



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 CAROLINA

Nonidentifying information may be released, upon request, to:

- The adoptive parent
- The adult adopted person
- A minor adopted person who is a parent or an expectant parent
- A licensed child-placing agency or a county Department of Social Services may agree to act as a confidential intermediary for the purpose of sharing identifying information for any of the following:
 - A birth parent
 - An adult adopted person
 - An adult birth sibling of an adult adopted person
 - An adult birth half-sibling of an adult adopted person
 - An adult family member of a deceased birth parent
 - An adult family member of a deceased adopted person

Access to nonidentifying information is limited to:

- Any person listed above may request a copy of any document prepared pursuant to § 48-3-205 and any additional nonidentifying health-related information about the adopted person's original family. The information that is provided at the time of the adoptive placement includes:
 - The date of the child's birth and any other reasonably available nonidentifying information
 - The age of the birth parents at the time of the child's birth
 - The heritage of the birth parents including nationality, ethnic background, and race.
 - Education completed by the birth parents at the time of the child's birth.
 - The general physical appearance of the birth parents
 - All reasonably available nonidentifying information about the health and genetic history of the child, the birth parents, and other members of the birth parents' families.
- Nonidentifying information about the adopted person's present circumstances may be disclosed to a birth parent, an adult sibling, or the guardian of a minor sibling..

Mutual access to identifying information:

- Except as provided below, no one shall release from any sealed records the name, address, or other identifying information about an adopted person, adoptive

parent, birth parent, or individual who, but for the adoption, would be the adopted person's sibling or grandparent, except upon order of the court.

- A child-placing agency may agree to act as a confidential intermediary for a person listed above without appointment by the court in order to obtain and share nonidentifying birth family health information, facilitate contact, or share identifying information with the written consent of all parties. An agency also may agree to act as a confidential intermediary for the adoptive parents, of a minor adopted person without appointment to obtain and share nonidentifying information.
- If such agency determines that the person, who is the subject of the search, or a lineal ascendant of that person, is deceased, the agency may obtain a copy of the birth certificate and deliver it to the person who requested the services.
- Nothing in this article is meant to prevent:
 - An employee of a court, agency, or any other person from;
 - Inspecting confidential records, other than records maintained by the State Registrar, for the purpose of discharging any obligation
 - Disclosing the name of the court or agency involved in the adoption to an individual described above who can verify his or her identity
 - Disclosing or using information contained in sealed records for statistical or research purposes
 - In agency placements, a parent placing a child for adoption and the adopting parents from authorizing an agency to release information to each other that may reveal the identity of an adopted person, an adoptive parent, or an adopted person's placing parent
 - The Division of Social Services from sharing information regarding the identity of birth parents with an agency acting as a confidential intermediary

Access to original birth certificate:

- Upon receipt of a certified copy of a court order issued pursuant to § 48-9-105 authorizing the release of an adopted person's original birth certificate. The State Registrar shall give the individual who obtained the order a copy of the original birth certificate with a certification that the copy is a true copy of a record that its no longer a valid certificate of birth.

North Carolina Division of Social Services

Contact Info Last Updated: 17-July-2013

Web Link: <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/fostercare/index.htm>

Phone: (877) 625-4371

Raleigh NC 27603