

Background Checks

All adoptions require that the State & Federal Fingerprint Background Check must be conducted 12 months or less prior to the filing of the adoption complaint. The hard copy of the checks must be filed with the adoption.



Private Adoptions

In the case of private adoptions a complaint will be accepted without the State & Federal Fingerprint Background Check because the agency appointed will obtain these.



Layer Referral Services:
(908) 353-4715
Legal Services:
(908) 354-4340

What The Complaint Should Contain

The complaint for adoption must include the following found in the NJ Court Rule: 5:10-3 Information on anyone residing in the adoptive applicant's home:

- Full Name
- Dates of Birth
- Birthplace
- Information on the child to be adopted:
 - ◊ Full Name
 - ◊ Date of Birth
- Birthplace

A full description of all property belonging to the child to be adopted.

Reports will include:

- State & Federal Fingerprint Background Check (CHRI)
- Child Abuse Check (CARI)
- Promis-Gravel
- Human Services Check

Fee of \$175.00 made payable to the Surrogate of Union County (*one complaint per child*).

Separate check made payable to the NJ Vital Statistics for an amended birth certificate.

This is just a basic overview of what is required by the court. The court highly recommends that you get the help of an attorney to prepare the necessary legal documents.

The Honorable James S. LaCorte,
Surrogate Judge of Union County

Sharda Badri,
Deputy Surrogate

Suzanne DiOrio,
Special Deputy Surrogate

Lisa Brophy,
Counsel to the Surrogate

The Surrogate's Court
The Honorable James S. LaCorte,
Surrogate of Union County

Adoption Guide

*A guide for prospective parents
prepared by the Union County
Surrogate's Court*



Union County Court House
2 Broad Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07207

Phone: (908) 527-4280

Fax: (908) 351-9212

E-mail: sdiorio@ucnj.org

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Be a Foster or Adoptive Parent.



Agency Adoption

- Verified Complaint & Order for hearing
 - ⇒ Hearing shall be scheduled within 10 – 30 days
- Consent of Agency
- Surrender of parental rights or termination of parental rights. A birth certificate must be presented.
- If rights were terminated, no one has to be notified.
- Agency reports [child abuse (CARI)] and State & Federal Fingerprint Background Check.
- Agency reports must be received 5 days prior to hearing. Report must include an evaluation of both parents and child. Anyone in the home age of 18 or older must also have a fingerprint check.
- Judgment of Adoption

For information on Private Adoptions, Foreign Re-Adoption and Adult Adoptions, please call the Surrogate office.

Step-Parent Adoption

- Verified Complaint & Order for hearing
 - ⇒ Hearing scheduled in 2-3 months
- Consent by other parent /Notice to other parent by certified & regular mail or affidavit of diligent inquiry.
- Copy of death certificate if other parent is deceased.
- Copy of child's birth certificate
 - ⇒ If birth father is not known or not named, the court needs a sworn statement (notarized) that the father is unknown and why.
- Adoptive parents Information:
 - ⇒ Full Name
 - ⇒ Social Security Number
 - ⇒ Date of birth
- Judgment of Adoption



Relative Adoption

- Verified Complaint & Order for hearing
 - ⇒ Hearing scheduled in 2-3 months
- Notification – Natural parents have to be notified
 - ⇒ If deceased, a copy of their death certificate is required.
 - ⇒ If the plaintiffs do not know where the parents are then an *Affidavit of Diligent Inquiry* is required.
- Agency Report – *Appointed by the court, will include:*
 - ⇒ State & Federal Fingerprint Background Check
 - ⇒ Child Abuse Check (CARI)
 - ⇒ Home Study
 - ⇒ Medical History
- Consent – If there is a custody arrangement, copy of custody order.
- Agency Fees – *Plaintiff is responsible for agency fees.*
- Proof of Service & Copy of Notice to natural parents
- Judgment of Adoption