

Children and Family Services



Practice Guide for Post Adoption Search Services 2011



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Introduction

Using this guide

This *Best Practices Guide* was developed for multiple audiences, with each section tabbed. Though one tab may be directed to a specific party, it is intended that the cross-functional design of this guide will also assist in the broader knowledge of the various aspects of post adoption search services of all parties. Both the audience and purpose of this guide are multi-faceted. The purposes are to:

- Provide information and guidance regarding the search process for parties interested in medical or background information, or contacting another party to the adoption
- Educate adoption staff about necessary considerations in responding to a post adoption search request
- Assist agencies in the development of policies related to post adoption search services and records
- Connect persons interested in post adoption search services with resources.

Motivation to search

Adopted individuals, birth parents, adoptive parents of minor children, siblings, and others touched by adoption may choose to engage in a search process for a variety of

reasons. While some individuals have always had a desire to search, others may not have any interest. The basis for performing a search may be as unique as the individuals who choose to search. Some of the most common reasons for searching may include: the need to obtain medical information or to have other comprehensive information in emergency situations; knowledge regarding the circumstances resulting in placement or experiences during placement with a sibling from whom they were separated; and/or major milestones in life (graduation, marriage, birth, death). Some individuals may feel that the information may fill a void or answer curiosities.

In Minnesota, adoption records and original birth certificates are sealed upon the finalization of an adoption, maintaining the confidentiality of the contents regarding identifying information. [National Adoption Information Clearinghouse (NAIC), Access to Family Information by Adopted Persons: Summary of State Laws] Adopted persons age 19 and older and adopted or adoptive parents of minor children may obtain non-identifying medical and background information from an adoption record without an adoption agency violating confidentiality. [Minn. Stat., section 259.83]

Minnesota statutes (stat.) and rules related to post adoption search services and records

Those interested in statutes and rules governing post adoption search services and records in Minnesota may want to read the sections cited below. These policies were developed to help individuals who have been adopted, or whose birth parents have terminated their parental rights, to obtain information about themselves and their birth relatives, as well as services. These policies can be accessed electronically at the Minnesota Revisor of Statutes' website at www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/statutes.asp.

Statute	144.225	Disclosure of information from vital records
Statute	144.218	Replacement birth records
Statute	245A.04, subd. 10	Adoption agency, additional requirements
Statute	259.43	Birth parent history, commissioner's form
Statute	259.47	Direct adoptive placement
Statute	259.61	Hearings, confidential
Statute	259.79	Adoption records
Statute	259.83	Post adoption services
Statute	259.89	Access to original birth record information
Rule	9560.0030	Legally freeing a child for adoption
Rule	9560.0170	Post adoption services
Rule	9560.0180	Maintenance of adoption records
Rule	9545.0835	Adoption placements
Rule	9545.0845	Plan for transfer of records

The search and expectations

Before initiating a search, consider taking time to gather information about the process. Websites, relevant books and articles, attending a support group, or talking with other individuals who may have already been through the experience, may provide important information. Some individuals interested in post adoption search know what they are looking for before they begin, while others may have some reservations or ambiguity.

Individuals who can initiate a search

Minn. Stat., section 259.83, allows the following parties to search:

- An adopted individual age 19 or older
- Parent(s) of a minor who has been adopted
- Birth parent(s)
- Birth sibling(s).

Types of services available

A variety of services are available from counties and child placing agencies. In determining which services are of interest, consider both the short- and longer-term nature of what is being requested.

1. Non-identifying information

Health and background information that is commonly made available does not include information that could lead to someone's identity. Identifying information that is likely to be excluded includes: names, addresses, birth dates, phone numbers and Social Security number(s). Background information may include birth parent(s) or birth family information; it may also include information regarding the child's placement(s) prior to the adoption. Additional information that is considered to be private and subject to data privacy laws cannot be released without proper consent. The non-identifying information can be from the original record, but may be outdated. Updated information may have been provided to the agency after the adoption finalized. The individual requesting the information may ask that the agency make the necessary contacts to provide current information.

The commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services has a designated format that agencies are to use when collecting this information. This form can be electronically accessed at www.dhs.state.mn.us. Click on the Children's tab at the top of the page, click on Adoption in the left navigation bar. Go to Forms at the bottom of the page, and under "B" select either: "Background and Health History" (DHS-3235), or "Birth Parent Social and Medical History," DHS-3205. Some counties or agencies may provide comparable information but in a different format.

2. Identifying information

The identity of birth parent(s), last known address, birth date and birth place can be provided to adults placed for adoption on or after Aug. 1, 1982, unless the birth parent(s) sign an affidavit objecting to the release of any or all of the information to the adopted individual. [Minn. Stat., section 259.83, subd. 3]

3. Contact and reunion

Services in this category vary depending on the interest of the individual requesting services. Some may be interested in only obtaining current information from a biological relative without their identity being disclosed, while others may have interest in a one-time only meeting, or to potentially maintain ongoing contact.

To facilitate a request involving contact, the county or child placing agency staff will gather information from the individual requesting services and locate records, hardcopy and/or electronic, depending on what is available. No identifying information will be released without the written consent of both parties.

www.macadopt.org

Access to information and available options

Adoptive parent(s) may:

- Be provided non-identifying background information concerning the birth family.
- Request contact, either for themselves or on behalf of an adopted child under 19 years of age. The birth parent(s) can deny this request.

Adopted individuals age 19 and older may:

- Be provided non-identifying information about the birth parent(s).
- Request updated non-identifying information. The birth parent(s) can deny this request.
- Request contact with the birth parent(s). The birth parent(s) can deny this request.
- Request a copy of their original birth certificate from the Minnesota Department of Health. The birth parent(s) can deny this request. For more information, go to the section on Venues to Search, Minnesota Department of Health.
- Petition the court for disclosure of the birth record. The court considers the interests of all known persons involved to determine whether disclosure of the information would be of greater benefit than non-disclosure. For more information, review section on Petitioning the Court, page 13.

Birth parent(s) may:

- Be provided a non-certified copy of the child's original birth certificate.
- Be provided a copy of any documents they signed, including the Agreement to Place Child for Adoption.
- Access non-identifying information about the adoptive placement.
- Request updated, non-identifying information. Such a request may be denied by the adopted person, age 19 or older, or adoptive parent(s) of a minor.
- Request contact with the adoptive parent(s) and/or the adopted person. Such a request may be denied by the adopted individual, age 19 or older, or adoptive parent(s) of a minor on their behalf, and/or on behalf of the minor child.
- Be notified of the death or terminal illness of the adopted person when known to the agency.
- File a Consent of Disclosure or an Affidavit of Non-disclosure with the Minnesota Department of Health, Vital Statistics, regarding the release of the original birth record to an adopted individual. If neither is specified, the record remains sealed even in the event of the death of the birth parent(s).
- Be provided information from the agency regarding the use of Consent of Disclosure or an Affidavit of Non-disclosure during adoption planning.
- Authorize the disclosure of their identifying information contained in agency records (name, last known address, birth date and birth place) upon the request of the adopted adult, by providing the agency a signed affidavit when the placement for adoption occurred after Aug. 1, 1982.
- Rescind an Affidavit of Disclosure previously filed with an agency by signing a subsequent Affidavit of Non-disclosure on some or all information in cases where the adoption occurred after Aug. 1, 1982.

Siblings age 19 or older and other relatives may:

- Request information from siblings age 19 or older.
- Request contact with siblings age 19 or older. If the identity of birth parent(s) is known to either sibling, the consent of the birth parent(s) or verification that the birth parent(s) is deceased is required.
- Request contact with adopted persons by other relatives, including alleged fathers. If the identity of birth parent(s) is known to either sibling, the consent of the birth parent(s) or verification that the birth parent(s) is deceased is required.

Outcomes and expectations

When initiating a search, it is important to be prepared for a variety of outcomes and emotions. An adopted individual's access to information and records is influenced by the information the adopted person may already have, and the year in which the adoption occurred. [North American Council on Adopted Children (NACAC), 2005] Regardless of whether the search is successful, this process is likely to evoke significant emotions. Even if the search is successful, some or all questions may remain unanswered. Information sought may not be available, problems may not be solved, and communication and relationships may not occur as anticipated.

Some requests to locate another party may be unsuccessful. Some of the common reasons an individual is not able to be located include:

- The use of aliases, name changes, or the agency does not have a Social Security number
- The birth parent(s) provided false information regarding their name, marital status and birth father
- Several moves by an individual to different locations
- The individual being sought is incarcerated in another state, and the agency is unable to locate the information
- No response from other party after multiple attempts, therefore unable to confirm or deny if correct party has been contacted
- Unpublished information
- Increased use of cell phones as a primary number and not always registered to the primary user
- One party involved in the adoption may currently live outside the country, even though the adoption took place in the United States, or the birth parent(s) were originally from another country. [Catholic Charities Arch Diocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Children's Home Society and Family Services, and Lutheran Social Service, Jan. 25, 2006]

Initiating a search

When initiating a search, there is much information that needs to be considered, and different paths that can be taken. Regardless of the chosen path, it is important that all efforts are documented. Keep track of all contacts, phone numbers, websites, correspondence, and a description of what transpired. [See "First steps to take in a search" at www.reunite.com,

Taking inventory

Take inventory of everything that can be remembered. Details such as names, dates, locations, circumstances, or stories that may be recalled can assist in a search. Adopted individuals may want to consult with their adoptive parent(s), relatives and/or family friends who may have been privy to information. [See “First steps to take in

a search” at www.reunite.com] Look through old files and personal effects for information that may have been forgotten, or details never known. Information that may seem minor may be helpful during the search process. [NAIC, Searching for Birth Relatives: A Fact Sheet for Families, 2004]

Requesting Party	Original Birth Record	Replacement Birth Record
Adoptive Parent	Not available	May obtain a non-certified or certified copy. Available with a fee.
Adopted adult, age 19 and up	Adoption finalized before Aug. 1, 1977 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With birth parent(s) filing an Affidavit of Disclosure with the MDH ■ Court order with agency certification, unable to locate birth parent(s). 	May obtain a non-certified or certified copy. Available with a fee.
	Adoption finalized on or after Aug. 1, 1977 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With birth parent(s) filing an Affidavit of Disclosure with the MDH ■ Agency certification, unable to locate birth parent(s), and no Affidavit of Non-disclosure from birth parent(s). 	
Birth Parent	Available with a fee.	Non-certified copy may be available to the public with adoptive name. Available with a fee.

Consider writing a letter

Whether an adopted adult, birth parent(s), sibling, adoptive parent(s), or other adult related to any of the parties to an adoption, writing a letter may be helpful for a variety of reasons. It may be helpful in processing what is being sought, and should be placed in a file so that another party searching will find it, and/or assist in providing the other party access to information in the file, or update places for the agency to make contact. Some agencies may have disclosure forms that may need to be completed. Disclosure statements with different agencies or institutions may need to be completed to release information. When sending a letter or disclosure statement, consider sending the letter by registered mail, return receipt requested. This will document that it was received, and by whom. [www.reunite.com, First steps to take in a search]

Venues to search

When performing a search, the following resources may be helpful in obtaining information:

- Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)
- Placing county or agency
- Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS)
- Registries

- Private adoption search consultants
- Petitioning court.

For a description of services see each of the corresponding sections below.

Minnesota Department of Health

The Minnesota Department of Health may be able to provide one or more of the following birth records:

Original birth record (pre-adoption) – information available includes: birth name of the child, birth mother and birth father (in some cases), date and place of birth, as well as other characteristics and information.

Replaced birth record (post-adoption) – information available includes: the name of the child at the time of adoption finalization, the adoptive parent(s), date and place of birth, as well as other characteristics and information.

What information can be released is dependent on several variables:

- The party requesting the information
- Date of the adoption finalization
- Appropriate authorization.

Birth parent – permission to release original birth record to child

A birth parent may give or deny permission to release the original birth information to a child when they reach age 19 by completing and submitting an Affidavit of Disclosure or Non-disclosure regarding an original birth certificate of an adopted child. Permission may be given or denied at any time.

To better understand who can access what type of record, review the chart on the following page.

If searching for information about siblings, a parent who was adopted, or on behalf of one of the parties listed above, the Minnesota Department of Health, Office of the State Registrar, is unable to provide any birth record information. This can only be released to the parties listed in the left column of the above chart.

Information about birth records after an adoption, related fees, or to obtain additional information and interactive forms and instructions, access the following website: www.health.state.mn.us. Select “Certificates and Records” to open the Office of the State Registrar home page. Select “Birth records after an adoption” from the index on the left.

Information about birth records after an adoption, forms, instructions, and fee requirements may be obtained from:
Minnesota Department of Health
Office of the State Registrar
Post Adoption Birth Records
PO Box 64882
St. Paul, MN 55164-0882
Phone: (651) 201-5970
Email: osr1@health.state.mn.us

Contact the placing county or agency

In cases where there is virtually no information about the subject of a search, one of the best places to initiate a post adoption search is through the agency that was responsible for facilitating the adoption. This may be a county social service agency or private adoption agency.

After contact is made with the agency, the requestor will be asked to provide information necessary to continue with the search, and may include name, date of birth, maiden name and adoptive parent(s) names. If this information is not provided, the search process may not be able to continue. Discuss with agency staff what services can be expected, if they have a waiting list, written policies, and reasonable fees (if applicable, as noted in the agency’s disclosure statement).

Agencies may also:

- Notify families of the terminal illness or death of adopted individuals or birth parent(s)

- Provide copies of documents that the individual requesting the information previously signed
- Provide counsel on adoption issues
- Make referrals to community organizations and resources.

Minnesota Department of Human Services

Contact the Minnesota Department of Human Services when it is known that the adoption took place in Minnesota, but the name of the placing agency or county where the finalization took place is unknown, or the agency no longer exists. [Minnesota Department of Human Services, Post Adoption brochure (DHS-4701) 2007]

Minnesota Department of Human Services

Adoption Unit

PO Box 64944

St. Paul, MN 55155-3831

Phone: (651) 431-2000

On the Web:

<http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/adoption/publications>

Requestors will be asked to submit a letter that includes:

- Current name, address and phone number(s)
- Explanation of status: adopted adult, adoptive parent(s), birth parent(s), sibling; or if writing on someone’s behalf (i.e., a wife writing for her husband or a friend writing for a birth parent)*
- Explanation of request (i.e., searching for background information, birth record, birth parent(s), etc.)
- Name of child before adoption, if known
- Names of birth parent(s) and/or adoptive parent(s)
- Birth date (or approximate birth date)
- Birth place (or possible birth place)
- Any additional facts.

*If the letter is being submitted on someone else’s behalf, the person making the request must send a notarized letter authorizing those searching on their behalf.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services will provide information, when available, regarding the agency involved and the requestor will be directed to contact that agency to initiate a search.

Additional services that may be provided:

- Verify stepparent adoptions for child support purposes
- Provide referral or search assistance in estate and probate matters
- Provide tribal enrollment assistance for adopted children or adults of American Indian heritage
- Provide the name of the adoption agency facilitating the adoption.

Grievances with a county or agency

If dissatisfied with services, requestors may contact the county social service or adoption agency supervisor as a first step, or the Minnesota Department of Human Services' Adoption Unit, to request a review.

Registries

Another venue to consider in the search process is a registry. Due to the number of registries available, it may be prudent to consider the size and prominence of a registry. When surfing the Web, certain registries will be referenced multiple times by different resources. This may help to get a sense of their exposure and the likelihood that the individual being sought may find the same registry. [www.adopting.org]

Also, consider utilizing more than one registry. There are a number of registries available that may be a good fit. These range from international registries to state-specific registries; registries for specific populations or topics; and registries for adoptions through a specific agency. Many registries can be quickly located by searching the Internet. Be mindful that there may be associated costs, or request of a donation. Determine what charges may apply prior to use of a registry. [See "Searching for Birth Relatives" at www.adopting.org, and "A Factsheet for Families," NAIC, 2004]

Registries generally fall into three categories:

Active	Listing starts a search and the information is generally stored offline	Fee involved
Passive, also known as mutual consent	Information is generally stored offline and the registry owner/operator notifies both parties once a match is made from listings submitted	In most cases, fee involved
Voluntary	Post information and search other listings for a match	May have fees to register and/or release contact information for matches

When posting or searching a registry, keep in mind that the individual(s) being sought may not have the same information that was submitted to the registry. A birth parent may not have an exact date of birth; an adoptee may not have the correct place of birth; and birth siblings may have even less information. Common information that is requested may include birth date, birth place, agency, name, year of adoption, and relationship to the adoption (adopted individual, birth parent(s), adoptive parent(s) or sibling). Depending on the registry, some postings may include descriptive information about race, height, hair and eye color. Remember that whatever is posted is available to the public. [www.adopting.org]

When searching a registry, consider expanding the time frame and not limit it to a specific date. Look at postings where the rest of the information appears to be a match, but the gender is wrong. Birth parent(s) may not have been accurately informed of a child's gender. Track what registry was used and what dates were reviewed. Registries are not static; individuals are searching and posting on a continual basis, and they should be checked with some consistency. [www.adopting.org]

Hiring private search consultants

Depending on the information already gathered or what information might be accessible, a search assistant or consultant can assist with all or certain portions of the process. In some cases, it may be useful to hire a search consultant if specific information needs to be located in another state. ["Searching for Birth Relatives," NAIC]

When choosing a search consultant, consider researching their reputation and experience, particularly in the area of adoption, and any certifications or licenses held by the searcher or company. ["Searching for Birth Relatives," NAIC] It may also be helpful to obtain referrals from someone who is trusted, or through a support group. Before hiring a search consultant, be aware of the payment schedule for services. Also, consider contacting the consultant's references or the Better Business Bureau. Use caution before paying in advance. Know what is being purchased and obtain a written agreement. Look into agreements that are outcome oriented. ["Searching for Birth Relatives," Jeff Hartung and NAIC]

Petitioning the court

Petitioning the court does not require retaining an attorney, although it can help any chances of success, particularly for complicated circumstance, or if legal difficulties are anticipated. The adoption agency

responsible for the placement of a child should certify that they have assisted in conducting a search and have not been successful, or found the birth parent(s) to be deceased. An adopted adult may draft a letter of petition to the court requesting that a sealed record be opened. Before filing a petition, be sure to have the correct court. The court that has the file will be the court that finalized the adoption. Courts may have forms for petitioning available upon request. It is not necessary to be physically present at a hearing in order for a judge to read and respond to a petition, although appearing in person can greatly enhance chances of success. Along with the petition, include the reason for the request. [www.adoption.com; “Searching for Birth Relatives: A Factsheet for Families,” NAIC, 2004]

The petitioner bears the burden of stating all the reasons why the court should consider granting the request. It is important to state that there are extenuating circumstances (such as a medical condition) that could be eased with the information, or with finding birth parent(s). Be sure to include proof and an explanation of the medical condition. Additional information to be included may be unusual circumstances involved in the adoption; if the birth parent(s) are deceased; if the identity of the birth family is already known; or if the adoptive parent(s) are deceased, submit a statement to that effect, along with proof of any claims. Even if there are no unusual circumstances, and the requestor simply wants the information, try a petition anyway. [www.adoption.com; “Searching for Birth Relatives: A Factsheet for Families,” NAIC, 2004]

Upon receipt of the petition, the court will determine whether it has sufficient information to grant or deny the request. The court may request additional information from the petitioner or an agency. [www.adoption.com; “Searching for Birth Relatives: A Factsheet for Families,” NAIC, 2004]

If the court cannot provide a petition form or format, provide the court an original letter. The petitioner should keep a copy. In the letter include:

- Petitioning the court pursuant to Minn. Stat., section 259.61, to order the opening of the records pertaining to an adoption
- Petitioner’s full name
- Age and date of birth
- The date of adoption
- County and state where the adoption occurred
- Adoptive parent(s)’ name(s)
 - Address (if applicable)
 - Indicate if deceased
 - Knowledge of any efforts and attitude.
- Efforts to locate birth parent(s) (if already used an agency to locate the birth parent(s) and it was unsuccessful,

make the agency aware that a court petition is being considered, and request that agency staff provide a letter documenting their efforts)

- Any facts known about the birth parent(s), such as deceased, locations, name(s).

Petitioning court when the birth parent is deceased

In cases where the parent(s) named on the original birth record of an adopted individual have died and did not rescind the Affidavit of Non-disclosure prior to death by filing an Affidavit of Disclosure with the Minnesota Department of Health, the adopted adult may petition the court for disclosure of the original birth record. The court may grant the petition if, after consideration of the interests of all known persons involved, it determines that disclosure of the information would be of greater benefit than non-disclosure.

Supports

The search process can be very emotional for some people. Be sure to have an adequate support system. For some, this may be family and friends. [NAIC, Searching for Birth Relatives, A Factsheet for Families, 2004, and NAIC, Impact of Adoption on Adopted Persons, A Factsheet for Families, 2004] Counties and child placing agencies may also have local resources that they recommend. For assistance in what to look for when choosing a counselor, go to naic.acf.hhs.gov and access their factsheet, “Tips on Selecting an Adoption Therapist.” [NAIC, Impact of Adoption on Adopted Persons, A Factsheet for Families, 2004]

Support groups

Consider joining a support group. A search and support group can be valuable for a number of reasons. Attending a search and support group in the area of the search will provide contacts with individuals who may have unique insight or knowledge of ‘tricks’ particular to the state or area of the search. Even if attending a group outside of the search area, forming contacts with searchers in many different phases could be beneficial. Learn from their mistakes, thus making the search easier. In addition, sometimes it is helpful to connect with others who are going through this unique experience. At times, individuals might feel alone, even if family is supportive. It is difficult for those who are not adopted, or who are not searching or interested in searching, to fully understand. Consider joining an online mailing list. To find a local support group check some of the following locations:

- Adoption agencies
- Adoption advocacy groups
- The Internet
- Local yellow pages.

Adoption agency staff

Overview

Minnesota law requires agencies to provide assistance and counseling services when they have been asked to obtain information through a post adoption search request. Agencies are required to contact the other adult or the adoptive parent(s) of a minor child in a personal and confidential manner to determine whether there is a desire to receive or share information or to have contact. [Minn. Stat., section 259.83]

Gathering information prior to a termination of parental rights

The foundation for what information is available for post adoption searches is greatly influenced by the information gathered by agency staff when working with birth parent(s). Conscientious efforts to obtain and record information in the file will benefit the child, the child's caregivers, and later in life the adopted adult. When a child enters out-of-home care, this vital information is often lost. When the information cannot be given to adoptive parent(s), a burden is placed on a child and family. Agency staff is obligated to make every effort to collect this valuable information at the earliest opportunity. A child's background and health history must also be as complete as possible. Although the process to terminate parental rights, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, can be difficult, this may be one of the last opportunities to engage birth parent(s) and birth relatives in gathering information that has not already been collected.

Individuals who may request post adoption search services:

- Birth parent(s) may request a search for children who have been adopted, including a minor child. In the case of an older child age 18 or younger, the adoptive parent(s) must consent. If the adopted person is age 19 or older, contact may be made directly with a child who can provide consent.
- Adopted adults, age 19 or older.
- Adoptive parents on behalf of youth ages 18 or younger.

Talking with an individual requesting information

Some who initiate a request for post adoption search services may not fully understand what they are about to engage in, should they choose to proceed. It is important that agency staff take time to ensure they understand what the requestor is looking for.

Setting the stage

As discussed in the section on Search and Expectations, anyone initiating a request for post adoption search services may have to deal with a variety of emotions and outcomes. Discuss these issues with the requestor and revisit this with them at various times throughout the search process to ensure that the individual feels they are adequately supported.

Agency staff may wish to help those initiating the search understand historical and societal factors that may have influenced a decision associated with birth parent(s)' decision to relinquish custody, which affects the openness of the adoption.

Helping adopted individuals understand the historical societal context

Depending on when the individual was born and placed for adoption, there may have been societal factors that may have influenced decisions associated with the birth parent(s)' decision to relinquish their rights. Also, help the adopted individual to understand that the practice of open adoption was not common at that time.

During the mid-1900s, it was common for adoptions to be veiled in secrecy. Some common occurrences that may or may not be applicable to the adoptive individual's circumstance are:

- Birth mother who conceived a child out of wedlock and felt that she had no other options than adoption
- Judgmental society
- Birth mother sent out of town during the pregnancy
- Birth mother may have been sent to a maternity home and used an assumed name
- Agencies commonly selected adoptive families to match characteristics such as hair and eye color of the baby or birth parent(s)
- False information given about the birth father and the circumstance pertaining to conception
- Birth mother not provided proper support or grief counseling and was told they would forget with time. [Children's Home Society and Family Services, Search Manual]

Discuss support systems

It is important that anyone engaging in a search be aware of a full range of support systems. Some individuals have a strong, well developed informal support system comprised of various individuals and organizations that may include their partner, family, friends and religious/

spiritual organizations. Others in the process may not have the same support system, may feel that they are not being understood, or may be uncomfortable sharing such private information and feelings. Agency staff should have ongoing conversations about support needs to help individuals understand the emotions and dynamics involved in the search process.

Agency staff should notify those who initiate a post adoption search that support groups are available, and that participation may help to provide contact with people in many different phases of a search. Agency staff should also share information about support groups that may be available on the internet as well as mailing lists for local resources.

Another option for those who initiate a post adoption search is counseling. Agency staff should provide information to the requestor, and if an agency does not provide this service, consider making a referral to other professionals. Also, if the agency maintains a list of professionals who may be available, provide this to the requestor. One internet resource is available at www.naic.acf.hhs.gov.

Explanation of services

Some initiating a request for post adoption search services may not fully understand the array of services available. It is important that agency staff help them understand what service options may be available to them. Below is a brief outline of applicable services that should be explained:

Information from records:

- Original medical and social history information
- Updated medical and social history information in file
- Identifying information.

Contact and search:

- Updated medical and social history information, or specific information via agency contact
- Terminally ill or deceased birth parent(s) or adopted individual
- Communication, maintaining anonymity
- Contact to exchange information
- Contact with intent to meet other party.

Fees and disclosure statements

Ensure that anyone initiating post adoption search services is fully informed of the associated fees, any options to adjust or waive fees, and when the fees are due. Also, provide them with the agency's written disclosure statement and discuss their rights and responsibilities.

Providing written information from agency records

When sending information to those requesting specific data, begin by writing a cover letter and making a list of the file types that were the source of information.

All information that Minnesota law authorizes to be released should be provided in writing in response to a written request for non-identifying information. In cases where the adoption occurred on or after Aug. 1, 1982, agencies may also provide identifying information to an adopted adult age 19 and older, unless the birth parent(s) signed an Affidavit of Non-disclosure.

When writing the summary of information, provide as many direct quotes as possible. To minimize distorting or misrepresenting information, avoid paraphrasing or interpreting information. Also, do not try to 'soften' information that may be considered harsh or offensive. Whenever possible, the information should be as balanced as possible, capturing both strengths and weaknesses.

The amount and type of information in agency files may vary greatly. There may be many explanations for this, including:

- How long the agency was responsible for the child
- Whether all related files can be located
- The complexity of history
- The cooperation of people contributing information.

The agency should ensure that all files related to the adoption are available. Depending on the agency's file maintenance history, a file may take various forms or have different retention schedules. Some examples of file types to look for may include:

- A family file containing child information
- A child specific file
- A licensing file for the adoptive family
- Files of other family members such as a:
 - Sibling who is or had been in care, entering together or at separate times
 - Parent that had been in care as a minor.

Fathers

A presumed or adjudicated father is considered a birth parent for the purpose of post adoption search services, and agency staff should provide services in the same manner as for a birth mother. Minn. Stat., section 257.55, subd.1, defines a presumed father as:

- Married to mother
- Attempted to marry mother before birth
- Attempted to marry mother after birth,
- Acknowledged paternity in writing filed with the state

- Is named on child's birth record
- Is obligated to pay child support by court order or written promise
- Lives with the child and holds the child as his own
- Provides written acknowledgement of paternity filed with the state and signed by both mother and father
- Genetic testing establishes biological relationship to 99 percent or greater probability
- Both mother and father executed Recognition of Parentage and there is another presumed father
- Completed Recognition of Parentage
- Completed Recognition of Parentage and either mother or father is a minor.

An adjudicated father is defined in Minn. Rules of Juvenile Protection Procedure, Rule 2.01(a), as an individual determined by a court, or pursuant to a Recognition of Parentage under Minn. Stat., section 257.75, to be the biological father of a child.

An alleged father is defined in Minn. Rules of Juvenile Protection Procedure, Rule 2.01(b), as an individual claimed by a party or participant to be the biological father of a child. The birth mother must consent to the pursuit of outreach to the alleged father. If the birth mother cannot be located or is deceased, outreach may occur only if authorized by a court order.

Once the alleged father is located, all of the standards outlined in **Individual Sought is Located** section of this guide must be applied. Additionally, the alleged father must be clearly informed that his status as a birth parent was alleged. He may choose to pursue a biological relationship through genetic testing at the expense of the other party and/or his own, as mutually agreed upon. An alleged father may mutually agree to exchange information and/or have contact with the party that requested the search services.

Providing medical and social history information

An agency must provide non-identifying background and health information to aid the adoptive parent(s) of a minor child, or the adopted adult 19 years or older in understanding the person's genetic background and adoption. [Minn. Rules, section 9560.0170, subp. 1(A)]

An agency, upon receipt of information about a medical or genetic condition which has affected, or may affect, the physical or mental health of genetically related persons, must make a diligent effort to contact the related party to share the health information. In cases where that information could affect an adopted minor, the agency must relay the information to the adoptive parent(s) or

subsequent guardian. When the agency is requested to relay that the adopted person has died, the agency must make a diligent effort to locate and, unless counter-indicated, notify the birth parent(s). [Minn. Rules, section 9560.0170, subp. 3]

In cases where there is minimal information in the file and the non-identifying information seems sketchy at best, some information may be gleaned from other sources. For example, states where information can be accessed from driver's licenses can provide information on hair color, eye color, height and weight, although not everyone's weight on their driver's license is accurate. For states where death certificates can be accessed, compile the cause of death for persons who are genetically related to the individual, including partial information on their medical background. [Catholic Charities Arch Diocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Children's Home Society, and Lutheran Social Service meeting, Jan. 25, 2006; and Children's Home Society meeting, Dec. 8, 2005]

In some instances, updated information may have been submitted to the county social service or private adoption agency. This information may also be provided to the person requesting services, in a non-identifying manner, unless the appropriate consent is obtained. If the request is for up-to-date medical information and there is no additional information in the records since the adoption finalization, suggest that they may want to contact the other party(ies), though they may choose to do so anonymously.

Search methods

When attempting to locate the birth parent(s), adopted adult or adoptive parent(s) on behalf of a minor, identifying information will be needed from the file, such as:

- Names
- Date of birth or approximate age if date of birth is unknown
- Social Security number
- Last known address(es)
- Phone numbers.

With this information, the search process can begin. Agency staff needs to inform those requesting information what options the agency may consider using to locate the other person. Many of the search methods likely to be used are listed below.

Public records:

- Social Security Death Index
- Minnesota Death Index
- Vital records

- Driver's license
- Property records
- Probate records
- Criminal records
- Historical Society
- Letter forwarded to the U.S. Social Security Administration or the
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Additional places to seek information:

- Alumni associations
- Word of mouth in small towns.

Additional locations to obtain death records:

- Cemeteries
- Obituaries
- Mortuaries and funeral homes.

Commercial database examples:

- Public Data.com
- Ameridex.com
- Locateplus.com.

Telephone directories:

- Local
- National
- Reverse lookup feature.

Libraries

Newspapers

A secondary means to locate a person may warrant contacting collateral resources such as relatives, friends, acquaintances, references and pastors. This should only be used if necessary. Inquiries to these resources should be made with a great degree of discretion and in a manner that continues to preserve confidentiality. When using this option, do not disclose the purpose of the contact to anyone other than that individual. [Minn. Stat., section 259.89, subd. 2; Catholic Charities Arch Diocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Children's Home Society and Lutheran Social Service meeting, Jan. 25, 2006] Consider the points in the list below that may also apply when contacting collaterals.

Individual sought is located

After presumably locating the subject of the search effort, contact must be made in a personal and confidential manner to determine if they wish to exchange information and/or have contact. [Minn. Stat., section 25.89, subd. 2] Some suggestions include:

- It is important to verify that the individual is the party to the adoption; one option is to make a home visit if the person lives nearby.

- Attempt contact by phone, but only when confidentiality can be maintained.
 - Beware of caller ID and other phone technologies. It is easy for an individual other than the party with whom contact is being sought to call back the number from which the call was made. Consider using a blocked line.
 - Be cautious about answering the phone or what information is on voice mail. It may not be wise to share office information on the phone, nor leave comparable information on outgoing voice mail. This could provide too much information to the wrong person.
- Send a general nondescript letter, requesting the birth parent(s) to call collect. Do not use envelopes or letterhead that identifies the agency. This should only be used when the other forms of contact have been ruled out.
- Once the party being located consents to the ongoing use of letters, determine if letterhead and identifying envelopes can be used.

[Minn. Stat., section 259.89, subd. 2; Catholic Charities Arch Diocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Children's Home Society, and Lutheran Social Service meeting, Jan. 25, 2006]

When the birth parent(s) is/are contacted they must be provided:

- The nature of the service requested
- The date of the request
- Information that they may file an affidavit with the Minnesota Department of Health. The birth parent(s) has 120 days after notification to file an affidavit that will allow or prevent release of the information the adopted adult is requesting.

If an affidavit is not on file, the birth certificate remains sealed and can only be opened by the adopted adult petitioning the court. [Minn. Stat., section 259.89, subd. 2; Minn. Rules, section 9560.0170, subp. 2] In cases where an adult genetic sibling or birth relative requests services, the agency may provide services when agency staff has determined that:

- The birth parent(s) provide consent
- The agency is able to determine the birth parent(s) is no longer alive, or
- The agency is able to determine the sibling has no knowledge of the birth parent(s)' identity. (This does not apply to relatives.) [Minn. Rules, section 9560.0170]

County social service and private adoption agency staff must also assess and determine the extent and frequency to which the person contacted wishes to share information or have contact. In either situation, parties must be informed that they may choose to remain anonymous, or disclose identifying information. The agency must provide the service requested when there is a mutual desire to receive or share information or to have contact. [Minn. Rules, section 9560.0170]

Petitioning the court for release of information

Minn. Stat., section 259.61, allows an adopted individual to petition the court for release of identifying information about birth parent(s).



Adoption agencies

Although this guide focuses on post adoption services requests, agency practices that occur prior to the finalization of an adoption impact the available information, and related parties' understanding of what rights they have at the time of the adoption proceeding and following.

Service requests

An agency must, upon request, provide reasonable post adoption assistance and counseling services to adoptive parent(s), birth parent(s), adult genetic siblings, and adopted persons who reached age 19. These services must be provided in a manner that strengthens the adoption contract and is within the parameters of applicable state law and federal regulations on confidentiality and privacy of child welfare and adoption records.

Requests for contact or information

The law requires agencies to transmit requests for information or contact in a confidential manner. Agencies that do not provide such services on a regular basis may wish to contact agencies that provide such services with regularity over an extended period of time. Some agencies choose to contract out such services. Several agencies have extensive knowledge and skill on how to conduct searches and have honed their techniques used to find difficult-to-locate relatives, and may be of assistance with suggestions on how a request for information or contact can be most effectively presented.

Original birth certificate information

The birth parent(s) must be informed of the right, at any time, to file an Affidavit of Disclosure or Non-disclosure with the Minnesota Department of Health, Office of the State Registrar. This affidavit allows the birth parent(s) to consent or refuse to disclose information on the original birth certificate to the adopted person age 19 or older. If no Affidavit of Non-disclosure is filed, and the agency, at a later date, cannot locate the birth parent(s), the Minnesota Department of Health, Office of State Registrar, will provide the requested information to the adopted person. [Minn. Stat., sections 259.83, subd. 3, and 259.89, subd. 1; Minn. Rules, section 9560.0030, subp. 1(B)]

Identifying information

For adoptions that were finalized after July 31, 1982, birth parent(s) must be informed that they may file now, or at any time, an affidavit that allows or prohibits the release of the birth parent(s)' identifying information to the adopted person, after that person attains age 19. This information may contain birth parent(s)' name(s), last known address, birth date(s) and birth place(s).

Death and terminal illness notifications

An agency must make diligent efforts to notify the birth parent(s) when the agency learns that the adopted person has died, and cause of death if they desire, provided they maintain a current address on file. Similarly, for a child placed for adoption after Aug. 1, 1987, an agency must notify the birth parent(s) of the terminal illness of a child, if they have requested such notification, and the birth parent(s) maintain a current address on file. [Minn. Stat., section 259.27]

The agency must also inform the birth parent(s) that they may designate individuals to notify the agency if a birth parent dies. The agency receiving this information will share it with the adoptive parent(s) of a minor child, or the adopted individual age 19 or older, if they indicated a desire to be notified and maintain a current address on file. [Minn. Stat., section 259.27]

Adopted adults of American Indian heritage

An adopted American Indian, age 18 or older, has the right to obtain information on the tribal affiliations of the birth parent(s) from the court which granted the adoption. The court must also provide other information necessary to protect any rights in relation to the adopted individual's tribal relationship. Adopted individuals of American Indian heritage may request assistance for tribal enrollment through the placing agency, or the state agency adoption section. [25 USC 1951 (a); Minn. Stat., section 260.781, subd. 1]

Whenever an adopted individual of American Indian heritage requests the state registrar to disclose information on their original birth certificate, the registrar shall act in accordance with the provisions of Minn. Stat., section 259.89. The state registrar shall provide a copy of an adopted individual's original birth certificate to an authorized representative of a federally recognized American Indian tribe for the sole purpose of determining the adopted individual's eligibility for enrollment or membership. Information contained on the birth certificate may not be used to provide information about the individual's birth parent(s) except as provided in Minn. Stat., sections 259.89, 259.83 and 144.1761.

Counseling

Agencies are required to provide skilled counseling services to adoptive parent(s), an adopted adult age 19 and older, birth parent(s) and adult genetic sibling(s). These services are to be provided through appropriately trained social workers. [Minn. Stat., section 259.83, subd.1; Minn. Rules, section 9560.0170, subps.1 and 5]

Agency fees

Agencies are allowed to charge reasonable fees for expense reimbursement for providing post adoption and/or search services, with the exception of services related to terminal illness or death notification. Such fees can be required to be paid in full before services are provided. Often, fees are assessed on a sliding scale based on ability to pay. [Minn. Rules, section 9560.0170, subp. 7] In cases where an agency will not be providing services immediately, the fee is not required until services are ready to commence.

Agency disclosure statement

An agency shall provide a disclosure statement in clear, understandable language to be signed by parties eligible to request post adoption search services, and are initiating such a request. The disclosure statement must include:

Fees, including:

- Fees charged for services
- Policies on sliding scale fees or fee waivers
- Itemization of fees that will be charged for information, search and counseling
- Any other services
- Timeline for fee payments.

Time frames, including:

- An estimation of when services may begin.
- An estimation of length of time for services. These estimates must be based on comparable services. If the original estimated length of service appears to be grossly underestimated, the agency should provide the client an updated estimate in writing which should include a summary of services to date, the basis for the additional time needed, and a new estimate of remaining time.
- A statement that the agency cannot guarantee the outcome of the post adoption search service that is being requested.
- A statement of the services the agency will provide for both the party initiating the request as well as for the party being sought.
- A statement that explains the rights of both the party initiating the request as well as for the party being sought.

[Minn. Stat., section 259.37, subd. 2]

Civil action

Minn. Stat., section 259.37, subd. 3, provides for an action for damages, including punitive damages, that may be brought by birth parent(s) or prospective adoptive parent(s) aggrieved by circumstances that may include:

- Violations when agencies require payment of fees in stages as services are performed. An agency engaged in placement activities must provide prospective adoptive parent(s) with a schedule of fees and a timeline indicating when each fee or portion of the total fees for agency services must be paid. The agency must also provide a fee schedule for pre-finalization post-placement services.
- Failure of an agency to provide services to the birth parent(s) listed in the disclosure form.
- Deceptive practices or misrepresentations made by an agency about its services.

Requests and consents

The department recommends that all requests and consents be in writing, and consider requiring them to be notarized. The purpose for this is two-fold:

- To provide a written documentation trail
- To ensure, within reason, that the person signing the form is whom they claim to be.

Due to the private nature of the information that can potentially be released, it is important that agencies provide adequate safeguards that the identity of the individual requesting information is verified and are entitled to certain information; and conversely, the individual consenting to the release of information is not only in agreement, but their identity is also verified.

Standardized forms and letters

When an agency is contacted to initiate a search request, how will staff respond? Does the agency have a standard application process where some information may be required, and additional information may be optional? Although each case may have unique nuances, a road map for staff regarding practice that captures the agency's policies is helpful. Similarly, standardized forms and letters may help provide consistent information and/or communication for clients and collateral contacts. Examples of forms and letters the agency may consider standardizing include:

- Application
- Information of, and agreement to, service provisions, costs and time parameters
- Disclosure statement

- Correspondence with applicant, including:
 - Missing forms or information
 - Failure to respond
 - Services have commenced
 - Some or all services fulfilled and summary
 - Completion of remaining services
 - Outline of case closing summary
 - Letter to client regarding case closing.
- Non-identifying letters, maximum three
- For adopted individual requesting original birth record, including:
 - Unable to locate
 - Deceased parent(s).
- To court:
 - Agency was unable to locate birth parent(s)
 - Affidavit of Genetic Parent Whose Child is Placed after July 31, 1982.

Record retention

Adoption records

Agencies are required to maintain information in a manner that ensures both confidentiality and permanency. Adoption records must not be purged, where the details in the case files are lost. [Minn. Rules, section 9560.0180, subp. 3]

Guardianship records

Agencies are required to maintain information pertaining to children under state guardianship on a permanent basis that ensures privacy. [Minn. Rules, section 9560.0480, subps. 2 and 3]

File structure and history

County social service and private adoption agencies should establish procedures that define all file types to be maintained, the content of each file, how they should be divided, and the contents of each section. If an agency does not already have a system in place, comparable information should be reconstructed to capture the historical file's structure. If an agency changes their file structure, the new procedures need to correspond, with a distinct trail of the old file structure procedures. There should be associated time frames as well as a new set of file structure procedures that document an effective date.

Adoption record content

The adoption records of agencies, at a minimum, must retain the following documents (when applicable):

Forms:

- Birth Parent Social and Medical History (DHS-3205)
- Background and Health History (DHS-3235)
- Report on Child's Current Physical Examination (DHS-3381)
- Outline for Health and Social History Narrative (DHS-3382)
- Child's Health History and Physical Examination (DHS-3380)
- Report on Child's Current Physical Examination (DHS-3381) or comparable medical documents
- Child's Discharge Examination (DHS-3383) or comparable medical documents
- Hospital Discharge Report (DHS-3384) or comparable medical documents
- Adoptive Family Application and Study (Commissioner's designated format)
- Adoptive Applicants (DHS-0968, registers a family on the State Adoption Exchange)
- Child Registration (DHS-0967) and SSIS 74 (registers a child on the State Adoption Exchange)
- Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children, ICPC 100A
- Adoptive Placement Agreement (DHS-0312) or comparable agreement
- Report of Adoptive Placement or Petition (DHS-0178)
- Report to Court: Petition for Adoption (DHS-0188)
- Report of Termination of Adoptive Placement (DHS-0313)
- Consent of Child Over 14 Years of Age (DHS-1956)
- Affidavit of Child Over 14 on Adoption (DHS-3500).

Reports and summaries:

- Summary of pre-placement conferences, placement and post-placement service plans
- Summary of information verbally shared with an adopting family
- A child's placement records
- Documentation of placement preference
- Post-placement service reports
- A copy of the commissioner's or agency's recommendation to the court.

Court documents:

- Copy of the court Termination of Parental Rights and order appointing guardianship of a child to the commissioner
- All stepparent, relative and properly filed independent placement petitions
- Decree of Adoption
- Copies of all reports and recommendations to the court.

Miscellaneous:

- Date agency closed the case and the reason for closing
- Affidavit of Genetic Parent Whose Child is Placed after July 31, 1982
- Correspondence with other agencies and community services
- Notification of death and terminal illness
- Document of post adoption services provided. [Minn. Rules, section 9560.0170, subp. 6]
- Copies of all pertinent correspondence and a summary of post-adoption services. [Minn. Rules, section 9560.0180, subp. 1]

Transfer of records

Adoption agencies must make arrangements with another county social service or private adoption agency to take their adoption records in the event that the agency closes or no longer provides adoption services. Adoption agencies are required to be bonded to cover the cost of transfer and storage of records to the receiving agency. [Minn. Stat., section 245A.04, subd. 10(3), and Minn. Rules, section 9545.0845]

Conclusion

This document was developed to assist various parties related to an adoption, professionals and administrators, with a better understanding of current law and policies that guide practice, providing insight of what the post adoption search process entails.

In conjunction with the transfer of records, agencies should provide a final copy of their file structure and history to the receiving agency. This should be provided to the receiving agency periodically, or at a minimum, when there is a change in agency procedures related to their file structure.

Other populations in need of search services

It is becoming more common for individuals who were once under state guardianship to have a desire for information, contact or connections, as individuals who were adopted. Although statutes do not specifically address this dynamic, best practice would support comparable access to information and services for these youth.

Agencies are already required to permanently retain the records of children under state guardianship. Agencies are strongly encouraged to develop internal policies and procedures to meet the needs of these populations.

Quality assurance and quality control mechanisms

Even though there are limited quality controls mandated for agency practice and record retention regarding post adoption search services, best practice would support that agencies ensure that staff are in compliance with the policies that guide these areas, and are providing quality services. If agencies do not already do so, they should consider instituting some minimal internal control mechanisms to ensure satisfactory practice and documentation specifically related to post adoption search services. Examples of some mechanisms may include, but are not limited to:

- Review functions (peer, supervisory or managerial)
- Client satisfaction surveys
- Voluntary exit interviews related to services received and/or follow-up inquiries at designated interval(s).

This document will evolve and change, just as post adoption practice and policies changed through the 20th Century. Everyone involved in the post adoption search process will benefit from a better understanding of the lifelong and multi-generational impact adoption plays in the lives of many.

Appendix A: Post Adoption Services, Responsible Parties and Significant Dates

Available Information or Services		Significant Dates
Department of Health, Vital Records	Amended birth record	Service is available regardless of date of adoptive placement or finalization
	Original birth record (non-certified copy)	Adoption finalized prior to August 1, 1977 , with birth parent(s) consent or agency certification, unable to locate birth parent(s) Adoption finalized August 1, 1977 , or after with birth parent(s) consent or agency certification, unable to locate birth parent(s) and no Affidavit of Non-Disclosure
	Provide a copy of an adopted person's original birth record to an authorized tribal representative to assist in determining eligibility for tribal enrollment	Service is available regardless of date of adoptive placement or finalization
County Social Service or Private Adoption Agency	Certify unable to locate birth parent(s)	Service is available regardless of date of adoptive placement or finalization
	Non-identifying background and medical history	Service is available regardless of date of adoptive placement or finalization
	Identity of biological parent(s): last known address, birth dates and birth places	Adoption finalized August 1, 1982, or after unless birth parent(s) contested
	Notify families of terminal illness or death of adopted person or birth parent(s)	Placed for adoption after August 1, 1987 , requested notification and maintain current address with agency, <i>no fees</i>
	Copies of documents previously signed by the individual requesting information	Service is available regardless of date of adoptive placement or finalization
	Counsel on adoption issues	Service is available regardless of date of adoptive placement or finalization
	Provide tribal enrollment assistance for adopted children or adults of American Indian heritage	Service is available regardless of date of adoptive placement or finalization
Minnesota Department of Human Services	Make referrals to community organizations and resources	Service is available regardless of date of adoptive placement or finalization
	Provide the name of the adoption agency facilitating adoption	Service is available regardless of date of adoptive placement or finalization
	Verify stepparent adoptions for child support purposes	Service is available regardless of date of adoptive placement or finalization
	Provide referral or search assistance in estate and probate matters	Service is available regardless of date of adoptive placement or finalization
	Provide tribal enrollment assistance for adopted children or adults of American Indian heritage	Service is available regardless of date of adoptive placement or finalization

Appendix B: Minnesota and national resources

The Department of Human Services does not endorse any of the resources listed below, nor recommends these resources over others that might be available.

Adoption.com

1745 Alma School Rd, Ste 215
Mesa, AZ 85210
Phone: (480) 446-0500
Email: info@adoption.com
www.adoption.com

Adoptive Families Magazine

39 West 37th Street, 15th Floor
Phone: (646) 366-0830 or (800) 372-3300
Email: letters@adoptivefamilies.com
www.adoptivefamilies.com

American Adoption Congress

Phone: (202) 483-3399
Email: AmerAdoptionCong@aol.com
www.americanadoptioncongress.org

The Adoptees Liberty Movement Assoc. (ALMA)

PO Box 85
Denville, NJ 07834.
Email: MAnderson@almasociety.org
www.almasociety.org/

Coalition for Adoption Registry Ethics (CARE)

Email: care@plumsite.com
www.plumsite.com/care/

Concerned United Birthparents, Inc. (CUB)

PO Box 503475
San Diego, CA 92150-4375
Phone: (800) 822-2777
Email: info@cubirthparents.org
www.cubirthparents.org/

Concerned United Birthparents (CUB)

Sandra Sperrazza, Searcher
6429 Mendelssohn Lane
Edina, MN 55343-8424
Phone: (952) 938-5866 or (952) 930-9058
Email: sayspazz@aol.com
www.cubirthparents.org/slpcub.html

First Nations Orphans Association

Sandra L. White Hawk
1515 E 23rd Street
Minneapolis, MN
Phone: (651) 330-1942
Email: sadoptee@yahoo.com

International Soundex Reunion Registry

PO Box 371179
Las Vegas, NV 89137
Phone: (888) 886-4777
www.isrr.net

Minnesota Adoption Support and Preservation MNASAP Minneapolis

430 Oak Grove Street, Suite 404
Minneapolis, MN 55403
Phone: (612) 798-4033

MNASAP St. Paul

970 Raymond Avenue, Suite 106
St. Paul, MN 55114
Phone: (612) 798-4033, or (877) 966-2727
Email: info@mnasap.org
www.mnasap.org

Child Welfare Information Gateway Children's Bureau/ACYF

1250 Maryland Avenue SW, Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: (800) 394-3366, or (888) 251-0075
Email: naic@caliber.com
www.naic.acf.hhs.gov

National Society of Genetic Counselors

401 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: (312) 321-6834
Fax: (312) 673-6972
Email: nsgc.org www.nsgc.org
www.nsgc.org

Appendix C: Reading resources

The Department of Human Services does not endorse any of the books listed below, nor recommends them over other books.

1. *Adoption and the Family System*, Miriam Reitz and Ken Watson
2. *Adoption Life Cycle: The Children and Their Families Through the Years*, Elinor B Rosenberg
3. *Adoption, Identity and Social Policy: The Search for Distant Relatives*, Erica Haimes
4. *Adoption Nation*, Adam Pertman
5. *Adoption Searchbook, the Techniques for Tracing People*, Mary Jo Rillera.
6. *Adoption Wisdom*, Marlou Russell
7. *Being adopted: The lifelong search for self*, David Brodzinsky and Marshall D. Schechter
8. *Birthbond: Reunions Between Birthparents and Adoptees, What Happens After*, Judith S. Gediman and Linda P. Brown
9. *Birthmothers: Women Who Have Relinquished Babies for Adoption Tell Their Stories*, Merry Bloch Jones
10. *Birthright: The Guide to Search and Reunion for Adoptees*, Jean Strauss
11. *Dear Birthmother*, Kathleen Silber and Phylis Speedlin
12. *How to Find Almost Anyone Anywhere*, Norma Mott Tillman
13. *Journey of the Adopted Self: A Quest for Wholeness*, Betty Jean Lifton
14. *Lost and Found: The adoption experience*, Betty Jean Lifton
15. *Search: A Handbook for Adoptees and Birthparents*, Jayne Askin.
16. *Searching For a Past: The Adopted Adults Unique Process of Finding Identity*, Jane Schooler
17. *Shadowmothers: Stories of Adoption & Reunion*, Linda Back McKay
18. *Shared Fate: A Theory and Method of Adoptive Relationships*, H. David Kirk
19. *Sisters And Brothers Forever*, H. Norman Light
20. *Stories of Adoption: Loss and Reunion*, Eric Blau
21. *The Adopted Break Silence: Forty men and women describe their search for natural parents*, Jean M Paton
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