



## State-by-State Information about How to Find Family Members Who Have Been Separated by Adoption

**Mutual Consent Registry:** This is how all parties involved in adoption provide information on whether they are willing or unwilling to have identifying information disclosed. These registries vary from state to state but generally the consent is needed from one birth parent and either the adoptive child or adoptive parents depending on the age of the child to release this information. In most states, the parties need to file an affidavit in order to release the information.

**Non identifying Information:** This is information about birth parents and children that does not give away the identity of the individuals. This information could include this different information: when and where the adoptive child was born, how old the birth parents are and a brief physical description, race, ethnicity, medical information and religion of the birth parents, how much schooling the birth parents have, why the child was put up for adoption and any other children each birth parent may have. All states have provisions in place about who can obtain this information and when. Usually it is given to adoptive parents at the time of adoption. Adoptive children can request to receive this information generally once they turn 18 years of age.

**Identifying Information:** Information that reveals a person's identity, such as last name, address, phone number and detailed family history. In the field of adoption search and reunion, information allowing a birth parent, adoptive parent or an adoptee to be identified and located.

# LOUISIANA

## **Nonidentifying information may be released, upon request, to:**

- The voluntary adoption registry may be used by:
  - The adopted person who is at least age 18
  - The birth mother and birth father
  - The parents or siblings of a deceased birth parent
  - An adoptive parent of a minor or deceased adopted person
  - The birth siblings who are age 18 or older
- Nonidentifying information shall be provided to:
  - The adoptive parents
  - The adopted person who is age 18 or older
  - The birth parents

## **Access to nonidentifying information is limited to:**

- The agency or person to whom a surrender is made shall have the duty to make a good faith effort to obtain the Statement of Family History. Required by Articles 1124 and 1125, to deliver it to prospective adoptive parents upon placement, and to make it available upon request, to the adopted person at age 18 or older.
  - If the Statement of Family History is subsequently transferred to another agency or person, the new custodian of the information assumes responsibility to the adopted person.
- Any adopted person, or if still a minor, his or her legal representative, or a birth parent, may, upon written request obtain nonidentifying medical or genetic information without the necessity of filing a motion for disclosure. Upon such a request, the agency or person shall make a good faith effort to review and abstract nonidentifying genetic or medical information from all available records and sources that are similar in content to the Statement of Family History.
- After adoptive placement of the child, the agency or person to whom surrender is made shall have a continuing duty to maintain these records and supplement them if additional nonidentifying medical or genetic information is received about the adopted child or a birth parent. Upon such a request, the agency or person shall disclose such information. In fulfilling this continuing duty, the agency or person is authorized to contact the adopted person, adoptive parents, and birth parents to provide updated nonidentifying medical and genetic information or to facilitate the exchange of information between the parties.

## **Mutual access to identifying information:**

- The Office of Community Services of the Department of Social Services shall maintain a voluntary registry for the matching of adopted person and birth parents or siblings, or both. The purpose of this registry shall be to facilitate voluntary contact between the adopted person and the birth parents, siblings or both.
  - The use of the registry shall be limited to:
    - The adopted person who is at least age 18
    - The birth mother
    - The birth father
    - Parents or siblings of a deceased birth parent
    - An adoptive parent of a minor or deceased adopted person
    - Any birth sibling who is at least age 18
  - No registration by an adopted person shall be permitted until all birth siblings who were adopted by the same adoptive parents have reached age 18.
- The registry shall not release any information from adoption records in violation of the privacy or confidentiality rights of a birth parent who has not authorized the release of any information.
- The registry shall confirm for an adopted person the fact of his or her adoption and identify the court in which the adoption was finalized and the agency, firm, or lawyer facilitating the adoption when that information is known by the department. To receive this information, the adopted person shall be age 18 or older, submit the request in writing, and provide proof of identity.

### **Access to original birth certificate:**

- The original birth certificate is available:
  - Upon court order to the adopted person or if deceased, the adopted person's descendants, or the adoptive parent.
  - To the agency that was a party to the adoption upon court order after a showing of compelling reasons.

### **Louisiana Voluntary Adoption Registry, Department of Children and Family Services Web Link:**

<http://www.dss.louisiana.gov/index/cfm?md=directory&search=1&catid=0&city=&zip=&parishID=0>

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