

Post Adoption Information Sheet No 26

Access to Adoption Information in Australia

See below for brief legislative summaries and contact details of major agencies that provide adoption information in Australian states and territories.

Australian Capital Territory

Australian Capital Territory Adoption Act (1993), implemented July 1993. Access to identifying information (original/ amended birth certificates, adoption files post 1966). For adopted persons (18+), their parents and adoptive parents. Qualified rights to adoptive and relatives. Contact veto available to those affected by release of information and not wanting contact. Reunion Information Register also available.

All applications to:

Office for Children, Youth and Family Support
ACT Adoptions and Permanent Care Unit
GPO Box 158
Canberra City ACT 2601

Phone: 02 6207 1466
Email: adoptions@act.gov.au
Web: <http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au>

New South Wales

For orders finalised before 1 January 2010:

The NSW Adoption Act 2000 allows for the release of identifying information to adopted persons (18+) and acknowledged parents about one another. Adopted people over 18 may also access identifying information regarding siblings also placed for adoption. Eligible parties will be issued with Adoption *Information Certificate* containing identifying information from the time of an adoption and allowing further searches (BDM marriage and death searches). Next of kin may apply to inherit the rights of a deceased adopted person or parent. Adopted persons and acknowledged parents may place a lifetime contact veto if the adoption was finalised before 26 October 1990.

For orders finalised after 1 January 2010:

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2008 amendments to the above legislation allow for greater access to adoption information for adopted children and adults, parents, siblings and adoptive parents in respect to adoptions finalised *after* 1 January 2010. [More](#) information is available from the Adoption Information Unit.

All applications to:

Adoption Information Unit
Family and Community Services
Locked Bag 4001, Ashfield NSW 1800

Phone: 1300 799 023 / 02 9716 3005
Fax: 02 9716 3400
Email: adoption.information@dcj.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.community.nsw.gov.au

Northern Territory

The Northern Territory Adoption of Children Act of 1994 allows for the release of identifying information to adopted persons and parents for any adoption that took place both after and prior to 1994. Prior to 1994 adopted persons and parents where the adopted person is 18 years old may have access to identifying information, non-identifying information and original/amended birth certificates. Before attaining the age of 18 years consent may be given by adoptive parents to access information.

Prior to 1994 there is provision for adopted persons and parents to lodge a veto to prohibit the release of their identifying information. After 1994 it is not possible to place a veto to prohibit the giving of information. Applicants will not be supplied with identifying information until they receive mandatory counselling.

The NT Adoption Information Service does not charge any fees for the provision of information concerning adoption. Applicants are required to provide proof of their identity.

The Contact Register is administered by:
Adoptions Unit
PO Box 37037
Winnellie NT 0810

Phone: 08 8922 5519 or 08 8922 7443
Fax: 08 8922 7480
Email: TF.Adoptions@nt.gov.au
Website: <https://nt.gov.au/community/child-protection-and-care/adoption>

Queensland

On 1 February 2010 the Adoption Act 2009 took effect allowing for the release of identifying and non-identifying information to parents and adopted persons over the age of 18, and adopted persons under the age of 18 with consent from their adoptive parents. Parties to the adoption can lodge a contact statement with Adoption Services Queensland (AdS) that expresses what type of contact they are interested in having e.g. face to face, by telephone initially or no contact at all. Adopted persons and parents can also receive the original birth certificate.

Non-identifying and medical information is also available on request.

For further information and application forms contact:

Adoption and Permanent Care Services Queensland
Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women
Locked Bag 3405, Brisbane QLD 4001
Brisbane QLD 4001

Phone: 07 3097 5100
Freecall: 1800 647 983
Email: ads@csyw.qld.gov.au
Web: www.childsafety.qld.gov.au/adoption

South Australia

Legislation enacted in 1988. Allows adopted adults, parents, adoptive parents and relatives of parents to receive identifying information about each other if they wish. The Act allows adopted people and parents, where the adoption was legalised prior to 1989, the right to restrict the release of information via adoption information vetoes. As of 18 December 2017, the provisions allowing for directions (or 'vetoes') have been removed from the Adoption Act. This means the legal ability to lodge a veto no longer exists. All vetoes in place at 18 December 2017 will continue to have effect for 5 years to the 17 December 2022 unless revoked earlier. The Department may assist in searching, the facilitation of contact and also runs a contact register. There are charges for registration for adoption information. These can be waived in cases of hardship.

Write to:
Postal Address:
Freedom of Information Team
Department for Child Protection
GPO Box 1072
Adelaide SA 5001

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Phone: 08 8226 4399
Email: DCP.FOI@sa.gov.au
Website: <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/family-and-community/parenting/adoption>

Tasmania

Legislation enacted in 1988. Allows adopted adults (18+), parents and relatives to receive identifying information about each other. The Department of Community and Human Service's Adoption & Information Service may assist in searching and/or the facilitation of contact. This Department also runs Tasmania's Adoption Information Register (contact register).

Write to:

Department of Health and Human Services
Adoptions and Permanency Services
Street Address:
Wingfield Building
St Johns Park
New Town
Tasmania 7008

Postal Address:
GPO Box 538
Hobart TAS 7001

Phone: 03 6166 0422
Email: Adoption.Service@dhhs.tas.gov.au

Victoria

The 1984 amendment to the Adoption Act (effective 1985) provides adopted adults (18+) with the entitlement to their original birth certificates, and court and agency records, after attending a mandatory interview (individual, group or telephone for interstate or overseas applicants).

Adopted persons under 18 are entitled to apply and can receive information, with the written permission of their parents and adoptive parents.

Parents and relatives are entitled to non-identifying information from records about the adopted person. Current and identifying information is given with the agreement in writing of the adult adopted person or the adoptive parents, if the person is under 18 years of age.

The adult children of adopted persons have the same rights as adopted persons. The agency must advise the adopted person that the application has been received unless evidence of the death of the adopted person is provided.

The Department maintains a register through which those entitled may express their wishes about providing or receiving information, and their feelings about contact. Adoptive parents are encouraged to register to facilitate the timing of approaches while the adopted person is under 18.

The Department provides a Search Guide and more information via their website.

Information is available from:

Adoption and Family Records Service, Department of Justice

Phone: 1800 130 225 (national free call)

E-mail: records.adoptions@justice.vic.gov.au

Web: <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/your-rights/adoption/past-adoptions>

Western Australia

Amendments to the Adoption Act 1994, in 2003 brought changes to Adoption Information Vetoes. As of 1 June 2005 the vetoes ceased. Previously, a lodged veto meant that parties to an adoption were able to prevent the release of identifying information. Access to this information is now available. Existing contact vetoes will remain in force. Prior to any identifying information being released to a person affected by an information veto, they are required to attend an information interview. If they are also affected by a contact veto they will be required to sign a legally binding agreement not contact the person who placed the veto.

People can register their details with Past Adoption Information & Services. If two or more people who are part of the same adoption have registered their details with Past Adoption Services, each person may be advised.

Post adoption services can provide further information:

Fostering and Adoption Services

Street Address:
Ground Floor
189 Royal Street
East Perth WA 6004

Postal Address:
PO Box 6334
East Perth WA 6892

Telephone: 08 9286 5200

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Free call: 1800 182 178
Email: adoptions@cpfs.wa.gov.au
Website: www.childprotection.wa.gov.au

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

Post Adoption Resource Centre (PARC)

Location: Locked Bag 6002,
Hurstville BC NSW 1481
Phone: 02 9504 6788
Email: PARC@benevolent.org.au
Website: www.benevolent.org.au

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