

# International Child Foundation, Inc.

## ADOPTION SERVICES

Mission, Fee Policy, Payments, Programs, Expected Number of Clients, Recruitment

### MISSION

The mission of International Child Foundation is to provide safe and loving families for orphaned children and to support aid programs that improve the quality of life for orphans overseas.

### SERVICES & FEE POLICY

International Child Foundation (ICF) provides both international and domestic adoption services, home study services and adoption education. It is the policy of the agency to ensure that information about fees and payment schedules are available to adoptive families through the agency websites, program guides and adoption agreements. Fees for services are paid at the time the service or stage of service is initiated. Fees are not refundable, except as may be noted in the adoption agreement. Fees are paid for services and not for the completion of an adoption. Adoption is a high-risk arena, emotionally and financially, as international countries may close adoption without notice and birthmothers or fathers may change their adoption plan when a child is born.

The agency application fee is \$300. Home study fees are \$1,400 for a non-Hague home study for domestic or international adoption and \$1,550 for an international Hague adoption or \$1,750 if, in the case of an international adoption, the foreign government requires additional visits or additional pre-adoption assessment reports or letters generated by the agency. Post placement report fees are \$350 per visit. Additional fees may apply if the home visit requires travel beyond the travel allowance or if more than one child is included in the report, as is detailed in the home study agreement.

The agency fee for an international adoption is \$6,500 for administration and case management plus foreign administration fees which may range from \$7,500 to \$18,000. The agency fee for a domestic adoption is \$14,500, plus profile registration, birthparent counseling, birthparent expenses, agency travel costs and legal fees. In both international and domestic adoption additional fees, such as legal fees, translation and document costs, birthmother or child medical expenses or orphanage donations, may apply; these are specified in the individual program fee addendums or contracts. In the event an additional unscheduled cost exceeds \$1,000, adoptive families are informed in advance in writing via email to request their consent.

### PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

International Child Foundation has a robust international adoption mission, however, the international adoption landscape is vulnerable to political or administrative shifts and countries routinely and sometimes unexpectedly curtail, suspend or close international adoption programs. The agency is cautious about re-opening programs when the future poses unusual high levels of uncertainty about outcomes; however, in no case, whether an adoption may be perceived to be low- or high- risk, can an adoption plan be guaranteed.

The domestic arm of International Child Foundation, ABC Adoption, is focused on helping birthmothers determine their options when confronted with an unplanned pregnancy. Staff is skilled and trained to avoid making assumptions; birthparents are counseled in an open-ended manner, with their values and preferences and their desires for their child in the foreground. All ICF personnel are experienced and compassionate. Many have extensive training or clinical skills. Sufficient personnel are available to provide services without undue delay; usually within 24 hours of contact.

### CLIENT FAMILY DEMOGRAPHICS

Clients of the agency who are adoptive parents are screened initially and have approved home studies. They generally present as sincere, intelligent, educated, professional and prepared prospective adoptive parents of middle or upper class means. The agency assists married couples and single women. Many adoptive parents have experienced infertility; some are parents to one or more children through birth or adoption.

#### EXPECTED NUMBER OF CLIENTS

ICF expects to assist approximately 60 families per year with preparation of home studies; approximately 25 families per year with international and 15 families with domestic placements. The agency anticipates serving at least 30 birthmothers per year with counseling; half of these contacts may result in adoption planning and placement. It is the experience of the agency 50% of birthmothers who contact the agency for information and counseling ultimately choose to parent their child or place their child with family members.

ICF is cautious about matching birthparents with adoptive families prior to thoroughly getting to know them, assessing their options with them, and reaching an understanding that they are fully committed to the idea of adoption as the preferred outcome of their pregnancy, and as the choice they feel is in the best interest of their child. ICF neither pushes for matching nor do we allow birthparents to consider prospective adoptive parents until they have fully explored their options and feel that adoption is the most reasonable avenue.

#### RECRUITMENT

Recruitment methods for both birthparents and adoptive families include the website, print advertising, seminars, networking with other agencies, hospitals and clinics, and word of mouth recommendations. New birthparents are screened by the birthmother counselor; new prospective parents are initially screened by the social worker who provided their home study assessment and by the agency director.

#### PLACEMENT TIMEFRAMES & RISKS

Generally children placed through ICF's domestic program are newborn infants, although the agency has counseled birthmothers considering the placement of children who are older. It is difficult to predict the average length of referral wait time, as the program is small and matching decisions hinges on birthparent and adoptive parent preferences. The agency estimates that the wait time could be 6-12 months, or more. Past placements are not a reliable indicator, as some birthmothers have chosen to match with families who only recently entered the program. We do not wish to promise overly optimistic wait times. If anything, the agency is inclined to stress the risks rather than paint adoption as simple, quick or predictable.

The primary case worker for domestic adoption has several years' experience with placements through the court and other placing agencies and exercises caution and forthrightness in discussions with adoptive parents. ICF social workers are very well acquainted with the challenges and disappointments adoption can bring and address potential negative outcomes as well as positive ones with prospective parents planning domestic or international adoptions. International adoption placements generally take a minimum of a year to complete and, in some cases, such as with China, can take five years.

In both domestic and international adoptions, financial liabilities are discussed. In domestic adoption, adoptive parents are informed in the adoption agreement that liability for medical or hospital treatment will be theirs unless the birthmother and child are eligible for financial assistance and have been accepted into the state aid program. With respect to international adoption, the agency agreement clearly outlines risks associated with the adoption process and placement. Adoptive parents are made aware of the agency grievance procedures and access to communicate with state licensing and accreditation entities through the application process and the adoption agreement. ICF is committed to transparent and ethical practices.

International Child Foundation is pleased that many families have recommended our services to their friends and relatives and that they return for additional adoptive services. We welcome all families to inquire about our services. If the agency does not provide services needed, staff will try to recommend other resources.