

Adoptions & Family Support Network, Inc.
2210 US 41 Schererville, IN 46375 Phone: 219-924-2600
www.adoptionandfamily.com * tina@adoptionandfamily.com

Adoption Home Study Instructions

Thank you for coming to this agency for home study services. As prospective adoptive parent(s), you are required to obtain a home study for the purpose of adopting a child in the State of Indiana. The home study report is written only after specific documentation is received by this agency, background checks are done, interviews have been done, fees are paid, and a home visit has been made to meet your family and determine if your home is a safe environment. The report is only seen by you, adoption agencies of your choosing, your attorney, and the court.

The home study process can take **at least 6-8 weeks** depending on how quickly you get your background checks and paperwork done. You will be provided with all the forms that need to be completed as well as a list of documents that need to be copied and submitted. Contact this agency with questions anytime throughout this process.

These instructions will take you through the steps needed to get the paperwork done efficiently in addition to getting the required background checks done. Please read these instructions carefully, follow the steps listed, utilize the check list, and contact this agency with any questions.

If your attorney needs the home study report by a certain date or if you have a scheduled COURT DATE, let this agency know right away. Your adoption worker will give you a time frame for getting all background checks and paperwork done. If there is not enough time, you will need to contact your attorney to reschedule your court hearing.

FIRST:

To begin the home study process, complete the following forms which are found on the website if this agency has not already sent them to you: **1) home study application 2) fee agreement 3) release of info 4) State form 53259.**

MAIL these completed forms to **2210 US Hwy 41 Schererville, IN 46375** along with a check/money order for the \$275 application fee. Once this is received, you will be contacted by an adoption worker to make sure you are getting all the background checks done and have all the necessary paperwork to be completed.

SECOND:

While you are waiting to hear from the adoption worker, go ahead and get the following background checks done.

Each adult age 18 and older living in the home, is responsible to get the following two **background checks** done.

(For step-parent adoptions- only the adopting parent needs to get the background checks done).

___ **Fingerprint National Check:** Arrange online at www.IdentoGO.com –click on **Indiana** to sign up and schedule an appointment for your **DIGITAL FINGERPRINTING**. Or call 877-472-6917. The cost is around \$40 per person and you will be instructed on payment options when registering. **It is very important when registering, that you make sure you choose private adoption agency with Adoptions and Family Support Network.** The results can take up to three weeks and will be sent directly to this agency.

___ **Local City or County:** It is required to get background checks from the local law enforcement agency/agencies where you have lived in the last 5 years. Go to your local police station or county sheriff dept and ask for a criminal history background check. You will need ID and there may be a small fee. They will check their computer system to see if you have had any arrests. They will give you a statement/report showing that no records have been found or listing any arrests. If you have arrests, you must provide legal documentation to this agency that the case is closed. **DO NOT** do fingerprints at the police station. Send this/these report(s) with your second batch of paperwork to this agency.

This agency will obtain the Child abuse/neglect (CPS) history check. You will have to give consent on a special form which will be emailed to you after the adoption application is received by this agency. If you have not lived in Indiana for the past 5 years, a CPS check will also have to be done in the other state(s) where you lived. You will be informed if any special forms need to be signed. This can take 3 weeks or longer. This agency will also do a name search in the Indiana court system as well as a National Sex Offender Registry check for each person age 12 or older in the home.

THIRD:

We will send you the following forms after receiving your application packet. Complete the:

Financial form, GenoGram, Ecomap, and a Questionnaire for each parent

You will also receive Medical Forms for the adoption applicants, to be completed by your doctor/NP. There are two different forms – one for caregivers (parents) and one for all other household members.

(For step-parent adoptions, only the adopting parent needs the medical form done.)

FOURTH:

You will need to gather and make copies of several documents. They are listed in the check list below.

FIFTH:

Contact this agency before mailing in your remainder paperwork to find out the total home study fee. **MAIL** in all remaining paperwork **and** home study fee(s) to this agency at: **2210 US Hwy 41 Schererville, IN 46375**. (Keep copies for your records.) After ALL paperwork is in, you will be contacted about setting up the virtual interview and the home visit.

FINALLY:

We will try to work with your schedule when setting up the interview and home visit. However, if you have to get it done in a certain time frame due to an upcoming court date, you will need to be flexible with your availability. The virtual interview will take 60-90 minutes and the home visit will take about 30 minutes. All persons living in the home need to be present. Your adoption worker will be going over your paperwork, gathering more information from each person in the home, and observing your family interactions. The adoption worker will need to walk through your home to make sure it is a safe environment. Any remainder fees, such as mileage, will be due at the home visit. Your home study report will be written and complete within 2-4 weeks after the home visit.

CHECKLIST

FIRST packet of paperwork to be sent in should contain:

- Agency Application
- Fee agreement
- Release of Information
- Check or money order for application fee of \$275
- Criminal History Check Form 53259

(For step-parent adoptions, only adopting parent needs the background check forms done.)

SECOND packet of paperwork to be sent in should contain the following forms and documents:

- Financial Form (make sure you sign it)
- Local City/County background check(s) for each person in the home age 18 and older- send original(s)
(For step-parent adoptions, only adopting parent needs this background check done.)
- Questionnaires (for each parent)
- GenoGram & Ecomap
- Medical Form signed by a physician or nurse (For step-parent adoption-only adopting parent needs medical form done.)
Caregiver form to be used by each adopting parent, household member form for all others living in the home.
- Home Study fee(s) is on fee agreement or check with agency if you are not sure.

Copies of:

- Picture ID/Drivers License for all adults in the home (both sides)
- Verification of current auto insurance for all vehicles used to transport children
- Legal Marriage License (with license and file number, not just certificate from the pastor)
- Legal Birth Certificate (for every member of the household)
- Divorce Decree(s) (ask adoption worker what to send if document is over 5 pages)
- Verification that pets have current rabies shots
- Tax Returns from previous 2 years (first 2 pages of 1040 only)
- Verification of current employment & income – i.e. Pay Check Stubs (most recent two)
- Other income verification (if you do not have check stubs and/or you have additional income)
- Health Insurance cards for applicant(s) and child(ren)
- For each child in the home – current immunization records

MAKE COPIES OF EVERYTHING YOU SEND IN AND KEEP A HOME STUDY FILE FOR YOURSELF.

At the virtual interview, adoption education will be discussed. Please utilize online resources and websites such as www.adoptivefamilies.com or www.adoptionlearningpartners.org and explore adoption books/magazines. Also go to www.socialworktraining.org for courses on adoption & foster care. **(not for step-parent adoptions)**