

KEY ELEMENTS OF AN ADOPTION SUPPORT SERVICE

Appendix Four – Section 5 - Provision of information

Information for Adopted Adults



www.afteradoption.org.uk

0800 0 568 578

The Law and You

The Adoption and Children Act 2002 came into force in both England and Wales on 30th December 2005. Adopted adults and their adult birth relatives have a new right to apply for an Intermediary Service. This means that an adopted adult can ask an Intermediary Agency to trace, and establish whether contact would be welcome with a birth relative.

Key Changes in the Law

If you were adopted before 30th December 2005, the Act brought in the following changes:

- Adopted adults and their adult birth relatives can request a regulated intermediary Service
- Adopted people can make it known on the Adoption Contact Register that they do not want contact at all, or only in certain circumstances
- Adopted people can put a qualified or absolute veto on contact on their adoption file
- Intermediary Agencies cannot disclose identifying information about adopted adults without first getting their consent
- Adoption Support Agencies and Adoption Agencies may charge fees to cover costs incurred. However, adopted persons cannot be charged for access to their adoption records
- The courts and the Registrar General now have to give you the information they may hold about the circumstances of your birth and adoption
- People adopted before 12th November 1975 will be given priority in relation to Intermediary Services

What is an Intermediary Agency?

An Intermediary Agency is an organisation that helps you get in touch with other people. They can do this by acting as a 'go between' so that you and the person you are looking for can choose whether and how you want to go ahead. It can be:

- an Adoption Support Agency
- a Voluntary Adoption Agency
- a Local Authority

If your Local Authority does not offer an Intermediary Service, they can refer to you to a registered Adoption Support Agency.

After Adoption's Intermediary Service

After Adoption has a well established intermediary service operating in areas where this work is funded by the Local Authority.

Additionally from 1st April 2009 After Adoption will be running a national self-funding Intermediary Service for anyone wishing to trace and attempt to make contact with birth relatives. The service will be available to birth relatives and adopted adults irrespective of whether or not there is an After Adoption service running in their area.

People applying for the service will be asked to meet the project worker at one of our offices to discuss the work that will be done and to prove their identity and demonstrate the link between themselves and the person being sought. Service users may need to travel to this first meeting, though this can happen at any of our regional offices and subsequent work will be mainly conducted over the phone. We will be building on our experience of providing intermediary work over the past 15 years. As well as the specialist project worker, we have a team of dedicated and experienced family researchers, some paid, some voluntary, who undertake the searching for lost relatives.

Information for Birth Relatives

www.afteradoption.org.uk

0800 0 568 578

The Law and You

The Adoption and Children Act 2002 came into force in both England and Wales on 30th December 2005. Adopted adults and adult birth relatives have a right to apply for an intermediary service. This means that a birth relative can ask an Intermediary Agency to trace and establish whether contact would be welcome by an adult adopted person.

Effect of The Adoption and Children Act 2002

If the person you are seeking was adopted before 20th December 2005, this Act brought in the following changes;

- You can request a regulated intermediary service
- Adopted people can make it known on their adoption file or on the Adoption Contact Register whether or not they wish to be contacted
- Intermediary Agencies cannot disclose identifying information about an adopted adult without first getting their consent
- Adoption Support Agencies and Adoption Agencies may charge you for the service and for any costs incurred
- You may be responsible for the costs of counselling for the adopted adult who is contacted on your behalf
- The courts and Registrar General have to give the information they hold relating to a child's adoption to the Intermediary Agency
- Priority will be given to cases involving adoptions that took place before 12th November 1975

What is an Intermediary Agency?

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- an Adoption Support Agency
- a Voluntary Adoption Agency
- a Local Authority

If your Local Authority does not offer an intermediary service, they can refer to you to a registered Agency

After Adoption's Intermediary Service

After Adoption has a well established intermediary service operating in areas where this work is funded by the Local Authority.

Additionally, After Adoption run a national self-funding Intermediary Service for anyone wishing to trace and attempt to make contact with adult adopted relatives. The service will be available to birth relatives and adopted adults irrespective of whether or not there is an After Adoption service running in their area. People applying for the service will be asked to meet a worker at one of our offices to discuss the work that will be done and to prove their identity and demonstrate the link between themselves and the person being sought. Service users may need to travel to this first meeting, though this can happen at any of our regional offices and subsequent work will be mainly conducted over the phone and/or by email. We have built on our experience of providing intermediary work over the past 20 years. As well as the specialist adoption support worker, we have a team of dedicated and experienced family researchers, some paid, some voluntary, who undertake the searching for lost relatives.