



## Adoptive Parent Handbooks

The NCCWE has compiled this state-by-state listing of free online handbooks. These handbooks assist prospective adoptive parents in negotiating the adoption process, as well as handbooks providing information on post-adoption services for families.

**State:** Alaska

**Title:** *Adoption and Guardianship Guidebook*

**Description:** This guidebook is about choosing adoption or guardianship for a child in state custody. It provides basic information on adoption and guardianship, the process for both options, a comparison of adoption and guardianship, and information about how the adoption and guardianship subsidy program works.

**Link:** <http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Documents/Publications/pdf/adopt.pdf>

**State:** Arizona

**Title:** *Special Needs Adoption Handbook*

**Description:** Although there are several adoption agencies in Arizona, the Department of Economic Security (DES) is the largest. Almost without exception, the children placed by DES have special needs; that is, they may be older or have physical or emotional handicaps. The information presented here is based on DES' statewide adoption program and will help potential adoptive parents navigate through the process of adopting children with special needs. (2004)

**Link:** <http://repository.asu.edu/attachments/77999/content/SpecNeedsAdoption.pdf>

**State:** California (Los Angeles)

**Title:** *Building Your Family through Adoption: A Handbook and Workbook*

**Description:** This LA County DCFS resource provides an introduction and includes chapters on the following topics: Legal Procedures; Adopting Children Already in Your Care; Putting Children Together with Families - Unattached Applicants; Signing Adoptive Placement Papers; the Adoption is Official; the Adoption Assistance Program and Medi-Cal; Post-Adoption Services; and, Specialized Adoptions Handled by the L.A. County DCFS.

**Link:** [http://dcfs.co.la.ca.us/adoptions/Adopt\\_Handbook.html](http://dcfs.co.la.ca.us/adoptions/Adopt_Handbook.html)

**State:** Florida

**Title:** *Adoptive Parent Handbook and Post Adoption Resource Guide*

**Description:** Family Services of Metro Orlando has produced this educational resource to help inform and empower families to take positive actions in navigating through the adoption system and post-adoption process. (2011-2012)

**Link:** <http://www.picernerealestategroup.com/rnd/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Post-Adoption-Resource-Guide.pdf>

**State:** Illinois

**Title:** *Making the Adoption/Guardianship Decision*

**Description:** This handbook provides basic information about adoption and guardianship, family considerations in decision-making, an adoption/guardianship comparison, answers to common questions about financial assistance, birth parent rights, responsibilities of adoptive families and guardians, and more. (July 2003)

**Link:** <http://www.state.il.us/DCFS/docs/adoptigdmanl.pdf>

**State:** Indiana

**Title:** *Post Adoptive Services (PAS) Brochure*

**Description:** This brochure has been developed by The Indiana Department of Child Services in an effort to connect adopted children and families across the state to post-adoption services. Post-adopt services are available to Indiana families who have adopted, whether they adopted through DCS or privately, until the child reaches 18 years of age. Families who adopted out-of-state (or even internationally) who now reside in Indiana are eligible for services, as well. This service is based on the belief that children and their families are remarkably resilient and capable of positive development when provided with community-centered support, defined by what is in the best interest of the child. It is meant to provide a comprehensive system of care that allows families to find support after adoption. (January 2012)

**Link:** <http://www.in.gov/dcs/files/IndianaPostAdoptionServicesBro4Email.pdf>

**State:** Maine

**Title:** *Maine Post-Adoption Resource Guide*

**Description:** This resource guide provides information on post-adoption services in Maine, including child development, health and medical, mental health, educational, legal, subsidies, respite, diversity, and recreation. (2007)

**Link:** <http://www.cwti.org/Publications/PAR/PDF/PARguide.pdf>

**State:** Massachusetts

**Title:** *Your Guide to Adoption in Massachusetts*

**Description:** This brief Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) publication provides answers to questions about becoming an adoptive parent, as well as a DCF Area Office Directory.

**Link:** <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dcf/adoption-guide.pdf>

**State:** Massachusetts

**Title:** *A Guide for Foster and Pre-Adoptive Parents*

**Description:** This guide was developed by the Massachusetts Department of Social Services to provide foster and pre-adoptive parents with some basic information about foster parenting, placement, health care, legal issues, emergency procedures, support and training, financial support, and suggestions for where to turn for help. (2003)

**Link:** <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dcf/c-fp-ap-guide.pdf>

**State:** Michigan

**Title:** *Adopting a Child in Michigan*

**Description:** This guide from the State of Michigan Department of Human Services provides definitions of terms and information on: common aspects of adoption in Michigan, types of adoptions in Michigan, temporary placements prior to adoption, assistance in adoption, the role of the family court, the children's ombudsman, information services, and recommended questions. (Revised January 2013)

**Link:** [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/DHS-PUB-0823\\_221566\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/DHS-PUB-0823_221566_7.pdf)

**State:** Minnesota

**Title:** *Answers to Your Questions about Adoption*

**Description:** People have many questions about adoption. This booklet by the Minnesota Department of Human Services Child Safety and Permanency Division provides some answers about adoption procedures to birth parents and adoptive parents. It also includes a list of licensed adoption agencies and other organizations that support adoption in Minnesota. County social service agencies and licensed adoption agencies can provide more specific information about adoption. This information is available in other forms to people with disabilities; contact information is included in the booklet. (2010)

**Link:** <http://www.co.otter-tail.mn.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/763>

**State:** Missouri

**Title:** *Welcome Home*

**Description:** This step-by-step guide from the Missouri Attorney General's Office leads prospective parents through Missouri's adoption process, from finding children to bringing them home for the rest of their lives. Contact information and other resources are provided. (Revised March 2009)

**Link:** <http://ago.mo.gov/publications/adoption.pdf>

**State:** Nebraska

**Title:** *Adoption: A Guide for Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Families*

**Description:** This publication serves as a guide for potential adoptive parents interested in adoption through the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. (Agencies and organizations may also benefit from this publication.) The information outlines what you can expect from the time of foster/adoptive placement through the finalization of the adoption. In Nebraska, potential adoptive parents must be licensed as foster parents. However, exceptions can be made for relative placements. This publication does not cover the foster care licensing process, but assumes the reader has already become licensed and is now preparing to adopt. (May 2003)

**Link:** [http://dhhs.ne.gov/children\\_family\\_services/Documents/AdpGuide.pdf](http://dhhs.ne.gov/children_family_services/Documents/AdpGuide.pdf)

**State:** Nevada

**Title:** *Guide to Adoption in Nevada*

**Description:** This extensive online guide to adoption in Nevada by the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services answers some of the most commonly asked questions about adoption and adoption-related services. It includes information for birth parents.

**Link:** [http://www.dcf.state.nv.us/DCFS\\_Adoption.htm#Guide](http://www.dcf.state.nv.us/DCFS_Adoption.htm#Guide)

**State:** New Hampshire

**Title:** *Post Adoption Services*

**Description:** The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services' Division for Children Youth and Families (DCYF) recognizes that adoption is not the end of the process, but the beginning of a life-long commitment for both adoptive parents and the adopted

child. This Post Adoption Services pamphlet helps to assist families with questions, concerns and special issues that may occur as their family grows and matures.

**Link:** <http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcyf/adoption/documents/postadoption.pdf>

**State:** New Jersey

**Title:** *Adoptive Parent Handbook*

**Description:** This booklet was produced by the State of New Jersey's Office of Adoption Operations to provide a step-by-step guide to the adoption process through the State's Child Welfare Program. This guide includes basic information about: the Adoption licensing process, waiting to hear about the availability of a child, the Selection and pre-placement process, the adoption subsidy program and post-adoption supports, along with information as to the adoption finalization process. (May 2013)

**Link:**

<http://www.nrcpfc.org/is/downloads/New%20Jersey%20Adoptive%20Parent%20Handbook-5-2013.pdf>

**State:** New York

**Title:** *How to Adopt a New York Waiting Child*

**Description:** This brochure provides step-by-step guidance from the New York State Office of Children & Family Services. (Revised June 2007)

**Link:**

[http://www.hillside.com/uploadedFiles/3Our\\_Services/Adoption/Adopting%20a%20Waiting%20Child%20in%20NY%20State.pdf](http://www.hillside.com/uploadedFiles/3Our_Services/Adoption/Adopting%20a%20Waiting%20Child%20in%20NY%20State.pdf)

**State:** Ohio

**Title:** *Ohio Adoption Guide: A Handbook for Prospective Adoptive Families*

**Description:** This handbook for prospective adoptive families in Ohio provides information on the adoption process. It provides information on who is eligible, personal characteristics of successful adoptive parents, challenging behaviors adopted children may engage in. The following section focuses on researching adoption agencies and lists key questions to ask when researching agencies. The adoption process is then described, including pre-service training, the homestudy, matching a child with a family, the placement of the child into an adoptive home, the legalization of an adoption, and post-finalization services. The next section discusses different types of financial support that may be available to adoptive parents. The handbook closes with a list of common adoption terms and contact information for public and private adoption agencies in Ohio. Profiles of adoptive families are provided throughout the handbook. (2013)

**Link:** <http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/file.asp?id=521&type=application/pdf>

**State:** Oklahoma

**Title:** *Adoptive Parent Handbook*

**Description:** The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) has developed this handbook because they recognize the valuable contribution families make when providing permanent homes to children through adoption. This responsibility is one that will change lives forever and end formal interaction with OKDHS. The family becomes responsible for all the important decisions for the child/children. There are many resources available through the department, other government agencies, and in the community that can help adoptive parents meet their responsibilities and thrive as a family. New adoptive parents are not child welfare specialists and this post adoption handbook will help them understand and navigate the services available to meet their child's ongoing needs. This publication contains the following sections: Adoption assistance benefits, Post-adoption supportive services, Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA), Frequently asked

questions, and, General information that may be of special interest to adoptive families.  
(Revised September 2011)

**Link:** [http://www.okdhs.org/NR/rdonlyres/2D2F0E68-E26E-4A2E-B17E-C1D474BA72CE/0/09361\\_AdoptiveParentHandbook\\_cfsd\\_12292009.pdf](http://www.okdhs.org/NR/rdonlyres/2D2F0E68-E26E-4A2E-B17E-C1D474BA72CE/0/09361_AdoptiveParentHandbook_cfsd_12292009.pdf)

**State:** Oregon

**Title:** *Oregon Adoption Assistance Handbook*

**Description:** This handbook focuses on Oregon's special needs adoption assistance program. (Revised August 2010)

**Link:** <https://apps.state.or.us/Forms/Served/de9050.pdf>

**State:** Rhode Island

**Title:** *Questions about Adoption*

**Description:** This Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth & Families webpage offers answers to questions about adoption.

**Link:** [http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/questions/adoption\\_questions.php](http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/questions/adoption_questions.php)

**State:** Texas

**Title:** *Adoption Options: A Directory of Adoption Agencies in Texas*

**Description:** There are a variety of ways for Texans to enlarge their families through adoption, including placement by the state through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, placement by a licensed agency, placement by the child's birth parents ("private adoption") and international adoption. This publication, by the Texas Young Lawyers Association, is intended to help those considering adoption to make informed decisions by answering commonly asked questions and by providing a list of available resources. The information should not be substituted for the advice of an attorney. (Revised 2010)

**Link:** <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/sls/forms/Adoption-Options.pdf>

**State:** Utah

**Title:** *Utah Guide to Adopting Children Who Live in Foster Care*

**Description:** This guide published by the State of Utah Department of Human Services Division of Child and Family Services serves as a handbook for prospective parents wanting to adopt children from foster care. It answers many frequently asked questions and connects individuals to many state-sponsored programs and resources. (2007)

**Link:** <http://www.hsdcs.state.ut.us/documents/HowtoAdoptBooklet-07.pdf>

**State:** Vermont

**Title:** *Vermont Adoption Handbook*

**Description:** The purpose of this guide, produced by the Vermont Adoption Consortium, is to help people who are thinking about building their families through adoption to consider all of the options available to them, understand the implications of each, and choose the one that is right for them. It can also help people who have already built their families through adoption to connect with post-adoption services, supports, and resources available to them. (2006/2007)

**Link:**

[http://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/pdf/fsd/adoption/AdoptHandbook2006\\_2007\\_web.pdf](http://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/pdf/fsd/adoption/AdoptHandbook2006_2007_web.pdf)

**State:** Washington

**Title:** *Post Adoption: Question and Answers*

**Description:** The Washington State Department of Social & Health Services has developed this handbook to better help families find answers to questions about adoption support

programs. It also identifies potential community resources that may be available to assist families in raising a child. (2007)

**Link:** <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/Publications/22-1211.pdf>

**State:** Wisconsin

**Title:** *Home to Stay: A Post-Adoption Resource Guide for Wisconsin Families*

**Description:** Adoptive families are different in some ways from non-adoptive families. When help is needed, there are supports available specifically for adoptive families. The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families funds six Post-Adoption Resource Centers to perform a number of services. This handbook serves as a guide for families to know which services are available in Wisconsin and where to obtain them. (2014)

**Link:** <http://wiadoption.org/Portals/WIAdopt/Brochures/HomeToStay20142.pdf>

**Title:** *A Step-By-Step Guide to Post-Adoption*

**Description:** Developed by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption in partnership with the Jockey Being Family, this guide identifies the range of resources available to parents after adoptions are finalized, how to select and locate providers, and suggestions in the event resources are not available in their communities. (2011)

**Link:** <https://www.davethomasfoundation.org/free-adoption-resources/adoption-guides/>