

REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLYING TO CENTRAL ADOPTION REGISTRY

- One must be adopted in Texas, or born in Texas and adopted in another state; or
- The birth parent or sibling of that adoptee;
- 18 years of age or older;
- Able to provide proof of age and identity (copy of birth certificate and government-issued photo ID); and
- \$20 check or money order, payable to BVS.

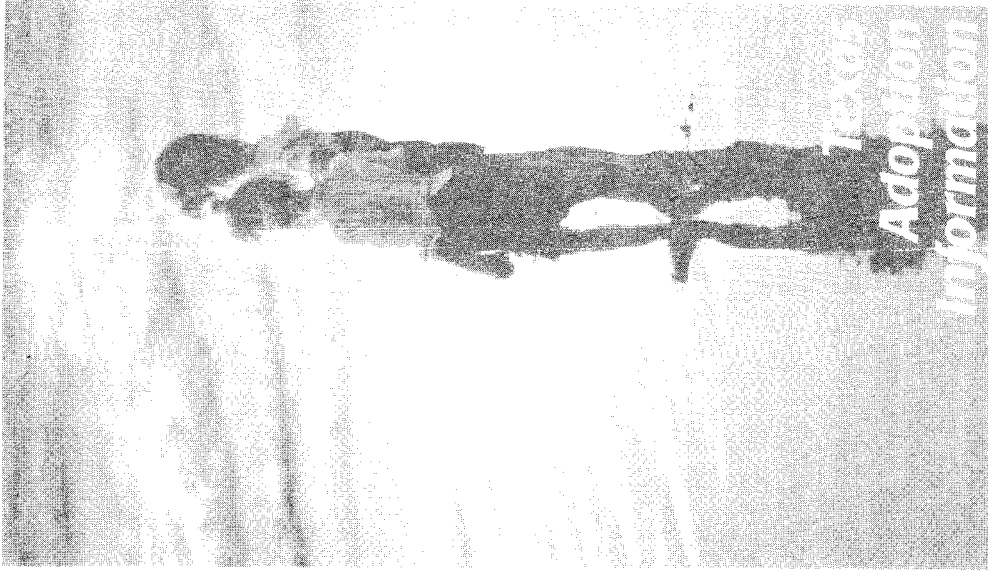
To receive an application call or write the Central Adoption Registry at:


CAR
POB 140123
Austin, TX 78714
512/458-7388 or 512/458-7111 x6279
Toll Free: 1-888-963-7111

Or visit the Texas Department of Health's Bureau of Vital Statistics' web site at:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/vs>

Texas Dept. of Health #35-11068 Aug. 2003




Texas Department of Health
Bureau of Vital Statistics
Central Adoption Registry
P.O. Box 140123
Austin, Texas 78714-0123



The Central Adoption Registry

Texas Department of Health
Bureau of Vital Statistics

NEW LEGISLATION

International Adoptions: Effective September 2003, Texas residents adopting a child internationally may request a Texas-issued birth certificate when they register the foreign adoption with their local district court.

ADOPTION INFORMATION

In Texas, adoption records are confidential and can, generally, only be opened for good cause by the court which granted the original adoption. Several entities have records relating to adoptions.

District Court: The district clerk for the court which grants adoptions quite often has copies of all documents submitted during the adoption process. An individual may petition the original court to open these records. If the petitioner presents good cause to the presiding judge, an order may be granted. Once the district clerk is in receipt of that court order, the petitioner may request copies of the adoption record.

Child-Placing Agencies: Each licensed child-placing agency maintains a file on each adoption they are involved in. The adoptee and adoptive parents are eligible to receive de-identified copies or summarized descriptions about the birth family from this agency file. If the agency is unknown, the adoptee may wish to register with the Central Adoption Registry to learn the identity of the agency.

Bureau of Vital Statistics (BVS): If an adoptee was born in Texas, BVS normally has the original pre-adoption birth certificate and a certificate of adoption submitted by the court which amends the original birth certificate by replacing the birth parents' names with the adopting parents' names. Very little social or medical information is contained in these files (see MEDICAL/SOCIAL INFORMATION).

BVS will provide copies of sealed documents upon receipt of a court order from the court which granted the adoption and payment of a \$9 fee. Upon request and payment of a separate \$9 fee, BVS can also provide the name of the court that granted the adoption of a Texas-born child. Contact BVS at 512/458-7111 for additional information.

MEDICAL/SOCIAL INFORMATION

The Bureau of Vital Statistics (BVS) provides medical and social information to adoptees and other eligible persons via two types of records. One is via the Health, Social, Education and Genetic History reports and the other is via the collection of out-of-business child-placing agency records.

- If you were placed for adoption after 1983 in Texas, in a private or independent adoption with adoptive parents who are not biologically related, you may be able to receive a copy of your medical and social history. Beginning in 1984, BVS started collecting medical and social reports on many families who placed a child or children in a non-relative, private adoption setting. Adult adoptees, adoptive parents and other qualified persons may obtain a redacted copy of this report. Applicable fees apply.

- If you were placed for adoption via a child-placing agency that is still in operation, please contact that agency for a summary or de-identified copy of its records as it pertains to the biological family.

- Years after the adoption, it may become important for the birth family to update and provide social, medical and genetic history relevant to the health and well-being of the adoptee. Once received, BVS will attempt to locate the last known address of the adoptive parents and inform them of their right to request

the information. If the adoption occurred through a child-placing agency, BVS will direct the birth family to that agency.

- The Central Adoption Registry (CAR) maintains many, but not all, adoption records from child-placing agencies that have ceased operation. Adult adoptees and their adoptive parents may obtain de-identified biological history from those records without joining the CAR. A fee, as set forth by the Texas Building and Procurement Commission, is charged for this service.

CENTRAL ADOPTION REGISTRY (CAR)

The Bureau of Vital Statistics' Central Adoption Registry is part of a voluntary mutual-consent registry system that began in 1984. The purpose of the registry is to reunite an adult adoptee who joins the registry with his or her birth parent or sibling who has also registered. The registry releases identifying information once each participant completes the following:

1. Attends a one-hour post-adoption counseling session that educates and prepares him or her for the reunion.
2. Prepares an autobiography with photographs. The registry exchanges the biographies at the same time it releases identifying information.

The Central Adoption Registry is unique, in that it has the authority, without a court order, to view a sealed file or confidential record. This allows for authentication of a match between two biologically related persons and gives each person involved in the process the comfort of knowing that there is no doubt or guesswork on the part of the registry.