



370 South Fifth Street
Suite 6
Columbus, Ohio 43215
(614) 469-0007

www.adoptionbygentlecare.org

Table of Contents

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Dear Prospective Adoptive Parent Letter
- Advantages of Adoption by Gentle Care
- Steps to Join Adoption by Gentle Care
- Important Information
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Medical Deposit
- Fee Sheet
- Fee Sheet Pre Arranged/Identified Program

HOMESTUDY

- Homestudy Procedures
- Homestudy Procedure Outline

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- Financial Assistance

APPLICATION

- Application Information
- Application Cover Letter
- Application

ODJFS

- Policy on Complaints of Alleged Discriminatory Acts
- ODJFS Form 01611 Non-Discrimination Requirements
- ODJFS Form 02333 Discrimination Complaint
- Fact Sheet

ADOPTION FAMILY RECRUITMENT PLAN

OHIO ADOPTION GUIDE - [LINK](#)





ADOPTION BY GENTLE CARE

Serving as a partner in creating and sustaining nurturing families

Dear Prospective Adoptive Parent,

Like many, you are turning to adoption to fulfill your dream of becoming a parent. The question most frequently asked to us is, “can you adopt a newborn from Ohio?”

The answer is simple; yes, Adoption by Gentle Care has a wonderful history of placing over 2,000 healthy newborns with loving families. We have been completing adoptions since 1985 and our dedication to our clients has helped us grow into the most successful adoption agency in Ohio.

We accomplished this by our constant commitment to improving our services to our birth parents and adoptive families. We feel this focus has helped us grow with our clients and stay a step ahead of other adoption professionals.

Domestic adoption presents every prospective adoptive parent with a wealth of options and challenges. It is important for you to find a professional who will help guide you through the adoption process; a professional to answer any questions and address any concerns you may have along the way. Finding a quality professional is the most important decision you will make, simply because that organization will help you begin or add to your family.

Should you choose Adoption by Gentle Care, you will find an experienced and dedicated staff willing to guide you through the world of adoptions.

We wish you well in your search to fulfill your dream. After reviewing our information should you feel we can help you complete that dream, our staff would be honored to work with you.

Sincerely,
The Staff of Adoption by Gentle Care

ADVANTAGES OF ADOPTION BY GENTLE CARE

1. We are one of the most experienced adoption agencies in the United States. This allows us to share our intimate adoption experience with our clients thus making the adoption process much easier for our clients.
2. We have placed over 2,000 newborns with loving families. Our proven record gives clients a strong feeling of confidence because of our past success.
3. Since 1985 we have been building solid relationships with health care professionals who come in contact with pregnant mothers facing an unplanned pregnancy. These professionals consistently turn to Adoption by Gentle Care because we provide extraordinary and heartfelt services to all of our birth mothers.
4. We will review with you, in detail, your Adoption Planning Questionnaire to provide you with our assessments as to how your responses and family dynamics could affect your waiting time.
5. Ohio has some of the best adoption laws in the United States and most adoptive families find this security comforting.
6. Since we only work with birth mothers in Ohio, potential adoptive parents enjoy this convenience as they are not forced to travel across the United States or travel to another country to adopt a child. They also meet with a supportive social worker, face-to-face, a benefit not available at all agencies.
7. By concentrating our efforts in Ohio, we have built a network of dedicated and qualified staff members across the state effectively allowing us to service birth mothers and adoptive families wherever they may live.
8. We can and do work with potential adoptive parents from other states and many come to us because of our solid reputation and the advantages Ohio laws offers to them. Due to our extensive experience, we welcome the opportunity to work with potential adoptive parents from all over the United States.
9. We are a full service adoption agency. Full service means we facilitate the entire adoption process for you. Most potential adoptive parents prefer an expert to handle the entire process for them. We also offer quality independent adoption services if you need a homestudy or have located a birth mother on your own.

STEPS TO JOIN ADOPTION BY GENTLE CARE

Read over this entire information packet and call us if you have any questions.

Step 1 - Application

- Complete the JFS 01691 Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Application for Child Placement (6 pages).
- Mail the completed application, the application cover letter, and the \$195.00 non-refundable application fee to:

Attn. Application
Adoption by Gentle Care
370 S. Fifth St., Suite 6
Columbus, OH 43215

*Please Note - You must return the original application; we cannot accept electronic copies. **It is important that your application be complete and correct.** If we cannot approve your application, we will mail it back to you along with an explanation.*

- Once your application is approved, we will send you a letter confirming that we received your application and payment.

Step 2 – Training and Education & Online Courses

All potential adoptive parents are required by the State of Ohio to complete a formal training session. Adoption by Gentle Care also requires additional training (beyond what the state requires). We have put together a seminar that provides the State required training as well as additional information and training that is completed online. The seminar and online training offers you a detailed explanation of how the adoption process works, information on developing and ordering the profiles that our expectant mothers review, allow you to meet and speak with a birth mother who has placed through our agency, gives you the chance to meet our staff, and provide you the opportunity to ask any questions that you may have. The Training and Education Seminar is held once every four months (subject to change), in the Columbus area. The seminar is typically held on Saturday.

- Applicants will receive a packet that includes response forms, a Homestudy Information form, and a letter inviting you to the next available Training and Education Seminar as well as hotel information for the Training and Education Seminar. The letter will also list your Homestudy fees.

Please Note – You will be assigned a Homestudy Social Worker at the Training and Education Seminar.

- Mail the following to us:
 - Response forms
 - Homestudy Information form
 - Homestudy fees
 - Training Attendance fee

Step 3 – Homestudy

After you have completed the required Training and Education Seminar and online training courses, you are ready to begin the homestudy process. The homestudy is handled by the social worker that was assigned during the Training and Education Seminar. A homestudy is an assessment of the home environment and your suitability to provide a stable, secure, and loving home for a child. In some cases, potential adoptive parents have already completed the homestudy process. In those cases, we will simply need to review the homestudy to make certain it complies with Ohio's regulations and standards. The homestudy process is explained in detail in the homestudy section of this packet.

Step 4 – Profiles

Profiles are very important because the majority of our expectant mothers make their selection based on your profile. The profiles are placed on the agency's website. You may have two different profiles; a mandatory paper profile and an optional video profile. You will work with one of three companies to develop your paper profile. A representative from the company will work closely with you to write your letter, arrange photos, and put your non-identifying information into a beautiful brochure. Show Pro Media will help you develop your video profile. The family provides the footage and Show Pro Media handles the editing.

Step 5 – Adoption Planning Questionnaire

The Adoption Planning Questionnaire is a series of questions that we ask you so we know what type of situations you are comfortable with in your adoption. The questionnaire will not cover every possible situation, but it does provide us with a good idea of your comfort level so we can most appropriately circulate your profile. We will work with you to fill out this questionnaire.

Step 6 – Activation

Activation is when you formally join Adoption by Gentle Care. It is at this point that you will sign your Activation Agreement and pay your Activation fee. This fee is primarily used for bulk advertising to promote our services to expectant mothers considering adoption and guidance through the process.

Step 7 – Promotion

Once all of the above steps are completed, you are now ready to be matched with an expectant mother. You are placed in our pool of waiting adoptive families. As expectant mothers contact us, we compare their background and desires with your Adoption Planning Questionnaire. We then share matching families with our expectant mothers. They decide which family will adopt their baby from the matching family profiles.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Birth Parent Living Expenses

The birth parent living expense deposit is due at the time you are matched with an expectant parent(s). Birth parents in Ohio may request living expenses of up to \$3000. If you are matched with an expectant mother who has utilized living expenses, and she changes her mind about her adoption plan, you will not be charged any additional living expense fees for subsequent matches. Any unused balance will be refunded to you upon your written request. All target situations are handled on a case by case basis.

Multiple Births

Multiple Births – Adoption by Gentle Care will not assess additional fees for multiple births except if the placement is with out-of-state adoptive parent(s). Adoption by Gentle Care is required to complete a separate ICPC packet for each child. Therefore, we will assess an additional ICPC fee to the adoptive family for each additional child that is placed with the family. (example: if twin infants are placed with a family, they will be charged two \$600 ICPC fees).

Independent Homestudy and/or Supervisory Reports

Adoption by Gentle Care is available to assist attorneys, courts, and/or interstate offices with homestudies and post-placement services for adoptions facilitated through sources other than Adoption by Gentle Care. Since 1985, we have earned a reputation for providing professional, efficient, and thorough homestudies to agencies and courts nationwide.

Independent Assessor Services

Adoption by Gentle Care is available to assist other agencies, attorneys and courts by providing Assessor Services to birth parents. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services require that Social Workers and Counselors who work with birth parents and adoptive parents be certified by the state as Adoption Assessors. The Social Work staff at Adoption by Gentle Care are Certified Adoption Assessors, and as such, can meet with birth parents who are working with attorneys, courts, or adoption facilitators. The state requires certain paperwork be completed with the birth parents by a Certified Adoption Assessor.

Pre-Finalization Adoption Services

Adoption by Gentle Care will provide Pre-Finalization services to the adoptive parent(s) and the child from the date of placement until the issuance of the Final Decree of Adoption. This Pre-Finalization period can be no less than six months from the date of placement. A social

worker will make a home visit with the adoptive family no later than 7 days following placement, 30 days following placement, and monthly visits until finalization. All Post Placement visits will occur in the home. In a two parent family, both parents and the child must be present for each visit.

The visits made by the social worker with the adoptive family are to ensure the baby is being loved and cared for and the adoptive family is adjusting to their new role. During these visits the social worker offers counseling, support, and makes an assessment as to the success of the placement.

Pictures and Letters

Adoptive families are required to send a set of at least 12 quality photographs and a nice letter to the birth parent(s) within the first week after placement, a set each month for one year, then two times per year until the child reaches 18 years of age. The pictures and letters are sent to Adoption by Gentle Care and then we mail the sets to your birth parent(s).

Finalization

Adoption by Gentle Care will refer the adoptive family to an attorney experienced in obtaining Final Decrees of Adoption through Franklin County Probate Court and will assist in providing the necessary documents to the attorney. All finalizations will occur in Franklin County. If finalization needs to occur outside of Franklin County, the adoptive family must contact the Executive Director prior to placement for approval.

Post-Finalization Adoption Services

Adoption by Gentle Care remains available to birth parents, adoptive families, and adoptees to provide counseling, education, or consultation on adoption issues after the Final Decree of Adoption has been issued. In situations where we are unable to provide the appropriate service needed, we will make referrals to agencies or individuals specializing in adoption issues.

Adoption by Gentle Care will continue to facilitate communication between birth parent(s) and adoptive parent(s). Also, local adoptive families will be invited to the Adoption by Gentle Care annual picnic held in central Ohio.

Adoptive Family Request for Information

It is the policy of Adoption by Gentle Care to ensure that all prospective adoptive parents receive information regarding adoption procedures from the agency within 48 hours of inquiry. This information will include, at a minimum, the following:

1. A link to the JFS form 01675 “Ohio Adoption Guide”.
2. A description of Title IV-E federal adoption assistance and state adoption subsidy programs, including eligibility requirements and the application process.
3. How to obtain an application for adoption.
4. A copy of the adoption policy, or summary of the policy, as required by rule 5102:2-48-05 of the Ohio Administrative Code.
5. Information on requirement for criminal records check.
6. The foster care/adoption homestudy assessment process.
7. Information regarding the state adoption assistance loan program.
8. MEPA Complaint Procedures: Policy on Complaints of Alleged Discriminatory Acts (5101:2-33-03).
9. ODJFS “Fact Sheet Adoption”.

Obtaining an Application for Adoption

You may obtain a State of Ohio ODJFS form 01691 “Application for Child Placement” the following ways:

1. Request the application from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services via their website: www.odjfs_state.oh.us/forms.inter.asp
2. Download the application from our website: www.adoptionbygentlecare.org
3. Contact us via web, phone, fax, or e-mail to request a copy of the application to be mailed to you. It is the agencies policy to mail this form, along with other information, within 48 hours of the request.
4. You can pick up an application at the office during regular business hours. No appointment is necessary. Our address is: 370 S. 5th St., Suite 6, Columbus, OH 43215.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the minimum requirements to adopt?

- Ohio's minimum age requirement is 21. We do not have a specified maximum age limit, but expectant mothers requests are considered in the matching process and age may be a factor in their decision.
- If a married couple is considering adoption, it is recommended they be married at least two years at the time of the application.
- Adoption by Gentle Care will be as flexible as possible in working with adoptive families in order to accommodate any special needs of the child.
- Adoptive families will be required to provide basic medical care for the child placed in their care including standard immunizations.
- Adoption by Gentle Care believes that smoking in the home is a threat to the health of the child, and so we are unwilling to place a child in a home where a parent smokes.
- After placement, a six week leave from work must be taken to care for the child. This responsibility may be taken by one parent or, if applicable, shared by two parents.

How does Adoption by Gentle Care differ from other adoption professionals in Ohio?

Each professional in Ohio has a different philosophy. Our philosophy is to be the best adoption agency in Ohio. We have led in this quest since 1985. Many of our programs and services are often mimicked by our competitors and we feel imitation is the greatest form of flattery.

Does Adoption by Gentle Care work with families and children from all races?

Yes.

What is the average waiting time?

We have found that the average wait time ranges from 18 to 24 months. The waiting time may be less depending on your family dynamics and your Adoption Planning Questionnaire responses. We will help you complete your Adoption Planning Questionnaire and that, coupled with your family dynamics, will allow us to point out any areas that will impact your waiting time. This will allow you to have a full understanding of waiting times before you formally join Adoption by Gentle Care.

What factors affect a families waiting time?

Over our years of experience, we have determined there are essentially four factors that can affect your waiting time. They are:

1. The number of expectant mothers an adoption professional reaches compared to the number of adoptive families on their waiting list.
2. The expectant mothers selection of a family. This is, obviously, an impossible variable for any professional to predict.
3. The degree of openness a family has on their Adoption Planning Questionnaire. The more adoption situations with which you are comfortable, the more times we can share your profile with expectant mothers.
4. The quality of the profile. In our research, we have found expectant mothers prefer our profiles because they are professional, attractively designed, and easy to read. Our profiles provide us a distinct advantage over other adoption professionals.

What factors typically cause the waiting time to be longer than average?

Since birth mothers select the adoptive family, we feel it is important to share the feedback we have received from birth mothers. The following situations may add to your waiting time:

- Single parent.
- If a parent is older.
- If families have more than one child living in their home.
- Those who do not provide good photographs and information on their profile.

If you fall into one of the categories above, you will want to talk with our adoption specialists to determine how much the above factors could affect your waiting time. It should be noted that if you fall into one of the above categories, it does not prevent you from joining Gentle Care. We feel obligated, as adoption professionals, to disclose any feedback received from birth mothers.

What are the costs to adopt through Adoption by Gentle Care?

Around 90% of our adoptions range from \$28,000 to \$32,000. There are additional costs that may occur for some of the more challenging cases, such as medical expenses and legal expenses. Please see our Fee Sheet for a listing and explanation of most fees.

Why would I need individual services?

You may need individual adoption services for the following reasons:

- You have found an expectant mother on your own and need a licensed agency to perform adoption services.
- You are working with a professional who does not perform services in Ohio.
- You only need domestic homestudy services.
- You only need some adoption services for various reasons.

What is MEPA?

MEPA stands for Multiethnic Placement Act. It is a federal act that was primarily created to prevent discrimination in adoption. Before this act, some adoption professionals would only place African American children with African American families or Caucasian children with Caucasian families. These professionals refused to look at the best interest of the child and rather looked at a child's race first and foremost. The act was intended to make sure adoption professionals, when deciding to place a child for adoption, do not discriminate against a child or prospective adoptive family based on any form of discrimination including but not limited to race. MEPA does not prevent government programs or charitable organizations from providing subsidies for families wishing to adopt children who may be more difficult to place.

What happens if I am discriminated against?

If you feel an adoption professional in Ohio may have discriminated against you, we have enclosed a form that you can submit to the State of Ohio. They will review the complaint and decide if it is something they should look into.

MEDICAL DEPOSIT

Estimated medical expenses are placed in an escrow account at the time of placement. The medical deposit is in addition to the placement fee. We have provided a general estimate of medical care expenses for normal delivery with few complications. It does not take into account cesarean section costs or additional costs for more difficult medical circumstances.

Once all medical bills are paid with this deposit, we will either process a refund to you or we will invoice you for any amounts due. Upon request, we will provide you with a statement or an itemized bill, detailing as much information as possible, without disclosing identifying information. We ask that all medical care providers give us a bill within 90 days of the baby's birth; however, bills have been known to come in months and even years later.

All of the medical bills received prior to finalization must be paid prior to finalization. Your finalization date may be delayed if your medical deposit has insufficient funds to pay all of the bills.

Adoption by Gentle Care will apply for Medicaid for the baby to cover the days in the hospital prior to placement. We have been fairly successful in obtaining Medicaid coverage for this time, but if Medicaid is denied, the adoptive family will be responsible for all of the child's medical bills.

You will be responsible for any co-pays or deductibles due for the birth mother's medical expenses.

If the adoptive parents find their own birth mother, there is a \$500 fee for Adoption by Gentle Care to apply for Medicaid. The Medical Fees listed below would still apply.

Medical Deposit for Non-Insured Birth Mothers

Birth Mother - Hospital	\$3,500.00
Baby - Hospital (Medicaid Application)	Medicaid
Birth Mother - OBGYN	\$3,500.00
Baby - Pediatrician (Medicaid Application)	Medicaid
TOTAL DEPOSIT REQUIRED	\$7,000.00

There is no Medical Deposit required for expectant mothers that are on Medicaid. However, you still may have some medical expenses, as explained above.

Medical Deposit for Privately Insured Birth Mothers

Birth Mother – Hospital	\$1,500.00
Baby – Hospital (Medicaid Application)	Medicaid
Birth Mother – OBGYN	\$1,000.00
Baby – Pediatrician (Medicaid Application)	Medicaid
TOTAL DEPOSIT REQUIRED	\$2,500.00

FEE SHEET

**All fees are non-refundable and are subject to change.
A 3% convenience fee is added to all credit card payments.**

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	COMMENTS
Application Fee	195	
Activation	10,000	
Paper Profile	Varies	Paid directly to profile company
Video Profile	1,300	Paid directly to Show Pro Media
Match	13,500	
Medical Deposit	Varies	See “ Medical Deposit” for summary of charges
Living Expense Deposit	3,000	
Homestudy Services		
Homestudy	1,500	
Homestudy Update	550	
Annual Review	250	
Homestudy Review	200	
Expedited Homestudy	200	If expected within 30 days
Homestudy Conversion	750	International to Domestic
Homestudy Addendum	125	
Multiple Children/Large Family Assessment	125	
Transfer a Homestudy to AGC	250	
Independent Individual Services		
Domestic Pre-Finalization Supervision	1,000	7 visits within 6 months
Domestic Pre-Finalization Supervisory Visits	175	Per visit
International Supervisory Visits	225	Per visit
Independent Assessor Services	75 Per Hour	Certified Adoption Assessor Services
Mileage	Varies	Federal rate per mile if the Social Worker must travel more than 60 miles round trip
Termination of Birth Father/Husband Rights	2,000	Estimated cost
Birth Mother Counseling	750	Maximum fee per birth parent
Finalization Outside Franklin County	200	If finalization needs to occur outside of Franklin County, the adoptive family must contact the Executive Director for authorization
Weekend/After Hours	200	If surrender, placement, and or hospital discharge occurs after 5:00pm or on a weekend.
Birth Parent Legal	Varies	Attorney fees incurred for legal representation of a birth parent.
Foster Care	58	Estimated cost of foster care per day.
Training Attendance Fee	25	Per person

Pre-Arranged / Identified Program

Adoption by Gentle Care has an experienced team of professionals ready to assist you with your Pre-Arranged or Identified adoption. A Pre-Arranged or Identified adoption is one in which the Adoptive Family and the Expectant Mother select each other and then ask Adoption by Gentle Care to facilitate the adoption process. Both the Adoptive Family and the Expectant Mother reap the benefits of Adoption by Gentle Care's extensive experience with the entire adoption process. We streamline the process to make it cost effective, efficient, and satisfying so you take comfort knowing your adoption is ethically and legally sound. We are concerned with the best interest of all parties and provide the most proficient and most professional services available to ensure a successful adoption.

As always, a birth mother does not pay any fees at all. All of the fees are paid for by the adoptive family. There are two fee structures, one for adoptive parent(s) that live in Ohio, and one for adoptive parent(s) that live in any state other than Ohio.

DESCRIPTION	IN OHIO	OUT OF OHIO
Fees needed before starting the process include the following: Administrative Processing, Homestudy or Homestudy Review fees		
Administrative Processing	\$300	\$800
Homestudy - All families must have or obtain an approved homestudy from their home state. We provide homestudies for Ohio residents only.	\$1,500	N/A
Homestudy Review - For families with an approved homestudy	\$200	\$200
Fees due at time of placement include the following: Placement, Baby Medicaid Application, ICPC, Post-Placement Visit, Out-of-State Finalization, Medical Records, Medical Deposit and Living Expense Deposit		
Placement Fee	\$4,250	\$4,250
Baby Medicaid Application	\$500	\$500
ICPC - This is the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children and required when a family adopts across state lines.	N/A	\$600
Post-Placement Visit	\$1,000	Facilitated by HS Agency
Out-of-State Finalization	N/A	\$200
Medical Records	\$50	\$50
Medical Deposit - Fee based on expectant mother's current situation	Varies	Varies
Living Expense Deposit	\$3,000	\$3,000
TOTAL	\$10,600	\$9,600

Depending on the specific situation, additional fees may apply, including legal fees.

The adoptive family is responsible for all fees. All fees are non-refundable and are subject to change.

A 3% convenience fee is added to all credit card payments.

HOMESTUDY PROCEDURES

Inquiry Process

Adoption by Gentle Care shall respond to adoption inquiries within 48 business hours and shall provide the following information:

1. A link to the JFS form 01675 “Ohio Adoption Guide”.
2. A description of Title IV-E federal adoption assistance and state adoption subsidy programs, including eligibility requirements and the application process.
3. How to obtain an application for adoption.
4. A copy of the adoption policy, or summary of the policy, as required by rule 5102:2-48-05 of the Ohio Administrative Code.
5. Information on requirement for criminal records check.
6. The foster care/adoption homestudy assessment process.
7. Information regarding the state adoption assistance loan program.
8. MEPA Complaint Procedures: Policy on Complaints of Alleged Discriminatory Acts (5101:2-33-03).
9. ODJFS “Fact Sheet Adoption”.

Out of State Inquires

- If the inquirer resides out of state and has an approved homestudy, Adoption by Gentle Care will provide the inquirer a link to the JFS form 1675 Ohio Adoption Guide.
- If the family has identified a child they are interested in, Adoption by Gentle Care will provide to the family the telephone number to the custodial agency.
- If the inquirer resides out of state and does not have an approved homestudy, Adoption by Gentle Care will provide the inquirer a link to the JFS form 1675 Ohio Adoption Guide. Adoption by Gentle Care will also inform the inquirer that they will need a completed and approved homestudy from their state of residence in order to adopt an Ohio waiting child.

Application Process

Adoption by Gentle Care will process all applicants who submit a completed ODJFS form 1691. See the agency Application Process narrative and form, plus the agency policy on “Joining Foster Care/Adoption Application and Home Study Assessment/Approval Policy” for additional information.

Adoption by Gentle Care offers assistance in completing the application and securing all required documents and information.

Adoption by Gentle Care can terminate the homestudy process if all required documentation is not submitted within one year of the receipt of the initial or revised ODJFS form 1691.

Homestudy Process

Once the applicant(s) has completed and returned the ODJFS form 1691 to the agency, the homestudy process will commence within 30 days of the date the agency receives the ODJFS form 1691 "Application for Child Placement." The assessment will be completed within 180 days of the date it is started. If the agency fails to commence an assessment within 30 days or complete the assessment within 180 days, Adoption by Gentle Care will document the reason(s) why it was unable to meet one or both of these requirements in the adoptive applicant's record. Commencement of a homestudy means, at a minimum, scheduling an appointment to interview the applicant(s) or assuring that the applicant(s) has been informed of the necessary materials required for the assessor to complete the homestudy.

The homestudy is a cooperative effort between Adoption by Gentle Care and the applicant(s) to assess the applicant's ability to parent a child successfully. (For details about the process see the Homestudy Procedure Outline). The homestudy consists of two meetings which are held in the applicant's home. Once all documents have been received and requirements met, the homestudy process will be complete and the applicant(s) will be notified by letter regarding final approval. The homestudy is valid in Ohio for two years from approval. Updates to the homestudy must be completed every two years.

Adoption by Gentle Care's policy is to require the adoptive family's attendance and participation at the mandatory Training and Education seminar, as this is an important and integral part of the overall homestudy assessment and approval process. Adoption by Gentle Care will, within 30 days of receipt of the adoptive applicant(s) ODJFS form 1691 "Application for Child Placement," notify the applicant(s) of the next available date for the Training and Education seminar, and invite them to attend this session.

Adoption by Gentle Care works with adoptive families in every county and community across Ohio. To complete the homestudy process, the agency utilizes a number of qualified Licensed Social Workers (all of whom are state certified Adoption Assessors), who themselves are located in various communities throughout Ohio. Agency Social Workers go directly to the home of each adoptive applicant, wherever the applicant may reside in the state, to personally meet with them to complete the homestudy. Each Social Worker uses the same procedures when conducting the homestudy, so that adoptive families are assured of receiving the same thorough homestudy process, no matter where they may reside in Ohio.

Completion of the homestudy and written notification to the applicant of the approval or denial will be provided within 180 days of the date when the completed application was submitted which initiated a homestudy for any applicant seeking a special needs child.

Completion of the homestudy and written notification to the applicant of the approval or denial will be provided within 12 months of the date the completed application was submitted if not seeking a special needs child.

The following is some information which is required for a homestudy:

1. As part of the homestudy interviews, all members of the household should be interviewed face to face if over the age of 4 years. The interview with all household members can be a joint interview or separate interviews.
2. JFS form 01653 Medical Statements, and the Fire Inspection Report JFS form 01200, must be dated within one year from the date of the homestudy approval.
3. A Safety Audit – this must be dated within 6-months from the date of the homestudy approval.
4. If applicable, a well water test is required.
5. References – ODJFS requires that all applicants and adult household members shall provide the name of the agency or organization they have applied to or had a homestudy completed for foster care or adoption or any organization they have worked with in providing care and supervision of children. ODJFS requires 3 references; however, Adoption by Gentle Care requires 4 non-relative references. Each reference must be personally contacted, as well as any agency which previously did a homestudy for the adoptive family or adult household members. These contacts must be documented in the narrative section of the homestudy. A written release must be signed by the adoptive applicants or adult household members before any agency or person is contacted.
6. All adult children of the applicant(s) must be contact for a reference.
7. Documentation that the residence satisfactorily meets all safety standards.
8. Adoption by Gentle Care requires proof of current marital status and proof of Ohio residence for five years for all applicants and all adult household members.
9. Adoption by Gentle Care requires applicants to submit ODJFS form 1681, financial statement, regarding the applicant's income, assets, and financial responsibilities.
10. Adoption by Gentle Care requires applicants to submit a credit report dated within 90 days of the homestudy approval.
11. Child abuse clearances are required on all adult household members.
12. State of Ohio BCI and FBI criminal background checks are required on all adult household members prior to an approved homestudy.
13. Applicants must submit license and vaccination records for each pet.
14. Updates and amendments – The homestudy must be updated and amended until the adoption is finalized. In other words, if the homestudy expires between placement and finalization, it will need to be updated. If an amendment or update would have been needed if there had not been a placement, it will now also be needed between placement and finalization.

HOMESTUDY PROCEDURE OUTLINE

Referral to Agency

- Date applied to agency
- Reaction to application process

Number, Place, and Dates of Interviews

- Type of child desired
 1. Age
 2. Acceptable handicaps
 3. Nationality
 4. Religion
 5. Reasons for preferences

Motive of Applicants

- A. Reasons for wanting to adopt
- B. Attitude concerning adoption and reaction to sharing this in interview

Background

- A. Applicant #1
 1. Identifying data
 2. Description
 3. Personality
 4. Health
 5. Parents and Siblings
 6. Childhood and adolescent experiences
 7. Adult relationships
 8. Education
 9. Activities, interests, and hobbies
 10. Employment
- B. Applicant #2 (Same as Applicant #1)

Courtship and Marriage

Descriptions and Adjustment of Other Children in the Home

Family's Social Network

- A. Friendships
- B. Social activities
- C. Religion

Readiness for Adoption

- A. Resolution of infertility, of validity of decision not to have a biological child
- B. Parenting an adopted child

Finances

Description of Home

Evaluation

- A. Emotional maturity and stability/mental health
- B. Capacity to give and receive affection
- C. Ability to provide for a child
 1. Financial
 2. Health
 3. Emotional
 4. Educational
 5. Parenting skills
 6. Social support for child
 7. Physical environment
- D. Stability of marriage

Paperwork Requirements

- A. ODJFS application (JFS form 1691)
- B. Income tax return
- C. Financial statement (JFS form 1681)
- D. Credit Report
- E. Letters from employers
- F. References
- G. Criminal record check (BCI/FBI)
- H. Local criminal record check
- I. Abstract of traffic record from BMV
- J. Adoption by Gentle Care medical release
- K. Medical statement (JFS form 1653)
- L. Health insurance information
- M. Letter from insurance company
- N. Marriage certificate/divorce decree
- O. Letter from child care class
- P. Infant CPR certification
- Q. Profile
- R. Program acceptance acknowledgement
- S. Certification of residency
- T. Emergency contact numbers
- U. Fire inspection
- V. Pet Vaccinations/Records
- W. JFS 1673 (pages 1-4)
- X. JFS 1673-A (pages 1-5)
- Y. Proof of Auto Insurance

Recommendations

An adoptive applicant may already have an approved homestudy from another agency, whether through an Ohio agency or out of state agency. If so, this homestudy will be reviewed by Adoption by Gentle Care to ensure that all Ohio adoption regulations and requirements are met. Once reviewed and approved by Adoption by Gentle Care, the homestudy will be treated in exactly the same manner as if the agency itself had completed it and will be used as an integral part of matching the adoptive family with the prospective birth parent(s). Specifically, Adoption by Gentle Care will ensure that a homestudy from another agency, whether in state or out-of-state, is in full compliance with all Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) regulations.

Notification of Homestudy Update

Not less than 90 days or more than 120 days prior to the expiration of a homestudy or a 2-year update, the adoptive family will be notified on the JFS form 1331 “Notice of Expiration and Reapplication for a Foster Home Certification or Adoption Home Study Update/Amendment”. If the adoptive family fails to apply for renewal within 30 days of the date of the notification letter, the homestudy will lapse upon the expiration date, the record shall be closed and the applicant’s must reapply through the initial homestudy process.

Homestudy Update Procedures

Adoption by Gentle Care shall amend the adoptive homestudy if:

- Any of the following have occurred since the last homestudy approval date: change in marital status of the adoptive applicant, change in health status of the adoptive applicant, finalization of the adoption of a child, birth of a child, death of a household member, criminal conviction of an adoptive applicant, change in number of adult household members, or the adoptive applicant has moved.
- The adoptive applicant or adoptive home has also been certified as a family foster home. The agency shall follow recertification procedures outlined in the rule 5101:2-5-24 of the Administrative Code.

When updating the adoptive homestudy report the assessor shall:

- Conduct a face-to-face interview with the adoptive applicant, which shall take place in the home of the applicant.
- Assess any family changes since approval of the adoptive homestudy, which may affect the ability of the applicant to successfully parent an adoptive child.
- Collect supporting documentation, which shall include, but not be limited to:
 - Current child abuse check
 - Current credit report
 - One reference
 - Pet vaccination and license records

- Complete ODJFS form 1385 which addresses all information obtained during interviews and review of documentation provided by the applicant. The completed form shall be attached to the original homestudy.
- The agency will attach the following documents to the 1385 update form:
 - The most recent medical statement (1653). If the agency decides it is necessary, a new medical statement (1653) can be required. It is not mandatory.
 - One reference from a professional or a personal reference.
 - Any additional reports the agency decides are necessary, such as a physical, psychiatric, or psychological exam.
 - If the agency decides it is necessary, a new fire inspection report. It is not mandatory.
 - A new safety audit, form 1348, if 6 months before the homestudy approval.
 - Well water tests may also need to be updated.
 - If there have been substantial changes in the adoptive parent(s) financial circumstances, a new 1681 financial statement shall be completed.
 - If the agency decides it necessary a credit report and pet vaccination records.
- The update shall include a summary report regarding the result of the Ohio child abuse registry search.
- The only requirements the state insists on are one reference and a new child abuse check. Adoption by Gentle Care requires a BCI and FBI check as well. State law requires a BCI and FBI check every 4 years. The agency shall require a BCI and FBI be obtained within 60 days of the effective date if the records are more than 4 years old. A new child abuse registry check must be obtained on the adoptive applicant(s) and every adult member of the household for all updates.

Note: Any applicant who is denied the opportunity to continue to work with Adoption by Gentle Care have the right to request in writing a review of the decision by Adoption by Gentle Care not to work with them.

Agency Notification

You must notify Adoption by Gentle Care if any of the following changes occur in your household, and within the timelines indicated. If these ODJFS rules are not followed accurately, your homestudy could lapse or become invalid.

An approved adoptive parent must notify the recommending agency within ONE HOUR if any of the following circumstances occur involving the adoptive child whose adoption is not finalized.

- A serious illness or injury involving medical treatment for the child.
- Death of the adoptive child.

- Unauthorized absence of the adoptive child from the home.
- Removal of the adoptive child from the home by any person or agency, other than the placing agency, or attempts at such removal.

An adoptive parent must notify the recommending agency within 24 HOURS or the next working day if any of the following occur prior to the finalization of the child. This also includes the time between the approval date and the actual placement of the child in the home.

- A change in the marital status of an adoptive parent.
- Any serious illness or death of an adopted parent or household member.
- The finalization of an adoptive child placed by a different agency.
- A change in the number of household members through birth or kinship who is under 18.
- A change in the number of adults residing with the approved adoptive parent (not including an existing household member reaching the age of 18).
- A criminal charge or conviction of any approved adoptive parent or other adult household member.
- A significant change in financial status or income, which would include the loss of a job or having a new job paying significantly less or more than the job they had at the time of the homestudy.
- Change of address or relocation.

New child household members residing with the adoptive parent shall have a JFS form 1653 medical statement completed within 60 days of becoming a household member.

If an infant is born to an adoptive parent, the agency should document that the adoptive parent and prenatal care and is receiving periodic medical exams from a physician, the mother must have a JFS form 1653 medical statement completed within 90 days of the date the infant became a household member.

Household members turning 18 shall have BCI and FBI checks initiated within 10 working days of the date they turn 18.

New adult members of the household residing with the approved adoptive parent shall have a JFS form 1653 medical form completed within 60 days of becoming a household member

Upon notification of the approved adoptive parent moving to a new residence, a safety audit shall be completed within 10 working days of the notification.

A fire safety inspection must be conducted within 90 days of the change of address.

Please keep this list so you can refer to it and the timelines, if any above circumstances should change in your home. Again, failure to notify the agency, within the listed time frames, could cause your homestudy to lapse or become invalid, thus delaying placement or finalization.

Please contact the Social Worker who completes your homestudy if any of these changes occur so she can add an addendum to your homestudy as soon as possible. If you have any questions regarding the rules, you can also contact the Social Worker who completes your homestudy.

Sharing and Transferring Adoptive Homestudies

The following definitions apply for the purpose of this rule:

“Sharing an adoptive homestudy” – This means forwarding an approved homestudy to an agency for consideration of potential adoptive matches.

“Transferring an adoptive homestudy” – This means releasing the approved homestudy and all related materials to another agency. Upon acceptance of the receiving agency and the execution of the JFS form 1334 “Recommendation for Transfer or a Foster or Adoptive Home,” the sending agency is relieved of all the responsibilities related to the approved adoptive family.

If the adoptive family has signed an “Authorization for Release of Information” the agency shall make the homestudy available for sharing or transferring.

The agency shall release the homestudy and related materials, including the JFS form 1530 “Multiple Children/Large Family Assessment” within 15 days after the request was made. A reasonable charge is allowed.

The receiving agency shall not approve the transfer request until the following information is received and approved by the agency.

- Three new personal references, who are not related to the prospective adoptive parent and do not live with the prospective adoptive parent.
- A new criminal record is obtained reviewed and approved by the assessor for all persons eligible for a criminal check residing in the home.
- A new safety audit is conducted to verify the home meets all current safety standards.
- Documentation of the assessor’s decision to recommend approval of the transfer request. The prospective adoptive parent and the sending agency are sent a written notice within 5 working day of the decision.
- References on applicants of adult children not living in the house.

If an incomplete homestudy is received from an agency, the receiving agency shall notify the sending agency in writing within 10 days from the date of the receipt of the incomplete home study. The written notification shall indicate the information needed for the homestudy to be considered complete. The sending agency should respond within 15 days from the receipt of the written notification form the receiving agency.

Upon acceptance of the transfer of an adoptive homestudy, the JFS form 1334 shall be completed and signed by both the sending and receiving agencies.

Joint Foster Care/Adoption Application and Homestudy Assessment Process

All applicants have a right to a Joint Foster Care/Adoption Homestudy; however, Adoption by Gentle Care does not offer a joint study. Only adoption services, not foster services, are provided. Adoption by Gentle Care shall refer any family who wants a joint study to an agency who provides joint studies.

Adoption Application Process:

Applicants are processed from all those who submit the JFS form 1691 “Application for Child Placement.” Adoption by Gentle Care encourages and welcomes a diverse mix of applicants so that the expectant mothers we work with will have families’ representative of the broader community from which to choose. Adoption by Gentle Care maintains a list of families who are of various ages, religions, geographical locations and professions. Expectant mothers working with Adoption by Gentle Care, may select the adoptive family themselves. All applicants, regardless of the agency program they have applied for, go through the same training and education process.

All applicants go through the exact same process when asked to indicate what race they are open to on their application. At the end of the homestudy, the Social Worker reviews JFS form 1691, “Application for Child Placement,” (page 4, paragraph entitled “Type of Child Will Consider”) with the applicant, plus JFS form 1673A, “Child Characteristics Checklist for Foster Care and/or Adoption.” All applicants are treated the same in this process.

Homestudy Assessment/Approval Process:

Adoption by Gentle Care offers Training and Education meetings approximately 4 times a year. This is an orientation meeting for adoptive applicants to learn about the agency, the adoption process, meet the staff, and have their questions answered. They also hear a birth parent speak who has placed a child through Adoption by Gentle Care. Applicants are invited to this meeting after being informed their application has been accepted and they are on the Adoption by Gentle Care waiting list for training. They are generally invited to attend in the chronological order applications are received. At the Training and Education seminar, they are asked to complete required paperwork and return it to their assigned social worker. At that time, the homestudy meetings are scheduled. The adoptive applicant is approved as soon as the homestudy meetings are complete and they have completed and submitted all required paperwork. The adoptive applicant completes their paperwork at their own pace.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Resources to Help Defray Adoption Costs

- Adoptive parents are sometimes eligible for a loan or a grant to offset some of their adoption costs. Such programs have specific requirements for types of adoption and may give preference to families with the greatest financial need or those with other specific factors. More detailed information may be found by checking the resources listed below.
 - Child Welfare Information Gateway offers factsheets that pertain to adoption costs:
 - www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_benefi.cfm
 - National Adoption Foundation offers adoption grants, adoption loans, and adoption insurance:
 - www.nafadopt.org
 - 100 Mill Plain Road
 - Danbury, Connecticut 06811
 - 1-800-448-7061
 - National Endowment for Financial Education offers an online booklet on adoption costs: “How to Make Adoption an Affordable Option”
 - www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/family/adoption
 - North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) lists State adoption subsidy profiles: www.nacac.org/adoptionssubsidy/stateprofiles.html
 - NACAC also provides information on tax credits for special needs adoption: www.nacac.org/postadopt/taxcredit.html
 - www.helpusadopt.org
 - www.adoptionnetwork.com
- You may be able to borrow against your retirement funds or life insurance policies.
- The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) has partnered with Fifth Third Bank to provide low interest loans to prospective adoptive parents. If you live in the State of Ohio, please contact your local Fifth Third Bank to inquire about additional information.
- Employers often provide for adoptions in their benefits packages. There may be a wide range of benefits for families that adopt, such as paid or unpaid leave when a child arrives in the home, reimbursement of some portion of adoption expenses, and assistance with adoption services. For more information on this topic, please visit the following websites: www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_benefi.cfm and www.adoptionbenefits.com
- Some insurance policies will cover the birth mother medical expenses. This practice is becoming more common. Consult your provider to see if this coverage is provided.
- Ask your family if they could provide a loan or perhaps even a monetary gift to help with your adoption expenses.
- Consider bank loans to cover the costs of your adoption.
- Churches are a good source of both financial and emotional support.

Federal Tax Credits, Tax Exclusion, and Refundable Credits

Prospective adoptive parents may qualify for an adoption tax credit (an amount subtracted from their tax liability). They may also be able to exclude from their income some amounts paid to them or for them by their employer under a qualified adoption assistance program. Find information about tax credits and tax exclusion for adoption at the IRS website:

www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc607.html

The IRS offers frequently asked questions and answers about adoption taxes credits, exclusions, and refundable credits for adoption on its website:

www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=231663,00.html

Parents also should find out about the IRS adoption taxpayer identification number, which is used for temporary identification when adopting taxpayers do not have the child's Social Security number.

www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96452,00.html

Some of this information was provided courtesy of:

Child Welfare Information Gateway - www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/s_cost/s_cost.cfm

Title IV-E Adoption Subsidy

Title IV-E Federal Adoption Subsidy program, provides federal financial support for children placed for adoption who meet the eligibility criteria. In order for a child to be eligible for Title IV-E Adoption Assistance, a PCSA must determine and document that:

1. The child meets special needs status
2. At the time the child came into custody of the PCSA or private child placement agency and at the time adoption proceeding are initiated, the child would have been eligible for Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) or the child is determined eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits by the Social Security Administration prior to the finalization of adoption

In addition to a monthly monetary payment, these children are eligible for medical coverage under Medicaid and may be eligible to receive assistance and services under the federal Title XX program. Applications for Title IV-E subsidy must be completed by the adoptive family

prior to adoption finalization. The amount of adoption assistance is determined by negotiation and mutual agreement between the adoptive parent(s) and the PCSA. For more information, please contact your county's PCSA.

State Adoption Maintenance Subsidy Program

The State Adoption Maintenance Subsidy Program is a financial program which provides monthly maintenance subsidy payments to adoptive families adopting children who meet the special needs criteria that is defined in the Ohio Administrative Code rules and who are not eligible for Title IV-E adoption assistance. The PCSA in your county is responsible for administering and determining the eligibility for the State Adoption Subsidy Program. Applications must be completed by the adoptive family prior to finalization. The family's income is taken into consideration when determining eligibility for the State maintenance Subsidy. The child may also be eligible for medical coverage under Medicaid. Contact your adoption caseworker to learn more about obtaining the State Adoption Subsidy Program.

Non-Recurring Adoption Expense Subsidy

The Non-Recurring Adoption Expense is designed to promote the adoption of special needs children by providing eligible families the opportunity for reimbursement of certain costs related to adopting a child with special needs. Non-recurring adoption expenses are those one-time expenses directly related to the legal adoption of a child with special needs. The program provides reimbursement, up to a certain amount, for expenses such as supervision of placements prior to the adoption, attorney's fees, court cost, transportation costs, and the reasonable and necessary adoption fees. The adoptive family's income is not taken into consideration in determining whether non-recurring expenses should be paid. Applications and agreements for the Non-Recurring Adoption Expense Subsidy must be completed by the adoptive family prior to adoption finalization.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

The first step required for any person who wishes to adopt a child in Ohio is to complete JFS form 01691 “Application for Child Placement”. There is a “fill-in” form available at: http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/results1.asp?stype=FORM_NUM&searchPar=JFS%2001691 or you can print a copy to write in the information. (Please note, if you use the online fill-in form, page 5 of the application asks for 3 non-relative references; however, we require 4 non-relative references).

Please keep in mind that this application is your official request to work with Adoption by Gentle Care. All information must be carefully and completely completed before we can approve the application. Every question must be answered and all supporting documentation must be provided before we can approve your application. If your application is not complete, it will be returned to you along with an explanation.

The application is designed for those who wish to become either adoptive parents or foster parents. For this reason, adoptive parents may find some of the questions confusing. To follow are additional instructions/comments on some of the frequent concerns.

Page 1 – Begin by filling in the form starting at “Applicant #1 Name”

Page 2 - **Sleeping Arrangements** – Please complete for each bedroom.

Note – the column ”Bedroom” should indicate Master Bedroom, Kids Bedroom 1, Kids Bedroom 2, Guest Bedroom 1, etc.

Directions to home from agency - You can attach a MapQuest and indicate “see attached”. Our address at the agency is:

370 S. Fifth St., Suite 2, Columbus, OH 43215.

Children placed in the home would attend the following schools –

Even if you plan to home school, please complete this section using the school your child would normally be assigned too.

Page 3 - **Does any household member have a criminal history?** – Please include ANY police involvement other than minor traffic violations like speeding tickets. This includes ALL offenses related to drugs and alcohol. Examples are: OVI, DUI, and Public Intoxication. If you are unsure, please list it anyway.

Are there any pets in the home?

Please be sure to list/describe each and every pet.

Residential History

Please be sure to list addresses for the last 10 years.

Page 4 - **Employment History**

Please be sure to list employers for the last 10 years. If you do not have an employer or was a student, please be sure to indicate status for last 10 years.

Marriage/Relationship History - OK to indicate N/A if not applicable.

Type of Child Will Consider

Age – Since we work with newborns up to 6-months old, indicate 0-2 Will Consider, and indicate Will Not Consider on the remaining ages.

Sex – Adoption by Gentle Care’s policy is that adoptive families may not request a specific gender. We believe that families should be equally open to adopting an infant of either gender.

Page 5 – **References** - Adoption by Gentle Care requires 4 non-relative references. We would appreciate exactly 4 references. If you provide more than that, we must check each one.

Employer Reference – Please complete this section.

Please double check all of this information and be certain that you have completed each section. No section can be left blank. If you have any questions or need help or clarification to complete your application, please give us a call during regular office hours.

We will send you a letter letting you know when we received your application. If your application is not complete, or if you are missing any documentation, it will be returned to you along with an explanation.

We look forward to working with you and helping you to successfully complete the adoption process.

Sincerely,

The Staff of Adoption by Gentle Care



ADOPTION BY GENTLE CARE

Serving as a partner in creating and sustaining nurturing families

Application Cover Letter

Thank you for your interest in Adoption by Gentle Care. Please return your completed Application for Child Placement, this signed cover letter, and your non-refundable \$195 application fee to:

Adoption by Gentle Care
370 South Fifth Street
Suite #6
Columbus, OH 43215

Please be aware that **ALL** information must be completed in its entirety or we will return your application to you. We are also required to have the ORIGINAL application on file; therefore, we are unable to accept e-mail or fax applications.

You will receive an acknowledgment of your application within 5 days of receipt at our office. This letter will initiate the adoption/homestudy process.

Applicant #1

Date

Email

Best Contact Number

Applicant #2

Date

Email

Best Contact Number

How did you hear about Adoption by Gentle Care?		
_____ Google	_____ Website	_____ Facebook
_____ Family Member/Friend <i>(Please list name)</i> _____		
_____ Other: _____		

ODJFS FORM 01691
APPLICATION FOR CHILD PLACEMENT

<http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/file.asp?id=535&type=application/pdf>

POLICY ON COMPLAINTS OF ALLEGED DISCRIMINATORY ACTS (5101:2-33-03)

Adoption by Gentle Care will provide a written notice of the procedure for any complaints of discrimination in the foster care or adoption process that involve race, color, or national origin (RCNO) to all individuals inquiring about or applying to be a foster caregiver or adoptive parent. The written notice of the procedure for complaints will be provided within 7 days of the individual's first contact with the agency. The JFS form 02333 "Discrimination Complaint Form" will be used to file a complaint.

Any individual may file a complaint alleging a discriminatory act, policy or practice in the foster care or adoption process of the agency.

Any person, including but not limited to, an employee or former employee of the agency or a member of a family which has sought to become a foster caregiver or adoptive parent may also file a complaint alleging that he or she was intimidated, threatened, coerced, discriminated against or otherwise retaliated against in some way by the agency because he or she has made a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing in connection with an allegation that the agency engaged in discriminatory acts, policies, or practices as it applies in the foster care or adoption process.

The individual filing a complaint shall use the above noted JFS 02333 "Discrimination Complaint Form". The complaint shall be filed within two years from the date of the occurrence of the alleged discriminatory act: or two years from the date of the complainant learned or should have known of a discriminatory act, policy or practice. The complaint may be filed with any Public Child Services Agency, Private Child Placing Agency (e.g. Adoption by Gentle Care), Private Non-custodial Agency or the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

When any complaint alleging discrimination in the foster care or adoption process is received by:

1. Adoption by Gentle Care, the agency will forward the complaint to ODJFS within three working days of date of receipt of the complaint.
2. ODJFS will notify Adoption by Gentle Care that it is the subject of the complaint within three working days of the receipt of the complaint.

ODJFS will conduct an investigation of the complaint. Adoption by Gentle Care will not initiate, conduct, or run concurrent investigations surrounding the complaint or take any further action regarding the complainant or the subject of the complaint until the issuance of the final investigation report by ODJFS, unless approved by ODJFS.

Adoption by Gentle Care will cooperate fully with ODJFS during the course of the investigation and will submit any information requested by ODJFS not later than fourteen days from the date of the request unless otherwise agreed upon.

No person who has filed a complaint alleging a discriminatory act, policy or practice in the foster care or adoption process of Adoption by Gentle Care or who has testified, assisted or participated in any manner in the investigation of a complaint shall be intimidated, threatened, coerced, or retaliated against by any employee or contractor of this agency.

Adoption by Gentle Care will provide a written notice of the procedures for any complaints of discrimination in the foster care or adoption process within thirty days of the effective date to all foster caregivers certified or in the process of certification and to all individuals who have an approved adoptive homestudy or who are participating in the adoptive homestudy process on the effective date of this rule.

See the attached copy of the JFS 01611, “Non-Discrimination Requirements for Foster Care and Adoptive Placements”, which is considered to be an integral part of this policy.

ODJFS FORM 01611
NON-DISCRIMINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR
FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTIVE PLACEMENTS

<http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/file.asp?id=455&type=application/pdf>

ODJFS FORM 02333
DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT

<http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/file.asp?id=810&type=application/pdf>

ODJFS

FACT SHEET ADOPTION

<http://jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/Adoption.pdf>

AGC
COMPREHENSIVE ADOPTION FAMILY
RECRUITMENT PLAN
COMPLETED APRIL 30, 2014

[S DRIVE>POLICIES>RECRUITMENT PLAN 2014](#)

OHIO ADOPTION GUIDE
A Handbook for Prospective Adoptive Families
ODJFS FORM 01675

Adoption by Gentle Care provides prospective adoptive families with a link to the Ohio Adoption Guide:

<http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/file.asp?id=521&type=application/pdf>