
Step-By Step: The Adoption Process for Children in Foster Care

Step 1. The adoption process begins after the biological parents consent to the adoption or their rights are terminated. In Arizona, Department of Child Safety (“DCS”) is represented by the Arizona Attorney General’s Office and they will initiate and finalize the termination of the parents’ rights. Once that is complete the child is free for adoption.

Step 2. The prospective adoptive parents must have a social study completed approving them to adopt. The social study consists of fingerprint background for both state and federal and Child Abuse Central Registry Checks done for submission to the court.

Step 3. The DCS Adoptions Case Manager will work with the family to submit the adoption subsidy application. This can be done at the same time as Step 4 but the adoption should not be finalized prior to obtaining subsidy approval.

Step 4. The adoptive parents will need to select an attorney to complete the legal pleadings necessary for the adoption. These include, the Adoption Petition and Verification, Affidavit of Compliance, Attorney Expenses and Verification, Eligibility for Expedited Hearing, and legal notices to request and set the final hearing.

Step 5. *THE FINAL ADOPTION HEARING!* This is the fun part. You and your family will go to court for the hearing. The attorney will present your paperwork for the new birth certificate, final orders for the judge’s signature and ask the prospective adoptive parents to give some brief testimony. Once the adoption is granted, everyone claps and your family takes a picture with the Judge. You’ll need to go to the Clerk of the Court’s Office to get your final orders certified. Be sure to have your celebration planned.



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