

CarolinaHope



CHRISTIAN ADOPTION AGENCY

SC License SR-4500-CPA • A Non-Profit 501(c)(3) Agency

1527 Wade Hampton Boulevard • Greenville, SC 29609

Phone: (864) 268-0570 • Fax: (864) 370-0036

Website: www.CarolinaHopeAdoption.org • E-mail: office@CarolinaHopeAdoption.org

Dear Adoptive Parent(s),

As you proceed with your plans to adopt a child or children, we would like to make you aware of some of the challenges faced by adoptive parents. To be sure, adoption is a joy, but it is not a risk-free venture in which everything is guaranteed to go smoothly. We will, of course, inform you to the best of our ability about what you may expect from your particular child. However, it would be both costly and unwise for you, the adoptive parents(s), to embark upon an international adoption without understanding the special factors involved. The following pages (“Special Considerations in International Adoption”) describe some of the challenges you may face as the parent(s) of a child adopted internationally, as well as our policies with regard to these risks.

This form (“Special Considerations in International Adoption”), as well as the application, the Risk Statement, the Refund Statement, the Consent to Release of Confidential Information, and the Communication Guidelines, constitute your total agreement with Carolina Hope as to your adoption plans. Please read this material carefully, sign and date the statement of understanding which follows, and return the statements to Carolina Hope. Make copies for your personal records also. Please also submit copies of these outlines to your social worker or home study staff person.

We cannot complete your adoption until we have this signed statement in your file!

Thank you,

The Staff of Carolina Hope Christian Adoption Agency

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SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION

The following factors should be taken into consideration by adoptive families before they accept the placement of a child or children adopted internationally. The policies of Carolina Hope are discussed in this information. These issues and risks should be discussed by you and your social worker/home study provider before you sign this statement.

1. It is important to read materials related to adoption, to seek the support of other adoptive parents, and to join an adoption support group before the arrival of the child. It is also beneficial to continue to participate in a support group after the child comes home.
2. Your child's heritage is important and should be maintained. Some ways of doing this are by keeping the child's original name (or part of it), associating with other families who have adopted from your child's country, and integrating the customs of your child's country into your family's traditions.
3. The adoptive parents must acknowledge that the child will probably look different from the adoptive parents, especially if he/she is of another ethnic or racial background.
4. Children's skin coloring, hair texture, and features may change over time, so the child assigned to your family as an infant may look very different by the time he/she is actually received. Also, the child's appearance may continue to change once he/she is at home. A parent who chooses to adopt a child of a different ethnic background from his/her own should not expect the adopted child to resemble him/her physically. Carolina Hope Christian Adoption Agency believes that parents have the right to select a child based on race, age, gender, and coloring.
5. Adoption authorities in the foreign countries in which we work may not always have completely accurate information about a child's age or medical background. If an assigned child is discovered to be unsuitable to the adoptive family prior to the submission of the dossier, the monies paid which have not been spent may be applied toward the adoption of another child.
6. Some fees may increase at any time without warning to either the client or the agency. Usually increases in these fees are related to expediting the adoption process.

Please sign initials

These fees include:

Authentication of Paperwork
Transportation and travel expenses
In-country court fees
Passport and visa fees
In-country fees

Adoptive parents must understand that they are responsible for any such increases and that Carolina Hope may increase its fees accordingly.

7. There are sometimes unforeseen delays in the adoption process. Paperwork is not always processed as quickly as we would like. Also, if your child develops an infectious disease, his/her adoption may be delayed until he/she has recovered. If an epidemic or infectious disease breaks out in your child's country, adoptions from that country could be put on hold until the epidemic is over.
8. Health conditions cannot always be accurately diagnosed in other countries, where medical equipment and physicians may be in short supply.
9. Children adopted internationally may display developmental delays due to having been institutionalized and/or not receiving enough stimulation. However, most of these children usually catch up developmentally in a remarkably short period after they are adopted.
10. In the event that your child needs special resources, many communities offer occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, and behavioral therapists. In addition, even the smallest community will have physicians who can assist with medical interventions, should they become necessary. Adoptive parents should not be afraid to call on these specialists if the need should arise.
11. Children born in other countries may not receive an adequate diet prior to their adoptions. Their nutritional requirements may not be fully met. Many babies do not receive adequate milk or formula.
12. Cultures differ greatly as to the expectations placed upon children. In some countries children are potty trained at a very early age. Yet these same children may not be expected to do other tasks which children born in the U.S. are expected to do.
13. The description of a child received by potential adoptive parents may be subject to cultural biases. For example, a child may be described as very tall for her age or the in-country facilitators may describe a child's care as excellent by their standards, but adoptive parents may feel that their child's care was substandard. Many standards are culturally determined.

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14. Each family is strongly advised to have their child evaluated by a physician specializing in the evaluation of children adopted abroad. These physicians may be able to detect problems related to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and other problems by looking at the child's features and developmental progress. There are also specialists who are trained to evaluate videos of waiting children in order to alert adoptive parents of potential problems, even before the child is assigned.
15. The child adopted internationally should be examined by a physician within a week or so of his/her arrival home.
16. The adopted child may have attachment and bonding issues. Although profound attachment disorders are rare, they do exist. Attachment disorders are found on a continuum—from mild to severe, with stages of severity in between. Most children coming from an institution will exhibit some form of attachment problems but do not have a diagnosable attachment disorder.
17. There are therapists specializing in attachment issues/disorders who are available to help adoptive parents cope with the challenges they face.
18. **The adoptive family must agree to have at least one post-placement assessment done by an adoption agency or qualified social worker to assure that the child and parent(s) are adjusting well. The home study agency, the state social services department, or the country from which the child is adopted may require post-placements at regular intervals; if this is so, the adoptive family must agree to these requirements and cooperate so that a post-placement report can be completed on a timely basis. Each report will include at least 4 recent photos.**
19. **Ukraine clients only:** In this program children are selected while the adoptive parents are in the country. There are many healthy young children available for adoption in Ukraine. However, there is a possibility that you will not “connect” with a child or find a child who meets your health expectations. In the event that this should happen, you are permitted (at no extra agency or facilitator fee) to return to Ukraine later to select and adopt a child.
20. **At some point in an adoption several events may occur, requiring Carolina Hope to PLACE YOUR ADOPTION IN THE “HIGH RISK” CATEGORY: A DEVELOPING MEDICAL CONDITION, REAPPEARANCE OF A BIRTH PARENT, DISRUPTANCE IN THE LEGAL PROCEEDING, OR A SIMILAR EVENT. If Carolina Hope places your adoption in the “high risk” category, then the Agency may strongly advise you to seek another placement, or you may at your own risk continue with your adoption plan, knowing that the Agency has classified it as “high risk.” We understand that you will have bonded with your child; however, if you proceed with the adoption plan, then the Agency has the right to modify at its own discretion the refund policy or take other actions relative to your adoption.**

Please sign initials

(If you have already had your home study completed, please submit this to your home study agent to sign, or contact Carolina Hope.)

I discussed the preceding risks, issues, and conditions with my home study social worker. Also, I have read the preceding information completely and understand the implications that this information could have for my family. I understand that international adoption entails certain risks. I willingly and knowingly agree to proceed with the adoption of a foreign-born child in light of these risks. I also acknowledge that there are professionals within many communities who are trained to assist adoptive families with the special challenges they may face. I will enlist the support of these people and organizations, should the need to do so arise. I also agree to submit the required post-placements required for the country from which I am adopting.

I understand that this statement of “Special Considerations in International Adoption” is a binding legal document that will be interpreted and enforced pursuant to the laws of the State of South Carolina, and that unresolved disputes between the adoptive individual/couple and Carolina Hope will be submitted to binding arbitration in the county of Greenville in the State of South Carolina.

(Signature) Prospective Adoptive Father

Date

(Signature) Prospective Adoptive Mother

Date

(Signature) Home Study Agency Representative

Date

(Signature) Placement Agency Representative

Date

Please initial all 4 pages of this statement of “Special Considerations in International Adoption” (if a married couple, both should initial), sign and date the fourth page, copy the document for your records, and send the original document to Carolina Hope Christian Adoption Agency. Thank you.

Please sign initials