



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 release, upon request, to:

- Medical history shall be provided to:
 - The adoptive parents
 - The adopted person
- Identifying information is available to:
 - An adopted person who is age 25 or older for adoptions finalized prior to September 1, 1998.
 - An adopted person who is age 21 or older for adoptions finalized on or after September 1, 1998.

Access to nonidentifying information is limited to:

•A child-placing agency, the Department of Health and Human Services, or a private agency handling the adoption. As the case may be, shall maintain and shall provide to the adopting parents upon placement of the child and to the adopted person, upon his or her request, the available medical history of the adopted person and of the birth parents. The medical history shall not include the names of the birth parents, the child's place of birth, or any other identifying information.

Mutual access to identifying information:

- For adoptions finalized prior to September 1, 1998: Upon a request for information, the department shall check the records of the adopted person to determine whether a consent form has been signed and filed by any relative. As well as whether an unrevoked nonconsent form is on file from a birth parent or an adoptive parent.
- If the consent form has been signed and filed and not been revoked, and if no nonconsent form has been filed by an adoptive parent, the department shall release the information to the adopted person.
- If no consent forms have been filed, or if the consent form has been revoked, and if no nonconsent form has been filed, the following information shall be released to the adopted person:
 - The name and address of the court that issued the adoption decree
 - The name and address of any child-placing agency involved in the adoption.
 - The fact that an agency may assist the adopted person in searching for relatives.

- For adoptions finalized on or after September 1, 1998: Upon a request for information, the department shall check the records of the adopted person to determine whether an unrevoked nonconsent form is on file from a birth parent.
- If no nonconsent form has been filed, the following information shall be released to the adopted person:
 - The name and address of the court that issued the adoption decree
 - The name and address of any child-placing agency involved in the adoption.
 - The fact that an agency or the department may assist the adopted person in searching for relatives.
 - A copy of the adopted person's original birth certificate
 - A copy of the adopted person's medical history and any medical records on file.
- If an unrevoked nonconsent form has been file, no information maybe released to the adopted person except a copy of his or her medical history, if requested. The medical history shall not include the names of the birth parents or relatives of the adopted person or any other identifying information.

Access to original birth certificate:

- For adoptions finalized prior to September 1, 1998: an adopted person who is age 25 or older may file a written request for the original birth certificate. For adoptions finalized on or after September 1, 1998: an adopted person who is age 21 or older may request the original birth certificate. If a consent form has been signed and filed by both birth parents, or by the birth mother of a child born out of wedlock, and no nonconsent form has been filed. A copy of the adopted person's original birth certificate shall be provided to the adopted person.
- For adoptions finalized prior to July 20, 2002: an adoptive parent or parents may at any time file a notice of nonconsent stating that at no time prior to his or her death, or the death of both parents if each signed the form, may any information on the adopted person's original birth certificate be released to such adopted person.

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services – Adoption Searches

Contact Info Last Updated; 01-July-2013

Web Link: http://dhhs.ne.gov/children_family_services/Pages/adoption_children.aspx

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