

Intercountry Adoption

Becoming an adoptive family



INTRODUCTION

In New Brunswick, the term *Intercountry Adoption* has three general meanings:

- a person or couple adopting a child from another country;
- a person or couple adopting a relative child living in another country; and
- a New Brunswick child being adopted by a person or couple outside of Canada.

The intercountry adoption process is complex, time-consuming and can be expensive. However an adopting mother, father or couple would likely say adopting a child from outside Canada can be very rewarding.

In New Brunswick the principles and philosophy of the *Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption* are applied to all intercountry adoptions as it is a frame work for co-operation between countries to protect the best interest of the children and birth and adoptive parents.

Intercountry adoption involving New Brunswickers is governed by the *Intercountry Adoption Act* and on

January 5, 2009, amendments were proclaimed to the *Act* and regulations enacted. The *Act* gives the Minister of Social Development the legal authority for all intercountry adoptions including that of a New Brunswick child being placed for adoption outside of Canada and also the authority to approve a number of not-for-profit agencies to perform certain tasks for intercountry adoptions. These organizations are referred to as community social services agencies (CSSAs).

REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

People considering adopting a child internationally are encouraged to seek as much information as possible about intercountry adoption, both the many unique challenges and rewards.

New Brunswick adults (19 and older) may apply to adopt a child(ren) from outside Canada, one country at a time. However the applicants must meet strict criteria under the *Intercountry Adoption Act* and its regulations. For instance, they cannot have been convicted of many of the Criminal Code offences, most of which pertain to the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children.

Provincial approval rests with the Minister of Social Development. Intercountry adoptions can only be concluded with the approval of the child's country of origin. Countries have their own specific requirements for applicants. Applications must also comply with federal legislation governing immigration and citizenship and the laws of the child's home country.

New Brunswick applicants must live in the province and submit the following documents:

- intercountry adoption application;
- birth certificate;
- for joint applicants, proof of a stable relationship for at least two years;
- medical check / criminal check / Department of Social Development record check; names of references;
- financial statement; and
- any other document required by country of origin.

PROCESS FOR INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

Applicants must contact a CSSA, which provides specifics about intercountry adoption and helps applicants by providing information sessions; intercountry adoption training; home assessments; updates; post-placement services; and progress reports.

COSTS

Through the CSSA, and in accordance with New Brunswick regulations, applicants will incur the following costs:

- Registration fee
- Intercountry adoption assessment fee
- Second opinion (where applicable)
- Adoption assessment update
- Post placement services (if adoption not finalized in country of origin)
- Post-adoption follow-up reports (if requirement of the country of origin)
- Disbursements

Applicants should also be aware that they are responsible for any additional fees associated with their intercountry adoption. Fees can vary country to country.

- lawyers and other legal fees;
- travel;
- translation; and
- miscellaneous fees.

For more information contact:

Gentle Path Counselling Services Ltd.
Phone: 1-888-394-4022 or (506) 652-7284
Email: adopt@gentlepathsj.com

Be informed.

www.gnb.ca/socialdevelopment

