



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.

MISSISSIPPI

Nonidentifying information may be released, upon request, to:

- The adopted person who is age 18 or older
- The adoptive parent
- The legal guardian or custodian of an adopted person
- The offspring or birth sibling of an adopted person if the requester is age 18 or older.
- Identifying information is available to the adopted person who is age 21 or older.

Access to nonidentifying information is limited to:

- The Bureau of Vital Statistics shall maintain a centralized adoption records file for all adoptions performed in this State after July 1, 2005 that shall include the following information:
 - The medical and social history of the birth parents, including information regarding genetically inheritable diseases and any similar information about the adopted person's grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, and sisters, if known.
 - A report of any medical examination that either birth parent had within 1 year before the date of the petition for adoption, of available and known.
 - A report describing the adopted person's prenatal care and medical condition at birth, if available and known.
 - The medical and social history of the adopted person, including information regarding genetically inheritable disease, and any other relevant medical, social, and genetic information, if available.
- Any birth parent may file with the bureau at any time any relevant supplemental nonidentifying information about the adopted person or the birth parents, and the bureau shall maintain this information in the centralized adoption records file.
- Nonidentifying information shall be released for a reasonable fee to any qualified person listed above. If the information is not on file, the adopted person may request the bureau to locate the birth parent and obtain the information.
- If an agency receives a report from a physician that a birth parent or another child of the birth parent may have a genetically transferable disease, the agency shall notify the adopted person of the existence of the disease if he or she is age 21 or older, or the adopted person's guardian, custodian, or adoptive parent if he or she is under age 21.
- If an agency receives a report from a physician that an adopted person may have a genetically transferable disease, the agency shall notify the adopted person's birth parent of the existence of the disease.

Mutual access to identifying information

- The bureau shall maintain as part of the centralized adoption records file the following:
 - The name, date of birth, Social Security number (both original and revised, where applicable), and birth certificate (both original and revised) of the adopted person.
 - The names, current addresses, and Social Security numbers of the adopted person's birth parents, guardian, and legal custodian.
 - Any other available information about the birth parent's identity and location.
- The birth parent may file with the bureau at any time an affidavit authorizing the bureau to provide the adopted person with his or her original birth certificate and with any other available information about the birth parent's identity and location, or an affidavit expressly prohibiting the bureau from releasing any information about his or her identity and location, and prohibiting any licensed adoption agency from conducting a search for such birth parent.
 - An affidavit filed under this section may be revoked at any time by written notification to the bureau.
- An adopted person age 21 or older may request identifying information regarding either birth parent, unless that birth parent has executed an affidavit prohibiting the release of such information. The adopted person must submit to counseling in connection with any release.
- If an affidavit is not on file, the adopted person may request the agency to undertake a search for the birth parent who has not filed an affidavit.

Access to original birth certificate:

- The original birth certificate shall not be a public record and shall not be divulged except upon the order of the court or pursuant to §§ 93-17-201 through 93-17-223.
- The birth parent may file with the bureau at any time an affidavit authorizing the bureau to provide the adopted person with his or her original birth certificate, or an affidavit expressly prohibiting the release of any information. The affidavit may be revoked at any time by written notification to the bureau.

Mississippi Department of Health, Vital Records

Web Link: http://www.msdh.state.ms.us/msdhsite/_static?31,0,109.html

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