



Adoption Information Service

Access and Information Provision (Adoption Act 1988)

Many people who are adopted have a desire to know about and perhaps meet their birth parents. If you have been adopted, you may wish to know more about your original family. The law recognises that adopted persons have the right to know their origins and identity, and therefore provides for adult adopted persons to have access to their original birth record and other records associated with the adoption.

Many birth parents also want to know how the arrangements they made for their child's future turned out, and what sort of adult the child has become. If you are a birth parent, you may just want to know that the child is still living and has had a good family life.

Some adoptive parents ask for information about their child's background and first family origins, to help them in their task as parents.

The law provides for an Adoption Information Service and an Adoption Information Register. The Register and the Information Service are intended to help all persons involved in an adoption (adopted persons, birth parents, adoptive parents, and natural relatives) to obtain and exchange information about each other and to arrange to meet if they wish to do so.

The law also recognises that all people concerned have the right to privacy and to have their lives protected from intrusion.

The Information Register allows all people affected by adoption to register their wishes about contact and exchange of information. This may include a veto against contact.

Counselling Interview

All persons seeking information who are residents of Tasmania are required to attend an interview with a counsellor before receiving information of any kind. The purpose of counselling is to explain your rights, to make sure you fully understand the rights of others, and to help you consider some of the matters that may arise in search and reunion. [There is no fee for counselling.](#)

Adopted People

As an adopted person on reaching the age of eighteen (18) years you are entitled to a:

- Certificate allowing access to your original birth record. This is referred to as your Section 80 Certificate.
- Any information that may be held on the record of your adoption, including the name of your birth mother and possibly the name of your birth father if recorded.

- If a Contact Veto has been registered, you will be required to sign, before being given the information, an Undertaking not to contact the person.
- You may register your wishes about:
 - Exchange of non-identifying information;
 - Exchange of identifying information;
 - Contact with your birth parents or relatives;
 - Veto on contact.

If you are not yet 18 years old, the written agreement of your adoptive parents is needed before any information can be given to you. Information which could identify your birth parents, and access to your original birth record cannot be given to you unless we can obtain the written agreement of the birth parent or parents who consented to your adoption. You may ask for the Adoption Information Service to seek this written agreement.

Adoptive Parents

As an Adoptive Parent you can register your wishes about:

- Exchange of non-identifying information;
- Exchange of identifying information;
- Contact with the birth parents of your adopted child (if he or she is under 18 years old);
- Your adopted child's contact with his or her birth parents (if he or she is under 18 years old);
- You may register your wish not to be contacted.

Birth Parents and Other Birth Relatives

Birth parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, siblings, or lineal descendants may register. You are entitled to:

- Information held on the adoption record about yourself and the adopted person. This will include the adoptive name of your relative. If a contact veto is in place, you will be required to sign an Undertaking not to contact the person.
- If your relative is not yet 18 years old, the written agreement of all parents is needed before any identifying information can be given to you. You may ask for the Adoption Information Service to seek this written agreement.



Contact Veto

All parties may register a veto on contact. Your identifying information will only be given out if the person requesting the information signs a legally binding undertaking not to contact you in any way.

You may like to leave a message with the veto, eg. family medical history, whether you are happy, married, have children and so on.

You must include your address with a request to register a Contact Veto. A Veto will not be recorded unless your name, date of birth and address are provided. Your address will remain confidential.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Adoption Information Register?

The Register is a list of names and addresses of people affected by adoption, with details of their wishes about exchange or disclosure of information and contact. Entries may be altered or cancelled whenever you wish.

Should I register if I do not want contact?

YES. Your wish can then be passed on to any relative who applies for information. A contact veto is legally binding.

Do you assist in search and contact?

Yes, when requested and subject to any wishes recorded by another person. You may carry out your own search if you wish.

How will I be contacted if an agency is approached by someone looking for information or contact?

With discretion and regard for your rights to privacy. Normally this will be by a letter to you at the most recent address on the Electoral Roll.

What happens if the person whose agreement is needed has died?

Evidence of that person's death, for example, a copy of the death certificate, will be needed to allow the release of information.

What kinds of enquiry are given priority?

Priority will be given to requests from adopted persons aged over 45 years, birth parents over 60 years and in circumstances where medical conditions justify urgency.



Costs

The Registration Only Fee places you on the Adoption Information Register so that your wishes are known and can be followed should someone register to seek information. This includes a Contact Veto.

The Registration and Information Fee applies to all requests for information, including requests for access to the original birth record. The fee is payable at the time of registration.

The search fee applies when the Department is required to seek the views of a person on disclosure of information exchange of current information. The fee is payable when the service is requested.

Fees may be reduced in some circumstances if payment in full would cause hardship. There is no charge for counselling.

The next step - if you would like a registration form sent to you, please fill in and post the request below:

Please forward a registration form to:

Name:

Address:
.....

Postcode:

PLAIN ENVELOPE: **YES** **NO**

Post request to:

Adoption Information Service
GPO BOX 538
HOBART TAS 7001

Enquiries:
Telephone: (03) 6166 0422
Email: adoption.services@dhhs.tas.gov.au

All enquiries are confidential. NO information will be given to unauthorised persons.



