



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.

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Nonidentifying information may be released, upon request, to:

- The adoptive parent may have access to nonidentifying information

Access to nonidentifying information is limited to:

- Prior to placement, the adoptive parent will be provided with all available information relevant to the child's development, including:
 - The child's developmental and medical history
 - The child's personality and temperament
 - The birth parents' complete medical histories, including conditions or diseases that are believed to be hereditary.
 - Any drugs or medications taken during pregnancy
 - Any other health conditions of the birth parents that may influence the child's present or future health.
- Information that would identify or permit the identification of the birth parents of the child shall be excluded.

Mutual access to identifying information:

- All records of proceedings related to the adoption shall be filed under seal by the clerk of the court and shall at no time be open to inspection or copying unless the court, upon good cause shown, shall otherwise order.

Access to original birth certificate:

- The original birth certificate is available only upon order of the court.

New Jersey Department of Human Services, Adoption Registry Coordinator

Contact Info Last Updated: 27-December-2012

Web Link: <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/contact/dcpplocal/#1>

Phone: (732) 988-2161

Fax: (732) 988-7025

Asbury Park NJ 07712

