



FAQs: Adoption

What Questions Should We Ask When Choosing an Adoption Agency?

It is very important to research and make sure the agency you pick is a good fit. Some questions to ask include 1) How many LGBT couples have successfully completed adoptions with you? 2) What is the typical waiting time for same-sex couples? 3) Do you provide counseling and support for LGBT parents? It is also helpful to talk with other LGBT families who have completed the adoption process about their experiences.

Who Can Adopt in Pennsylvania?

Any adult in Pennsylvania may adopt.

What is an Open Adoption?

Open adoption is increasingly considered in all types of adoption plans. In an open adoption, adoptees maintain contact of some type with birth families. The level and type of contact is determined on a case-by-case basis. The benefits for adoptees include an opportunity to be aware of and understand their heritage, and to have access to medical information. For adoptive parents, openness can sometimes seem threatening. Many times, these fears recede as relationships are established. Open adoption is not appropriate for everyone, and the adoptive parents ultimately determine whether it is best for their family.

Step Parent or Second Parent Adoption?

An individual may wish to adopt their partner's child and become a legal parent of that child, giving the child an additional legal parent and giving each parent legal rights, especially if the parent is not biologically related to the child. Stepparent adoption laws require the parents be legally married, while second-parent adoption laws do not. The 2015 Supreme Court *Obergefell* ruling guaran-

tees same-sex couples the right of marriage, including the option for stepparent adoption. In Pennsylvania, parents can petition for second-parent adoption, regardless of marital status.

What is a Post Adoption Contact Agreement?

In Pennsylvania, open adoptions are not legally binding unless both parties enter into a voluntary written Post Adoption Contact Agreement (PACA) that follows PA law, uses statutory language and is signed by the Court. This PACA allows continued communication between the birth parents and adoptive family. Some examples of post-adoption contact include exchange of photos, videos, letters, phone calls, emails, and in some cases, visits.

Can We Still Adopt During COVID?

Yes! At the beginning of the pandemic, many courts were closed, but now, court proceedings have fully resumed with safety measures in place.

KingSpry Adoption Legal Services Include:

- Private and Agency Adoption
- Interstate Adoption
- Birthmother Outreach/Birthparent Representation
- Public Agency/Fostercare Adoption
- Open Adoption
- Step-Parent, Second-Parent, Relative, Grandparent Adoption
- Special Needs Adoption
- Parentage Decree
- Post-Adoption Contact Agreement
- Terminations of Parental Rights
- Child Guardianship
- Subsidy Consultation
- Foster Parent Representation

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