

ADOPTION PROGRAM

Many Michigan children are in need of families; therefore, many kinds of families are needed for these children. The focus of our adoption program is to link children who need a home with families wanting to adopt them. The Department of Human Services (DHS) delivers adoption services directly through its own staff and through purchase of service with licensed private child care agencies in the state of Michigan.

If you have been thinking about adopting, here is some information about the DHS adoption program.

Geographic Area Served

DHS provides adoption services to all 83 Michigan counties.

The Children the Department Places for Adoption

The adoption program provides services to children whose parental rights are terminated and are committed by the court to the State of Michigan. While all kinds of children are committed to the state, most of the children fall into the following groups:

- Minority children.
- Older children.
- Children with physical, emotional or mental impairments.
- Family groups of two or more children.

Services Provided to Adoptive Applicants

- Orientation to adoption.
- Adoption education.
- Adoptive family assessments.
- Placement assistance.
- Adoption supervision.

Services Provided to Releasing Parent(s)

- Counseling (unless waived) and the options related to the release and its consequences.
- List of adoption support groups.
- DHS's adoption program statement.

Eligibility Requirements for Adoptive Applicants

- **Application** — Applicants are required to complete an application.
- **Age** — Applicants must be adults.
- **Marital Status** — Both single and married persons may apply. If applicants are married, they must both apply.
- **Health** — A medical history and a recent physical examination are required.

- **Family Assessment** — Applicants are required to participate in a family assessment. The assessment will include personal contact with each member of the family and must include a home visit. Some of the factors to be considered are:

1. Reasons or motivation for adoption.
2. Family history including emotional stability and compatibility of adopting parents.
3. Strengths, weaknesses and health of family members.
4. Parenting ability including methods of child discipline.
5. Education and employment history including current financial status.
6. Adjustment and special needs of own children.
7. History or incidents involving domestic violence, substance abuse or child abuse or neglect involving any family member.
8. The family's attitude toward accepting an adoptive child, including the family's plan to discuss adoption with the child.
9. The family's capacity, and disposition to give an adopted child love, affection and guidance and to create an atmosphere that fosters the religion, racial identity, and culture of an adopted child.
10. Record of any criminal convictions other than minor traffic violations.
11. Three references of non-relatives.

12. Characteristics of the children preferred by the family and the agency's recommendation as to the age, sex, and characteristics, including special needs, of children best served by the family.

Factors Considered When Selecting A Home for Each Child

The following factors are taken into consideration for each child who is available for adoption in determining what type of family would meet the child's needs.

1. Placement with relatives.
2. Placement with foster parents.
3. Placement with siblings.
4. Special physical and emotional needs of the child.
5. The child's religious preferences.
6. The child's wishes, particularly if the child is fourteen (14) or older.

Well over half of the children placed by the DHS are adopted by relatives or by their foster parents.

Exchange of identifying information between parents and adoptive parents is infrequent but continued contact with parents or other members of the child's family may be encouraged when considered to be in the interest of the child.

Adoption Subsidies

There are two types of adoption subsidies which may be granted to adoptive parents to help them meet the unique financial needs of special needs children. A medical subsidy may assist in paying for expenses that result from a physical, mental, or emotional condition which existed before the adoption. A maintenance subsidy provides a monthly payment for the support of the adopted child until the child reaches 18 years. The DHS determines the eligibility of the child for a subsidy. A separate pamphlet is available which describes adoption subsidies, Publication 538, Michigan Adoption Subsidy Program Information Guide.

Services Available After the Adoption is Complete

1. Direct casework services and referral to community resources.
2. Assistance to families seeking medical subsidy.
3. Assistance to adult adoptees, former siblings, adoptive parents and birth parents requesting information from adoption records.

Fees

The DHS does not charge fees for its adoption services.

Legal Representation

Adoptive parents have a right to independent legal representation when adopting a child placed by the DHS. The DHS does not pay for the cost of legal representation.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**



**STATE OF MICHIGAN
Department of Human Services**

Quantity: 8,000
Order Cost: \$866.27 (.11 each)
Approval: DHS Director

Department of Human Services (DHS) will not discriminate against any individual or group because of race, sex, religion, age, national origin, color, height, weight, marital status, sexual orientation, political beliefs or disability. If you need help with reading, writing, hearing, etc., under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are invited to make your needs known to a DHS office in your area.

DHS Pub-255 (Rev. 11-06)
Previous edition obsolete.

ADOPTION PROGRAM STATEMENT



**STATE OF MICHIGAN
Department of Human Services**