

Adoption Services and Birth Parent Regional Offices

Region I Adoptions

714 N. Pleasantburg Drive/Suite 300
Greenville, SC 29607
864-282-4730 or Toll-Free: 1-800-868-6595
Abbeville, Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville,
Greenwood, Laurens, Newberry, Oconee,
Pickens and Spartanburg Counties

Region II Adoptions

Childrens Center of South Carolina
2638 Two Notch Road/Suite 200
Columbia, SC 29204
803-929-2555 or Toll-Free: 1-888-711-7095
Aiken, Bamberg, Barnwell, Edgefield,
Kershaw, Lexington, McCormick, Richland
and Saluda Counties

Rock Hill Office (Region II)

454 S. Anderson Road, BTC 551/Suite 300
Rock Hill, SC 29730
803-329-9626 or Toll-Free: 1-800-922-1537
Chester, Fairfield, Lancaster, Union and
York Counties

Region III Adoptions

3346 Rivers Avenue/Suite F
North Charleston, SC 29405
843-953-9750 or Toll-Free: 1-800-922-1518
Allendale, Beaufort, Berkeley, Calhoun,
Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester,
Hampton, Jasper and Orangeburg Counties

Region IV Adoptions

181 East Evans Street, BTC 112
Florence, SC 29506
843-661-2495 or Toll-Free: 1-800-763-6637
Chesterfield, Clarendon, Darlington, Dillon,
Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Lee, Marion,
Marlboro, Sumter and Williamsburg Counties

Office of Human Services

S.C. Department of Social Services
1535 Confederate Avenue, P.O. Box 1520
Columbia, SC 29202
803-898-7561 or Toll-Free: 1-800-922-2504

Adults Who May Adopt

Families are needed who are accepting of children and have the capacity to cope with children's individual needs. Both married and single persons are encouraged to adopt.

In accordance with Title VI Section 601 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title V Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the State Department of Social Services will administer its programs in such a manner that no person shall solely by reason of his race, color, religion, national origin or qualified handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity administered by the department.

DSS Brochure 2419 (MAY 08)
Edition of MAY 07 is obsolete.

Adoption Guidelines and Steps to Adoption

Information Especially
for Adoptive Applicants

South Carolina
Department of Social Services
Adoption Services

Adoption Guidelines

Residence and Citizenship

You may adopt if you live within the state or live elsewhere. United States citizenship is not required, but the status of noncitizen applicants is investigated.

Age

By law, one must be of legal age to complete an adoption. We encourage persons over age 40 to apply for adoption, and they are given consideration for older and special needs children, depending on the preference of the applicant.

Marital Status

Both married and single persons are encouraged to apply to adopt. The security of the marital

relationship and the commitment of both partners to adoption are explored. We also believe in the ability of single parents to provide a good home, and for some children a single parent may be preferable.

Finances

Your ability to manage your income is more important than how much money you have. It is only necessary that you have enough income on a regular basis to ensure reasonable financial security in providing for the child's care. Financial assistance may be available to help care for children with special needs.

Housing

You do not have to own your own home in order to adopt. Your living arrangements should offer enough space and should ensure the health, safety

and well-being of your family and the child you wish to adopt.

Health

Your physical health and life expectancy are important, as well as your emotional health. We seek parents who would be expected to live to see the adopted child reach adulthood. Parents should be able to handle the everyday responsibilities of raising a child.

Religion

A family's values and beliefs are influential and significant in a child's development. However, adoptive applicants are not required to claim certain religious faiths. Our main concern is the provision of a wholesome environment in which the child is accepted and nurtured.

Steps to Adoption

1. Inquiry

Applicants may call the appropriate adoption office listed on the back of this brochure.

2. Application

The application is completed and returned to the adoption office serving the applicant's county of residence.

3. Assessment

The applicants, together with an assigned adoption worker, decide if they should pursue adoption.

4. Preparation Workshops

Adoptive applicants participate in an Adoption Preparation Workshop where applicants share experiences, discuss parenting and coping skills, find out about children available for adoption and determine their readiness to adopt.

5. Home Visits

An adoption worker visits the applicant's home to further explain adoption, answer questions and complete the adoptive home assessment.

6. Pre-Placement Investigation

A report on the applicant's readiness to adopt is written, compiling information gathered from the application and assessment process. This report is required by law and is submitted to the court at the time of the adoption complaint.

7. Placement Committee

Adoptive parents are selected by a committee of adoption professionals based on the needs of the child eligible for adoption.

8. Placement

Visitation between the adoptive parents and the selected child usually begin prior to placement. When the child and family are ready, the child is placed with the new adoptive parents.

9. Supervisory Assistance

Supervisory assistance, which may cover several months, is given for the period of adjustment immediately following placement.

10. Legalization

When DSS and the adoptive family agree that the adoption should be finalized, the family retains an attorney to file the adoption complaint. Financial assistance is available to help with the cost of finalizing the adoption of a child with special needs.

11. Adoption Preservation Services

Adoption is a life long process. After finalization, DSS will provide counseling, referral services and other assistance upon request from the adoptive family.

Children Who Need Families Although there are some children under school age available for adoption, most of the children in need of permanent homes fall into the following categories: sibling groups, children older than 6 years and children with physical, emotional or mental handicaps.