody hearing, at which time all fees must be paid in full.
3. **Percentage** – The adoptive couple may choose to split the payment into equal parts due at incremental times during the adoption process as determined by the Executive Director.

It is the adoptive party's responsibility to make payments according to the plan they choose. Statements will not be sent as reminders when payment is due. Highlands does not show partiality to couples that have their adoption fees in total. The decisions are based upon the desire and prayers of the expectant mothers and God's will.

Application and Follow-Up

- Each couple is unique and different. Therefore, the above information with the exception of the basic requirements is general and adaptable to specific couples and circumstances.
- Each couple is evaluated on an individual basis.
- Each applicant is encouraged to stay in touch with **COMPACT** Family Services to express continued interest. Please be assured of a response to your inquiry.

- At any point in the adoption process if you adopt a child from another source, please notify us immediately. (COMPACT will evaluate your file at that time and determine the status of your application with the agency.)
- Please realize that COMPACT /Highlands/Hillcrest might not be able to place a child with each couple we are working with. COMPACT encourages each couple to be active in their endeavors to adopt a child. This might include having an active file with other adoption agencies
- Please be patient. Keep COMPACT in your prayers. We shall be praying that God will grant you the desire of your heart and the blessing of a growing family.

Should there be any questions relating to the application, please feel free to contact us:

COMPACT Family Services Agency/COMPACT Adoptions

Ashley Grant, Highlands Director/Case Manager

2325 Malvern Ave.

Hot Springs, AR 71901

E-mail: highlands@compactfamilyservices.org

Phone: 501-262-1660