

Adoption and Foster Care Summary Information

Definitions: OOHC - Out-of-Home Care; **C&P** – Care and Protection; **CS** –NSW Community Services; **Adoption Plan** – A legal agreement about contact post adoption; (For further details refer to the FAQs)

Adoption/Out-of-Home Care placement type	<u>Local adoption</u>	<u>Intercountry Adoption</u>	<u>OOHC Adoption</u>	<u>Long term foster care</u> (Final Children’s Court order)	<u>Short term foster care</u> (Interim Children’s Court order)
Length of placement / permanency and stability	Placement is permanent, legal status is lifelong and irreversible	Placement is permanent, legal status is lifelong and irreversible	After the adoption order replaces the Children Court C&P order, placement is permanent and legal status is lifelong and irreversible.	Placement to 18 or older. An order may be varied and rescinded	Varies – not assumed to be long term
Legal status	NSW Supreme Court adoption order	NSW Supreme Court adoption order or an order made in child’s country of origin	NSW Supreme Court adoption order	Final Care Order with Parental Responsibility to the Minister until 18 years, with aspects delegated - eg to CS/ Carers/ Relatives	Interim care of Minister
Eligibility criteria	Standard criteria (according to adoption legislation) apply for the assessment of applicants. In addition some agencies may have upper age restrictions and other policies regarding eligibility	Standard criteria for the assessment of applicants apply; each country will also have their own eligibility criteria	Standard criteria for the assessment of applicants apply. Carers must demonstrate that the child has established a stable relationship with them and that adoption will promote the child’s welfare and is in the child’s best interests.	OOHC standards apply to assessment and screening of applicants, focussed on capacity to care and to support a child’s identity. Some age restrictions apply.	OOHC standards apply to assessment and screening of applicants, focussed on capacity to care and to support a child’s identity
Training, assessment and approval process	Training required. Additional for older child and special needs adoption. Assessment is done over 4 – 6 months	Training required. Additional for older child Assessment is done over 4 – 6 months	Mandatory training and assessment/screening for all authorised foster carers. Additional training and assessment is required at the time adoption is considered for child in care.	Mandatory training and assessment/screening for all authorised foster carers. Training / assessment process may take 6 – 9 months from enquiry to carer approval	Mandatory training and assessment/screening for all authorised foster carers. Training / assessment can take 6 – 9 months from enquiry to carer approval.
Reviews / accountability and reporting to agency	3 home visits by agency at a minimum between placement and order. Each agency offers post adoption services. Referral for support to specialist agencies	3 home visits by agency at a minimum between placement and order (or post order for those adoptions finalised in country of origin. Each agency offers post adoption services. Referral for support to specialist agencies	Prior to adoption order, need to comply with OOHC standards for placement, including regular home visits (frequency will depend on need/resources – usually at least monthly) and annual case plan reviews by agency. Some agencies offer post adoption support in special circumstances. Referral for support to specialist agencies is available.	Carers need to comply with OOHC standards for placement, including regular home visits (frequency will depend on need/resources – usually at least monthly) and annual placement and case plan reviews by agency.	Carers need to comply with OOHC standards for placement, including regular home visits (frequency will depend on need/resources – usually at least monthly) and case plan reviews by agency.
Waiting time	Data on Adoption Orders made in NSW (July 11-June 12): Community Services (7); Catholic Care (4); Anglicare (2). Approval is valid for 4 years. Eligible couples may have applications reassessed for further approval after this time. Waiting time is dependent on approval status, needs of child and wishes of birth parent/s. As families are matched to the needs of the child/ren, there is no guarantee of placement or indication of waiting times	Data on Intercountry Adoption: There were 46 Orders made in NSW (July 11-June 12). Approval is valid for 4 years. Waiting time is dependent on time frames nominated by each country.	Waiting time for foster placement dependent on approval status and age/needs of the child /young person. From time of placement an adoption order typically takes 2 or more years. The time to achieve an adoption order varies depending on the age of the child and complexities of each case.	Waiting time for foster placement dependent on approval status and age/needs of the child /young person. Placement needed for older children and sibling groups. Aboriginal carers needed for Aboriginal children	Waiting time for foster placement dependent on approval status and age/needs of the child /young person. Usually a shorter waiting time as there are more referrals than placements available.
Child’s typical needs and background	Primarily 0 – 2 year olds but up to 5 years, some with complex social/medical background and culturally diverse Special Placements Program identifies placements for children with special needs based upon their individual needs	Very few 0 – 2 year olds, some with special needs, complex social/medical background and culturally diverse. Increasing need for placements of older children, including sibling placements.	Child protection history, often drug and alcohol issues, mental health and disabilities affecting parent’s capacity to care	Child protection history, often drug and alcohol issues, mental health and disabilities affecting parent’s capacity to care Siblings may be in care	Child protection history, often drug and alcohol issues, mental health and disabilities affecting parent’s capacity to care. Siblings may be in care
Contact (typical) with	Openness in adoption involves raising a child in the full knowledge of their adoption and the emotional	Adoptive parents encouraged to keep in contact with the child’s overseas adoption agency, orphanage	Adoption Plan typically involves face to face visits, letters, photos, emails, phone calls per annum – in	Several times a year, usually supervised; plus sibling / extended family contact	Often there are multiple supervised visits on a weekly basis.

child's family of origin (birth family)	process of integrating their adoption identity. Open adoption typically involves face to face visits, letters, photos, emails, phone calls per annum – managed between birth parent, adoptive parent, with agency support if required. May include siblings and extended family.	(where appropriate) previous foster carers, birth family if possible – via letters, photos, email. Adoptive parents encouraged to travel with child to their country of origin during their childhood/adolescence	most circumstances managed independently between birth parent and adoptive parent. Siblings and extended family would be included in visits.		
Financial – application costs Ongoing financial support	Application costs are approximately \$3000-5,000; additional costs may be incurred dependent on the complexity of the legal process. Adoption subsidy is available post adoption for children identified as having complex or specific needs. Subsidy is reviewed annually by agency. There is no cost for special needs adoption application.	Up to \$50,000 (inclusive of e.g. travel to overseas country, accommodation and in-country incidental and adoption related expenses) Adoption subsidy available post adoption for children identified as having complex or specific needs. Subsidy is reviewed annually by agency.	As a foster carer a tax free carer allowance is paid each fortnight of over \$400. Adoption application – no cost. Post adoption, the foster care allowance is replaced by a \$1500.00 allowance from Community Services per year.	Tax free carer allowance paid each fortnight of over \$400. Amount is adjusted according to the age and level of need of the child. In additional some contingency costs are paid to carers, based on the child's case plan.	Tax free carer allowance paid each fortnight of over \$400. Amount is adjusted according to the age and level of need of the child. In additional some contingency costs are paid to carers, based on the child's case plan.
Matching and selection process	Adoptive parents selected by agency based upon needs of the child and wishes of the birth parents.	Following approval within NSW, matching is undertaken by overseas adoption agency.	Agency identifies matching of suitable child with carer. Proposed carers will have input into the matching decision.	Agency identifies matching of suitable child with carer. Proposed carers will have input into the matching decision.	Agency identifies matching of suitable child with carer. Proposed carers will have input into the matching decision
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