



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.

NORTH DAKOTA

Nonidentifying information may be released, upon request, to:

- The adoptive parents
- The adult adopted person
- The birth parent
- Identifying information may be provided to:
 - The birth parents
 - The adoptive parents
 - The adopted person
 - Adult birth siblings
 - The adult child of an adopted person

Access to nonidentifying information is limited to:

•Nonidentifying information, if known, concerning undisclosed birth parents must be furnished upon written request to the individuals listed above. The term 'nonidentifying adoptive information' includes:

- The age of the birth parent at the time of the child's birth
- The heritage and religion of the birth parent
- The education completed by the birth parent at the time of the child's birth.
- The general physical appearance of birth parent at the time of the child's birth, including height, weight, color of hair, eyes, skin, and other information of a similar nature.
- The talents, hobbies, and special interests of the birthparents
- The existence of any other children born to either birth parent
- The reasons for the child being placed for adoption
- The vocation of the birth parent in general terms
- The health history of the birth parents and blood relatives

Mutual access to identifying information:

•Before the child reaches adulthood, exchanges of identifying information may take place between the birth parents, adoptive parents, and adopted person. Disclosure of a party's identifying information may not occur unless the party consents to disclosure. If one parent objects, the identifying information disclosed by the agency may only relate to the consenting parent or parents.

•An adopted person who is age 18 or older may request the department to initiate the disclosure of information identifying his or her birth parents or adult birth

sibling. A birth parent or adult birth sibling may request the department to initiate the disclosure of information identifying that individual. An adult child of an adopted person may request the department to initiate the disclosure of information identifying the adopted person's birth parents.

- Within 90 days after receiving a request, the child-placing agency shall make complete and reasonable efforts to notify the individual or individuals that a disclosure of identifying information has been requested. An adopted person, birth parent, or birth sibling may authorize disclosure, refuse to authorize disclosure, or take no action. If no action is taken in response to a request, the child-placing agency must treat that as a refusal to authorize disclosure, except that it does not preclude disclosure after the person's death.

- Upon application to the department by an adult adopted person or the parent or guardian of a minor adopted person, the department may investigate to determine the adopted person's eligibility for the enrollment as a member of an Indian Tribe.

Access to original birth certificate:

- The original birth record is available only upon order of a court or as provided by rules and regulations.

North Dakota Department of Human Services, Adoption Search/Disclosure

Contact Info Last Updated: 11-May-2011

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