

# Instructions for Kinship Adoption

These standard instructions are for informational purposes only and do not constitute legal advice about your case. If you choose to represent yourself, you are bound by the same rules and procedures as an attorney.

## General Information

- ◆ The Petitioner must be 21 years of age or older unless a minor has permission of the court to file the adoption.
- ◆ Petitioner is either a grandparent/aunt/uncle/brother/sister/half sibling/1<sup>st</sup> cousin of the child to be adopted and has had physical custody of the child for a period of one year or more, and the child is not the subject of a pending dependency and neglect proceeding.
- ◆ Your case should be filed in the county in which you reside or where the placement agency is located.
- ◆ Any child legally available for adoption per §19-5-203, C.R.S., under 18 years of age residing in the state at the time the Petition for Adoption is filed or under the jurisdiction of a court in Colorado for at least 6 months may be adopted. Any person between the ages of 18 and 21 may be adopted upon approval of the Court.
- ◆ Legally available for adoption means one of the following: a Court has terminated the parent-child legal relationship; a Court has approved voluntary relinquishment of the parent-child legal relationship; if the parents are deceased, court-appointed guardian has executed written and verified consent; or written and verified consent has been signed by the parents.
- ◆ The prospective adoptive parent(s) and any adult residing in the home must complete both state and federal fingerprint-based criminal history record checks.
- ◆ The prospective adoptive parent(s) must complete a TRAILS background check from the Department of Human Services. The individual inquiry form and current fee information is available on their website.
- ◆ The prospective adoptive parent(s) must provide a statement informing the Court if they have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor in one of the following areas:
  - child abuse or neglect.
  - spousal abuse.
  - any crime against a child.
  - any crime, the underlying factual basis of which has been found by the Court to include an act of Domestic Violence.
  - violation of a Protection/Restraining Order.
  - any crime involving violence, rape, sexual assault, or homicide.
  - any felony involving physical assault or battery.
  - any felony involving drugs within the past five years, at a minimum.
- ◆ A person convicted of a felony offense that involves child abuse, a crime of violence, or a felony offense involving unlawful sexual behavior **shall not be allowed** to adopt a child.
- ◆ If the fingerprint-based criminal history record check reveals a felony or misdemeanor conviction, the Court will review the type of conviction and determine if it meets the requirements as outlined in 19-5-207(2.5) (a.5)(III) where the court **may allow** the party to adopt the child.
- ◆ If the child is not legally eligible for adoption, the Petitioner(s) must provide proof that he/she has consulted with the appropriate local County Department of Social services concerning the possible eligibility of the Petitioner(s) and the child for temporary assistance for needy families (TANF), Medicaid, subsidized adoption and other services or public assistance administered by the County Department of Social Services.
- ◆ For additional information, please review §19-5-200.2. – 19-5-403 of the Colorado Revised Statutes.
- ◆ If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation to access the courts, please contact your local ADA Coordinator. Contact information can be obtained from the following website:  
[http://www.courts.state.co.us/Administration/HR/ADA/Coordinator\\_List.cfm](http://www.courts.state.co.us/Administration/HR/ADA/Coordinator_List.cfm)

## Common Terms

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| ☒ Petition:           | Document officially commences the Kinship Adoption process.                    |
| ☒ Petitioner:         | The person or persons filing a Petition for Adoption.                          |
| ☒ Respondent:         | The person who files a response against the Petition for Kinship Adoption.     |
| ☒ Service of Process: | The Petition is to be served on any party in interest in the Kinship Adoption  |
| ☒ Return Date:        | The date that the Respondent must file his/her answer (listed on the Summons). |
| ☒ May:                | In legal terms, “may” is defined as “optional” or “can”.                       |
| ☒ Shall:              | In legal terms, “shall” is defined as “required”.                              |

If you do not understand this information, please contact an attorney.

## Fees

For a list of fees and how to request a fee waiver, visit: [www.coloradojudicial.gov/self-help/list-fees](http://www.coloradojudicial.gov/self-help/list-fees)

## Forms

To access a form online go to [www.coloradojudicial.gov](http://www.coloradojudicial.gov).

- |                          |         |   |
|--------------------------|---------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 454 | Verified Statement of Fees Charged                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 505 | Petition for Kinship Adoption                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 506 | Notice of Adoption Proceeding and Summons               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 507 | Affidavit Service/Waiver and Acceptance of Service      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 510 | Consent to Adoption - Non-Custodial Parent              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 511 | Consent to Adoption - Child Over 12 Years of Age        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 514 | Notice of Hearing                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 515 | Motion to Waive Family Assessment/Home Study            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 516 | Order Regarding Motion to Waive Family Assessment       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 517 | Motion and Affidavit for Publication of Notice          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 518 | Order for Publication and Mailing                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 520 | Petition to Terminate Parent - Child Legal Relationship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 521 | Finding of Fact and Decree                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 522 | Final Decree of Adoption                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 525 | Affidavit of Abandonment                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | JDF 526 | Affidavit of Diligent Efforts                           |



**Petition for Kinship Adoption (JDF 505):**

If more than one child is being adopted you will be required to prepare a separate Petition for each child. Each child being adopted will have his or her own case for confidentially purposes. Pay the filing fee for each adoption. However, if the Petitioner(s) is/are is seeking to adopt more than one child, and the circumstances/availability for the children to be adopted are the same (e.g. the children are available for the adoption due to the death of the primary caretaker, e.g. biological parent) then only an additional \$3.00 Vital Stats Fee is required for each additional child the Petitioner(s) is/are seeking to adopt. The Petitions must be filed on the same day.

Please complete all sections of this form.

Attach the fingerprint based FBI and the CBI criminal history checks to the Petition and identify as Exhibit A. **Make sure that the fingerprint-based criminal history record checks are conducted within 90 days prior to the filing of the Petition.**

Attach the TRAILS Background Check and label as Exhibit B.

Attach proof you have consulted with the appropriate local County Department of Social Services for temporary assistance for needy families (TANF), Medicaid, subsidized adoption and other services or public assistance administered by the County Department of Social Services. (See step 3 above.)

**Verified Statement of Fees Charged (JDF 454):**

The Petition is to be accompanied by a Statement of Fees disclosing any and all fees, costs, or expenses charged or to be charged by any person or agency in connection with the adoption.

**Consent to Adoption - Child Over Twelve Years of Age (JDF 511):**

**Complete this form only** if the child is 12 years of age or older, as his/her consent is required.

**Notice of Hearing (JDF 514):**

Please complete the caption only on this form.

Provide pre-addressed stamped envelopes for you and the non-custodial parents. For the non-custodial parents use their last known address.

**Motion to Waive Family Assessment/Home Study (JDF 515):**

The Court may waive the assessment and approval of the potential adoptive parents in cases involving kinship or custodial adoption or may determine and order what kind of information or written report it deems necessary. 19-5-206(2)(c), C.R.S.)

**Complete this form only** if applicable.

**Order Regarding Motion to Waive Family Assessment/Home Study (JDF 516):**

**Complete this form only** if you file a Motion to Waive Family Assessment/Home Study (JDF 515).

**Petition to Terminate the Parent - Child Legal Relationship (JDF 520):**

The Court must enter an order terminating the parental rights of the child's parents. (§19-5-210(6), C.R.S.)

Please complete all sections of this form.

**Affidavit of Abandonment (JDF 525):**

**Complete this form only** if the birth parent(s) has/have abandoned the child for a period of one year or more, or that the birth parent(s) has/have failed without cause to provide reasonable support for a period of one year or more.

## Non-Custodial Consent Forms

Please review sections A – C below to determine the forms to complete and the process necessary to complete based on your individual circumstances.

### A. Consent to Adoption is obtained from both birth parents.

You will need to have the non-custodial birth parents complete (JDF 510) based on their custody relationship with the child being adopted.

- Complete Consent to Adoption – Non-Custodial Parent (JDF 510). Each birth parent should complete all sections on this form if they consent to the adoption.
- Make sure that you also provide the Non-Custodial Parent(s) with a copy of the Petition and Notice of Hearing.
- The waiver and acceptance of service must be signed in the presence of a Court Clerk or Notary Public.
- You are now ready to file your Documents with the Court, see Step 5.

or

### B. Consent to Adoption cannot be obtained and whereabouts of the non-custodial birth parent(s) are known.

If you have not obtained consent from the non-custodial birth parent(s) and you know his/her whereabouts, you must complete the following forms and serve them before a hearing will be set to finalize your adoption.

- Notice of Adoption Proceeding and Summons (JDF 506).**
  - Please complete all sections of this form and provide to the Court when you file your Petition.
  - Once issued/signed by the Court, you can complete service.
  
- Affidavit of Service/Waiver and Acceptance of Service (JDF 507).**
  - Once the Petition for Kinship Adoption, Petition to Terminate Parent-Child Legal Relationship, and Notice of Adoption Proceeding and Summons have been served on or accepted by the non-custodial birth parent(s), the applicable portion of the Affidavit of Service/Waiver and Acceptance of Service must be completed and filed with the Court

#### Service options:

##### Waiver and Acceptance of Service:

- This is the easiest form of service. However, the non-custodial parent must be willing to accept the adoption papers and sign the waiver.
- Have the non-custodial birth parent sign the Original Waiver and Acceptance of Service form before a Court Clerk or Notary Public.
- File the signed original waiver with the Court.

##### Personal Service:

- Select the Sheriff's Department, a private process server, or someone you know who is 18 years or older, who is not a party to the action, and who knows the rules of service to serve the non-custodial parent.
- Provide the process server with the Notice of Adoption Proceeding (JDF 506), Petition for Kinship Adoption (JDF 505), and Petition to Terminate Parent - Child Legal Relationship (JDF 520).
- The process server will need to complete the Affidavit of Service and the original will need to be filed with the Court.

or

### C. Consent to Adoption cannot be obtained and whereabouts of the non-custodial birth parent(s) is unknown.

If you are unable to obtain the consent of the non-custodial birth parent(s), and you do not know where he or she is located, you will need to file a Motion with the Court requesting service by Publication and the Affidavit of Diligent Efforts (JDF 526) to support your efforts in locating the non-custodial parent. The Motion for Publication can be filed when you file the other adoption forms, see step 5.

**Affidavit of Diligent Efforts (JDF 526).**

- Complete all sections and please do not alter this form as the Court must have complete information regarding efforts made to locate the non-custodial parent.
- Identify in your own words, stating the last known address and/or any efforts made to contact or locate the non-custodial birth parent. Keep return receipts, registered mail slips, and any returned mail you might have. This documentation should be attached to your Affidavit.

**Motion and Affidavit for Publication of Notice (JDF 517).**

- Complete all sections on this form.

**Order for Publication and Mailing (JDF 518).**

- Complete caption only on this form.
- Provide pre-addressed stamped envelopes for you and the non-custodial parent at his/her last known address.

**Note:** Once you receive the Order for Publication and Mailing, it is your responsibility to provide the appropriate newspaper agency with a copy of the Order of Publication and the Notice of Hearing. Service by publication will be in a newspaper published in the county where the action is filed or as ordered by the Court. You are responsible for all publication costs.

Once publication of the Notice of Hearing has been completed, the newspaper agency will provide you with a clipping of the publication along with an Affidavit of Publication. **It is your responsibility to provide this information to the Court. This proof is necessary for the adoption hearing to proceed.**

### **Step 5: File Documents with the Court.**

Check with the Court to determine if they require all completed forms at the time of filing and if they have any additional filing requirements.

- You have completed all background checks as mentioned in Step 1 and 2.
- You have completed the appropriate forms mentioned in Step 4 based on your individual circumstances and have completed the forms identified in Step 6. **Some courts may want you to keep the forms referenced in Step 6 and bring to the Court at the time of the hearing.**
- Pay the appropriate filing fee.
- Be sure to provide the appropriate number of pre-addressed stamped envelopes with the Court. This includes envelopes for you and the non-custodial parent.

### **Step 6: Be prepared for your Adoption Hearing.**

Submit the following forms to the Clerk prior to the hearing, unless submitted to the Court at the time of filing. The documents will be signed at the end of the hearing.

**Finding of Fact and Decree (JDF 521).** *(Original and 1 Copy)*

The statute requires that the Court must enter an order terminating the parental rights of the child's parents. (§19-5-210(6), C.R.S.)

- Complete caption only on this form.

**Final Decree of Adoption (JDF 522).** *(Original and 3 copies for each child)*

- Complete caption only on this form.
  - a. Original is for the file.
  - b. One to be certified for the adopting parent.

- c. One certified copy goes to Vital Records Section of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment for purposes of obtaining a new birth certificate.
- d. One for the attorney of record. (if applicable)
- e. Certified copy fee \$20.00, copy fee is \$.75 per page.

- Report of Adoption/Obtaining a Birth Certificate.** This is not a JDF form. Please use the following link to access the Report of Adoption.  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NvAbhhFr-2aiUM2g9DIkrRbBe7jxE6n2/view?usp=sharing>

**After the Judge or Magistrate signs the Final Decree of Adoption, complete the Report of Adoption.**

- You or your attorney will need to prepare a document, called the **Report of Adoption**. Complete items 1 through 10. Section 6 should be completed by the attorney, if applicable. Once you complete the form online, print two copies for submission to the Court.
- The Court will certify the bottom portion of the form and send the Report of Adoption to the Office of the State Registrar of Vital Statistics within one week from issuing the Final Decree of Adoption.
- New Requirement to obtain a Birth Certificate.** The Office of the State Registrar will contact you or your attorney within 4 – 6 weeks from the receipt of the Court order in their office.
  - You or your attorney will need to complete the application provided by the Vital Records Division with a photocopy of your driver's license, state identification card, passport, or other State or Federally issued ID card (legal representatives must provide proof of client relationship).
  - The Vital Records Office will not issue a birth certificate without the required fee and a photocopy of one of the forms of ID mentioned above. If you have an attorney listed in section 6 on the Report of Adoption, the notification will be forwarded to the attorney.**
  - One Report of Adoption is required for each child. **If the child was born in the State of Colorado or born out of the United States**, the Vital Records Office will send Notification and an Application for a Certified Copy of a Birth Certificate to your attorney. If no attorney is listed on the Report of Adoption the Notification and Application will be sent to you.
- The Court will not be accepting payments for the Colorado Vital Records Office.**
- If the child was born in another state, please determine what the cost is to obtain a birth certificate in that state. Make a check or money order payable to that state in the amount of the cost to obtain a birth certificate. Please access the link (on page 7 of these instructions) to the National Center for Health Statistics Website to obtain information about obtaining birth certificates.

***Helpful Hints when completing the Report of Adoption:***

- Check the Report of Adoption carefully.
- The Vital Records Section will not accept the report if there are mistakes, cross-outs, or white-out entries.
- The information on the Report of Adoption in sections 8 – 10 **must agree** with what is on child's current birth certificate.

***Preparation of Birth Certificate - If your child was born in Colorado or a foreign country:***

The birth certificate will be prepared and issued by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. It takes anywhere from 4 - 6 weeks to prepare a birth certificate in Colorado. It is important that you supply a current address on the Report of Adoption to prevent any delay in getting the Notification and Application for a certified copy of a Birth Certificate to you.

If there are any problems in getting the birth certificate prepared, you will need to contact the Vital Records Section of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment directly. The address and telephone numbers are as follows:

Vital Records/Adoption  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South HSVR-VR-A1  
Denver, Colorado 80246-1530  
(303) 692-2226

Link to Website: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/categories/services-and-information/birth-deathand-other-vital-records>

***Preparation of Birth Certificate - If your child was born in another state:***

The Colorado Vital Records section will send the Report of Adoption to the appropriate state. You will need to contact the Vital Records Office in the appropriate state where the child was born to find out the procedure and cost for obtaining a birth certificate. Each state has different laws, regulations, and fees. Please check with them to determine how long it will take to receive a birth certificate from any other state.

You may check the link to the National Center for Health Statistics Website to obtain information about obtaining birth certificates from each state.

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2welcom.htm>

***When you receive your certificate please check it over carefully!***

Be sure that names, dates, and ages are correct. If there is a mistake caused by the documentation you supplied, you will need to fill out an **Amended Report of Adoption**, which will have to be signed by the Court and then sent to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment for correction and re-issuance of another birth certificate. **There is a fee charged by the Vital Records Office for this process.** You will need to contact the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment for their fee schedule and exchange policy.