

Post Adoption Information Sheet No 13

Information about the Advance Notice in NSW

What is an Advance Notice?

This provision was introduced in September 1996 and allows for advance notice of two months in which the adoptive parents, an adopted person or a birth parent may prepare themselves before the release of identifying information and possible contact by a searcher. Current legislation is known as the Adoption Act (2000).

If you lodge an Advance Notice you will be informed in writing that a searcher has applied for the Adoption Information Certificate. Social and Medical information (i.e. information from medical or agency records), cannot be released during the period of the Advance Notice. One condition of the Advance Notice is that you can't make contact with the searcher without removing the Advance Notice first. No fee is charged for people wanting to use this provision.

An Advance Notice should not be seen as a message discouraging contact indefinitely. If you do not want contact at all you have the option of lodging a Contact Veto (see Information Sheets 16 and 17 regarding lodging a Contact Veto).

What are the benefits of lodging an Advance Notice?

While there are many potential gains to be made by contact, it's rarely a straightforward process. It is common for people to experience strong feelings around the time of contact for all sorts of reasons. You may be afraid that important existing relationships will be disrupted, or that a carefully guarded secret will be discovered. Or you may be aware that "life is never the same after contact" and need time to prepare.

If you are an adopted person, you may:

- want time to raise the issue with your adoptive parents
- not be ready for contact because of exams or you're getting married soon or some other reason
- want to state a preference for how contact is made, e.g., leave a correspondence address.

If you are an adoptive parent, you may:

- want time to tell your adopted son or daughter of their adoptive status if you haven't already told them

- want to prepare and support your adopted son or daughter before contact from birth relatives
- have a need to put off the added challenge of contact because your adopted son or daughter may be studying or the family may be dealing with a time of crisis.

If you are a birth parent you may:

- have kept the adoption a secret from family members and need time to tell them
- this may be especially difficult if you had more than one child who was adopted and the family is aware of only one
- want time to prepare yourself emotionally
- be dealing with another crisis such as an illness in the family
- want to leave a message stating a preference about how contact is to be made.

I would like to lodge a request for Advance Notice. How do I go about it?

Birth parents, adopted people over the age of 17 years and 6 months and adoptive parents may register if they wish to delay the release of identifying information for two months, giving them time to prepare for possible contact

You will need to lodge a request for advance notice by completing an Advance Notice Register application form and return it to the Adoption Information Unit:

Adoption Information Unit
 Department of Communities and Justice
 Locked Bag 4028
 Ashfield NSW 2131

Download the form here

<http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/parents,-carers-and-families/fostering,-guardianship-and-adoption/adoption/past-adoptions/advance-notice-register>

Please phone us if you wish to talk further about any issues raised in this information sheet.

<p>Post Adoption Resource Centre (PARC) Mail: Locked Bag 6002, Hurstville BC NSW 1481 Phone: 02 9504 6788 Email: PARC@benevolent.org.au Website: www.benevolent.org.au</p>	<p>Post Adoption Support Queensland (PASQ) Location: Ground Floor, 189 Coronation Dr, Milton QLD 4064 Phone: 07 3170 4600 Email: PASQ@benevolent.org.au Website: www.benevolent.org.au</p>
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