



# Adoption Council of Ontario

## Public Adoption: Children's Aid Society

All Children's Aid Societies are governed by the same provincial legislation, but their delivery of service varies as they are autonomous organizations governed by local boards and local policies. Some are called Family and Children's Services, or other similar names.

Services are provided at no charge, as their funding is part of the Ontario budget. Families who wish to adopt through a CAS must apply to the CAS that covers the geographical area in which they live, as funding is intended to service people in that area.

Children's Aid Societies may consider families for their children who have had homestudies completed by workers in other CAS's or approved private adoption practitioners. With the consent of the applicants, homestudies may be shared when children are identified as being a potential match in another agency. Infant adoption placement may be "by consent" as follows:

- ★ Families go through a preparation/homestudy process with an assigned adoption worker at their local agency.
- ★ Families are approved for adoption and may help prepare a personal profile that can be given to birth family.
- ★ A birth parent, who is working with the agency's pregnancy counsellor or family services worker during pregnancy, or requests assistance from the Children's Aid Society at the birth of a child, is provided with the opportunity to consider alternatives and to select an adoption home for the child
- ★ Approved families are selected for a particular child either directly by birth parents' choice through profile selection, by birth parent criteria if they choose not to select personally, or by adoption workers where the birth parent does not choose to be/or is unavailable to be involved
- ★ Birth parents may choose to meet the adoptive parents in hospital or following discharge, and may choose to be directly involved in placement where possible
- ★ A child may be placed directly from hospital with the adoptive parents or may be placed from a foster home, depending upon circumstances of placement
- ★ The birth parents will sign consents when the child is over 8 days old. They have a 21 day period to re-track their consents and request that the child be returned to them.
- ★ The form of post placement contact between birth family and adoptive family is established during the pre-placement process
- ★ A minimum of 6 months supervision of adoption placement is legally required and the adoption worker will visit to provide support during this time.
- ★ The adoption is legally finalized through the court by the agency. No lawyer or fee is involved in a CAS adoption.

Children's Aid Societies in Ontario are mainly involved in the placement of children beyond infancy. They are responsible for the children who come into their care in their area. When children's legal connections to birth parents are terminated through a court process (Crown Wardship), the CAS will seek to place the child(ren) in a permanent legal family through adoption if a kinship family is not identified.

Procedures may vary from agency to agency, but will be similar to the following:

- ★ Families go through the same adoption preparation/ homestudy approval process as they would when working with a Private adoption practitioner.
- ★ An adoption worker reviews children referred for permanency within their agency, and then first reviews their own approved applicants' suitability based on the needs of these children. When a child referred matches criteria determined by a family through the homestudy process, the adoption worker will approach the family about their interest in being considered for placement of the child(ren)
- ★ The Adoption worker will also search for suitable applicants for their children in other agencies through means such as the AdoptOntario family database, or meetings such as the biannual Adoption Resource Exchange.
- ★ Note: approved families may also look at children on the AdoptOntario site/ or Today's Child, or attend the Adoption Resource Exchange (A.R.E.) presentations to self select a child/ren for whom they wish to be considered
- ★ Once selected by the agency for consideration, specific information on the child will be shared with the applicants with the assistance of their worker. This information can include videos or pictures of the child. There may also be meetings with other workers or foster parents who know the child. When the family and the child's worker believe that the family is the most suitable family for the child, a personal introduction with the child will take place.
- ★ A series of pre-placement visits is conducted in order to achieve a comfort level for the child and family prior to the final move into the adoptive home. Any arrangements are mutually decided as is in the particular child's best interests, for post-placement contact with the child's siblings, other birth family or foster parents.
- ★ Following placement an adoption worker will visit with the family to provide support and counsel regarding adjustment issues. This period of supervision will continue for a minimum of 6 months as required by legislation or for whatever period of time is required for the family to be prepared for legal finalization of the adoption.
- ★ The adoption is finalized in the court serving the area where the adoptive family lives. All legal work is provided with the assistance of the agency and no fee is involved. Locate your local Children's Aid Society:

[://www.oacas.org/childwelfare/locate.htm](http://www.oacas.org/childwelfare/locate.htm)



Every Child Deserves a Forever Family.

[www.adoption.on.ca](http://www.adoption.on.ca)

