



ADOPTING A **CHILD** IN ARIZONA

A Guide by The Valley Law Group
TheValleyLawGroup.com

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ADOPTING A CHILD IN ARIZONA

THE VALLEY LAW GROUP

Adopting a child is an exciting and rewarding process, but it can also be a daunting one. It takes time, patience, and dedication to ensure that the adoption is successful. Each state has different guidelines for adopting a child, so it's important to familiarize yourself with the requirements for your particular state. In this, we will provide an overview of the process of adopting a child in Arizona.

Adopting a child in Arizona requires multiple steps and approvals. This typically begins with identifying and connecting with a licensed adoption agency that has experience in the particular type of adoption desired. Every prospective parent will also need to submit to Arizona Child Protective Services a written statement describing the home environment, finances, medical history, background check information, and references.

Adopting a Child in Arizona

Upon completion of screening activities, adoptive parents must attend several training classes before their application can be approved. Before a court places a child into the home of an adoptive family, they will assess the fit between the family's values and lifestyle with those of the child being placed.

If all goes well, the formal adoption hearing can be held as soon as six months after placement—at which point adoptive parents receive legal parental rights for their newly adopted child!





ARIZONA ADOPTION STEPS

*ADOPTING A CHILD IN ARIZONA REQUIRES
FOLLOWING CERTAIN STEPS:*

STEP 1:

The prospective adoptive parents must meet the requirements set by the state and submit an application to begin the adoption process.

STEP 2:

After submitting an application, they will need to complete a home study that includes interviews with social workers as well as background checks on all adults living in their household.

STEP 3:

Once approved for adoption, there are several options available such as adopting from foster care or through private agencies or attorneys specializing in adoptions.

STEP 4:

Finally, after choosing which type of adoption is best for them and finding a suitable match, they must go through finalization proceedings before officially becoming legal guardians of their adopted child.

HOW IS ADOPTION DEFINED IN ARIZONA?

Adoption is the legal act of taking another person into your family as your own child. It involves transferring parental rights and responsibilities from the birth parents to the adoptive parents. The adoptive parents become responsible for providing all necessary care for their adopted child, just as if they were his or her biological parents.

ADOPTING A CHILD IN ARIZONA

The process of adopting a child varies by state; in Arizona, there are several requirements prospective adoptive parents must meet before being approved to adopt a child. These include completing a home study, submitting background checks for all adults in the household, and attending court hearings and training sessions as required by law.

SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Adopting a child is a wonderful way to grow your family, and it's an exciting process - but it can also be daunting to consider all the information you'll need to provide and requirements you must meet. Prospective adoptive parents must ensure that they meet the standards set by their local state when submitting their application.



This will include information about their finances, health, lifestyle, and more. Fulfilling these requirements is the initial step for prospective adoptive parents on their adoption journey and can help them move forward in the process to ensure the safety and security of their new family member.

COMPLETING A HOME STUDY

A home study consists of interviews with social workers who assess whether you are fit to become an adoptive parent. During these interviews, they may ask questions about your financial status, criminal record (if any), lifestyle habits, etc., to determine whether you have what it takes to provide adequate care for an adopted child.



The home study also includes background checks on all adults living in the household and may require additional documentation such as proof of income or evidence of stable housing if applicable.

FINALIZATION PROCEEDINGS OF AN ADOPTION IN ARIZONA

Once you have chosen which type of adoption best suits you and your family's needs and have found a suitable match for your new family member(s), it's time to go through legal finalization proceedings before becoming legal guardians of your new child (or children).

Completing an adoption is a major milestone for parents and caretakers, but the process does not end with finding a suitable child: finalization proceedings are often necessary to make it all official.

This can be a stressful time for those involved, especially since ensuring every detail is carefully attended to is so crucial. It's important for parents to remember that finalizing is the most important part of the entire adoption journey because this is when they will finally get their legal guardianship and the chance to officially become a family.

This involves:

- Filing paperwork with the court detailing why you wish to finalize the adoption as well as any financial arrangements that were made between yourself and the birth parent(s) during pre-adoptive counseling)
- Attending hearings where both parties must appear before a judge who decides whether or not to grant approval based on all relevant information presented during proceedings. This includes reports from social workers who conducted visits throughout the pre-adoptive counseling phase before officially becoming legal guardians over their newly adopted children.



Types of Adoption in Arizona

PRIVATE ADOPTION

This is when a party forgoes an agency, and a child is placed directly in the home of potential adoptive parents. Typically, the birth mother will choose to terminate their parental rights and place a child directly into the home of the potential parents without the involvement of an agency or foster care for placement.

AGENCY ADOPTION

Agency adoptions occur when a party looking to adopt contacts an adoption agency to locate a child for adoption. Whether you decide on a local adoption agency or a national organization, making the choice best for you and your family is of utmost importance, and your attorney can help you.

STEPPARENT ADOPTION

Stepparents may adopt a child after parental rights have been terminated. For a stepparent to be eligible to adopt their stepchild, they must have been married to the child's parent for at least one year, and the child must have been living with the stepparent for at least six months.



RELATIVE ADOPTION

Typically, certification is dependent upon the relationship to the child. Great grandparents, grandparents, aunts or uncles, cousins, or siblings are all considered relatives eligible to adopt a relative.



INDIAN CHILD ADOPTION

There are special requirements for adopting Indian children under the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) in the State of Arizona. Because so many native children were being removed from homes instead of being placed with fit relatives, it was feared that adoption was an effort to disconnect them from their culture and heritage. The ICWA of 1978 was enacted to help protect native children as well as native tribes and families.

ADULT ADOPTION

The state of Arizona allows adults to adopt other adults when certain conditions or relationships exist. For example, stepparents may wish to adopt their adult stepchildren, or foster parents may wish to adopt foster children formerly in their care. In the event of an adult adoption, the birth parents of the person being adopted do not need to be informed of the adoption proceedings.



ARIZONA ADOPTION FAQS AND QUICK REFERENCE

YOU CAN ADOPT A CHILD IN ARIZONA IF YOU:

- Are single, married, or a widow
- Are at least 18 years of age (to adopt) or 21 (to foster)
- Own or rent an apartment or home
- Pass an FBI and local background check
- Are a legal resident of the United States

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO ADOPT IN ARIZONA?

It's estimated that it can cost up to \$20,000 or more, depending on one's specific case. **Some costs that aspiring parents must consider include:**

- Adoption Agency fees
- Legal assistance
- Medical expenses
- Home Study fees (Every adoptive family will need to complete a home study to be certified to adopt in Arizona.)
- Travel costs

HOW MUCH MONEY DO YOU GET A MONTH FOR ADOPTING A CHILD IN ARIZONA?

To be eligible for state-funded adoption assistance a child must meet the same special needs criteria.

- For children aged 0-11, the maximum monthly assistance amounts to \$590.40
- Parents of children aged 12-18 get a maximum monthly assistance of \$651.60

Contact The Valley Law Group About Adopting in Arizona



Arizona is an adoption-friendly state, welcoming aspiring parents who are single, in a same-sex marriage, etc. A consent for adoption in Arizona can be signed as soon as 72 hours after the birth of a child.

With the right resources and knowledge readily available, anyone interested pursuing adoption dreams here Arizona should feel confident! Contact the Valley Law Group for a consultation.

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Call 24/7 **(480) 806-1572**
For a Free Consultation

