

# Birth Parent Services and Adoption Planning

In Saskatchewan, the Ministry of Social Services, Child and Family Services (CFS) provides adoption planning and supports to birth parents who are thinking of placing their child for adoption. A caseworker will discuss with birth parents what is involved if they want to place their child for adoption, as well as other options they may have considered, such as parenting.

If you are a birth parent interested in discussing options such as parenting or adoption, contact your nearest Child and Family Services office and ask to speak with an intake worker. The intake worker will then refer your call to a caseworker. Information about your case will remain confidential and will not be shared with anyone else including your family.

If you become aware of a birth parent who is thinking about placing a child for adoption, refer them to the nearest Child and Family Services office to speak with an intake worker.

## Services

Birth parents thinking of placing a child for adoption may consider doing so with the Ministry through a **Voluntary Committal** adoption plan (also known as a 'domestic adoption'), or independently with someone they know through an **Independent Adoption** (also known as a 'private adoption').

- In a **Voluntary Committal**, birth parents make a plan directly with the Ministry to place their child for adoption. Birth parents are able to participate in the selection of prospective adoptive parents who have already been approved by the Ministry through a home study process. The adoption is facilitated by the Ministry and there is no cost to the prospective adoptive parents.
- In an **Independent Adoption**, birth parents make a plan for adoption directly with someone they know and identify, such as a friend or relative.

The adoption is facilitated by a lawyer working on behalf of the prospective adoptive parents, who are responsible for all fees and costs, including costs to have their home study and background checks completed.

Birth parents interested in either type of adoption must meet with the Ministry in order to receive the planning and counselling they require to make an informed decision on adoption, and to complete the necessary legal birth parent processes that are part of the adoption plan. There are no organizations in the province approved or licensed by the Ministry to provide this type of planning and counselling.

## Birth Parent Rights

Birth parents should know and understand their rights, and should have thought about all their options. When birth parents meet with a caseworker from Child and Family Services, the following are discussed:

- The right to seek legal counsel regarding any decision made.
- The right to make decisions without being influenced by other people.
- The right to confidentiality, including the right to not have family members or any other individuals notified of the pregnancy or whatever plan is discussed or made.
- The ability to parent with supports, such as support through other Ministry programs including Income Security. They may also have the ability to parent with support from family members.
- The ability to place a child into temporary care of Child and Family Services while making a decision.
- To participate in the selection of an adoptive family, express what they hope for in an adoptive family, as well as what an adoptive family will provide their child.

- What type of communication with the child and adoptive family they hope to have after the adoption occurs, while keeping in mind that communication agreements are created in good faith and are not legally enforceable.
- The loss of parental rights when a child becomes adopted, which includes the loss of ability to make decisions regarding the health and safety of the child.
- The right or ability to change their mind about an adoption plan (referred to as 'revocation') up to 21 days after they consent, even if the child has already been placed with the adoptive family.
- The right or ability of a person adopted on or after April 1, 1997 to receive a certified copy of their original birth registration six months after their 18th birthday if no veto has been placed upon its release by the birth parents. This means that in an adoption where the identities of the birth and adoptive families were not known or exchanged, the adoptee will be able to find out the identities of the birth parents unless the birth parents place a veto on this release of information.

In Saskatchewan, birth mothers and fathers have equal rights with respect to a child. Before an adoption plan can proceed, both must agree to it in writing. If one birth parent does not agree to an adoption plan, then he or she has the right to consult with their own lawyer and seek primary custody in court. Issues of custody, which are not dealt with by the Ministry, must be resolved before an adoption plan can proceed.

## Unauthorized Placement

In Saskatchewan, it is illegal to advertise that you would like to place a child for adoption, or that you would like to adopt a child through any type of means, including social media sites, newspapers, bulletins, etc. As well, third-party individuals, including professionals such as physicians, nurses, lawyers, pastors, teachers, etc., cannot arrange the placement of children for the purposes of adoption. This means that third-party individuals cannot arrange for birth and prospective adoptive parents to meet in order to develop an adoption plan. Under legislation, these types of activities

carry penalties including fines and imprisonment.

## Further Information

For more information, contact your nearest Ministry of Social Services office. Your call will be referred to a person who can appropriately respond to your questions.

Individuals may also contact the Adoption Support Centre of Saskatchewan (ASCS) for general information on adoption, as well as community supports available to both birth and prospective adoptive parents. The ASCS also has a resource library that can be accessed by the public. They can be reached toll-free at 1-866-869-2727.

Child and Family Services Offices			
<b>Buffalo Narrows</b>	1-800-667-7685	<b>Moose Jaw</b>	306-694-3647
Waite Street	306-235-1700	36 Athabasca Street E.	
S0M 0J0		S6H 6V2	
<b>Creighton</b>	1-800-532-9580	<b>Nipawin</b>	1-800-487-8594
1st Street East	306-688-8808	210 - 1st Street E.	306-862-1700
S0P 0A0		S0E 1E0	
<b>Estevan</b>	306-637-4550	<b>North Battleford</b>	1-877-993-9911
1219 - 5th Street		#300, 1146 - 102 St.	306-446-7705
S4A 0Z1		S9A 1G1	
<b>Fort Qu'Appelle</b>	1-800-667-3260	<b>Prince Albert</b>	1-866-719-6164
177 Segwun Avenue	306-332-3260	800 Central Avenue	306-953-2422
S0G 1S0		S6V 6G1	
<b>Kindersley</b>	306-463-5470	<b>Regina</b>	306-787-3760
125 1st Avenue East		2045 Broad Street	
S0L 1S0		S4P 3V6	
<b>La Loche</b>	1-877-371-1131	<b>Rosetown</b>	306-882-5400
La Loche Avenue	306-822-1711	122 - 2nd Avenue North	
S0M 1G0		S0L 2V0	
<b>La Ronge</b>	1-800-567-4066	<b>Saskatoon</b>	1-877-884-1687
1320 La Ronge Avenue	306-425-4544	122 - 3rd Avenue North	306-933-5961
S0J 1L0		S7K 2H6	
<b>Lloydminster</b>	1-877-367-7707	<b>Swift Current</b>	306-778-8219
4910 - 50th Street	306-820-4250	350 Cheadle Street West	
S9V 1Z5		S9H 4G3	
<b>Meadow Lake</b>	1-877-368-8898	<b>Weyburn</b>	306-848-2404
Unit 5, 101 Railway Place	306-236-7500	110 Souris Avenue N.E.	
S9X 1X6		S4H 2Z9	
<b>Melfort</b>	1-800-487-8640	<b>Yorkton</b>	306-786-1300
107 Crawford St. E.	306-752-6100	72 Smith Street East	
S0E 1A0		S3N 2Y4	