



HM Passport  
Office

General Register Office

## HOW TO APPLY FOR BIRTH CERTIFICATE INFORMATION BEFORE ADOPTION

The Adopted Children Register and Adoption Contact Register Regulations 2005 provide for the General Register Office to Administer the service.

In order to apply for birth certificate information before adoption you must be 18 years or over and have been adopted in England or Wales. **Only the adopted person can apply for this information.**

If you already know your birth information you may be able to apply for your original birth certificate. Please contact this office for advice.

A record of your birth or adoption must be held by the Registrar General in order to go through this process.

There is no charge for this service.

### **1. If you were adopted on or before 12 November 1975**

The law requires you to receive your information from an approved adoption advisor. This can be your local authority social services department (the area you pay your council tax to), at a registered adoption support agency or voluntary agency. They will provide support for you during the process. The General Register Office at Southport offers a limited number of appointments but is unable to share additional information as no adoption files are held here.

### **2. Adoption Advisors**

For adoptions granted before 12 November 1975 birth parents and adoptive parents believed that an adopted person would never be given the information which would enable them to trace their birth family.

When the law changed in 1975 it was considered that birth details would only be given to an adopted person by an adoption advisor. This is an important part of the Birth Certificate Information Before Adoption process. An adoption advisor can offer support and guidance regarding the effects of both obtaining birth certificate information and tracing relatives may have on you, your adoptive family and your birth relatives.

### **3. What information will the adoption advisor give me?**

You will be given information about your birth name, birth parent(s) name(s) and your district of birth. You can then, if you wish, apply for a copy of your original birth registration. **If you already have this information you may bypass this office and contact the court that dealt with your adoption to see if they hold the name of the agency which placed you for adoption.**

### **4. Adoption Files (The General Register Office does not hold any adoption files)**

Once you have received the name of the organisation involved in your adoption you or your adoption advisor will be able to contact them to see if your file is still available. If so, you may be allowed to see some of the information that the file contains.

It is not possible to know what information adoption files contain as each case is different. There may be information relating to your birth family and the details surrounding your adoption, however there may also be very few details.

If your adoption file still exists it will be held by the local authority or adoption agency or its successor that arranged your adoption. Information may also be held by the court where the adoption order was made.

**5. If you were adopted on or after 12 November 1975 but before 30 December 2005**

If you were adopted through a court in England or Wales and are aged 18 years or over the law allows you to have your original birth certificate information before adoption without the requirement to see an adoption advisor. These details will enable you to apply to purchase a copy of your original birth certificate should you wish to do so.

You have a choice of having your birth certificate information sent direct to you or to an adoption advisor. If you wish to have the information sent direct to you we will have to see proof of your current address eg an original bank statement or utility bill showing your current contact details.

**5a. If you choose to see an adoption advisor see Adoption Advisors - paragraph 2 above**

**5b. If you do not wish to see an adoption advisor** - The information relating to your birth certificate will be sent directly to you.

**6. If you live outside the UK and were adopted on or before 12 November 1975**

If you were adopted in England and Wales and now live outside the UK you can apply for your birth certificate information before adoption. However, the same process will apply with regard to obtaining the information through an adoption advisor.

This office holds a list of approved post adoption advisors for some countries. On receipt of your application we can advise of an adoption adviser near to you.

**7. If you were adopted on or after 30 December 2005**

Please contact this office for advice.

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**Contact information is below:**

**Adoptions Section Room C202  
General Register Office  
Smedley Hydro  
Trafalgar Road  
Southport  
Merseyside  
PR8 2HH**

Telephone: **0300 123 1837**  
Text Relay: **18001 0300 123 1837**  
Email: **adoptions@gro.gov.uk** Website:  
**www.gov.uk/adoption-records**

If your birth or adoption took place in Scotland, Northern Ireland or Eire you may also wish to contact the organisations below for advice:

Birth Link, Family Care, 21 Castle Street, Edinburgh, EH2 3DN  
Tel: 0131 225 6441 Fax: 0131 225 6478 mail@birthlink.org.uk www.birthlink.org.uk

Northern Ireland General Register Office, Oxford House, 49/55 Chichester Street, Belfast BT1 4HL  
Tel: :0300 200 7890 gro\_nisra@dfpni.gov.uk www.nidirect.gov.uk

General Register Office, Government Offices, Convent Road, Roscommon, Eire  
Tel: +353 (0) 90 6632900 www.groireland.ie/