



Adoption Case File Procedures

June 2021

Note: for information on accessing adoption records see [Access to Birth Records and Adoption Case Records](#).

This chapter was introduced into the manual in February 2016 and further updated in March 2021.

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1. Opening an Adoption Case File

1.1 Children

An Adoption Case File for a child should be opened as soon as there is an adoption plan for the child, i.e. once adoption has been identified as the **Permanence Plan** for the child at his or her **Looked After Review** or, where a child has been **Relinquished** for adoption, as soon as the parent's request for adoption has been made. The child's social worker should immediately transfer to the Adoption Case File the following information in order for this to be done:

1. The child's **Care Plan**;
2. Any relevant reports, e.g. Child and Family Assessments, medical reports, specialist assessments;
3. **Looked After Review** minutes;
4. Any reports or assessments relating to a decision to place siblings separately.

The child's social worker should then provide additional reports and information for the Adoption Case File throughout the adoption process as they become.

The Adoption Case File is separate from the existing case file.

The child's Looked After case file should indicate on the front sheet that a separate Adoption Case File exists. **The case file must include information in relation to the new identity or address of the child or any information whereby the child's pre and post-adoption identity could be linked - such information should only be contained on the Adoption Case File.**

Where the plan relates to a group of siblings, there must be a separate Adoption Case File for each child.

1.2 Applicants to Adopt

An Adoption Case File should also be opened for every prospective adopter who pursues an application for approval. In the case of a couple, a single Adoption Case File can be set up for them both. If foster carers wish to be considered as adopters, a separate Adoption Case File should be set up for each single person or couple.

2. Contents

2.1 Children

The child's Adoption Case File should contain the following information and documents:

1. The child's original birth certificate and birth details (time, weight, type of delivery etc.);
2. Description and details (including family tree) of the birth family and household set out in a Child and Family Assessment or other relevant document;
3. Photographs, certificates, other significant personal mementos and Life Story information;
4. Completed CoramBAAF Forms M and B (Neonatal and obstetric reports);
5. CoramBAAF Form A (completed by birth parents);
6. CoramBAAF Development Assessment Forms or equivalent;
7. The Child's Permanence Report;
8. **Prospective Adopter's Report** and **Adoption Placement Report**;
9. **Adoption Support Plan** where this is not included in the Adoption Placement Report;
10. The child's Profile, Family Finding Meeting minutes and any other documents prepared and presented for the matching decision;
11. Record of social work with child about adoption, including recording of direct work;
12. Details of siblings, together with any assessments and decisions to place brothers and sisters separately, including minutes of relevant meetings;
13. Pre Agency Decision Making minutes (if completed and held on file);
14. All relevant minutes and Agency Decision-Maker's decisions in relation to the child's adoption plan and placement, including records of discussions held by the Agency Decision-Maker;
15. **Looked After Review** minutes and the child's **Care Plan** from the point when adoption was identified as the plan;
16. Assessments, correspondence and signed agreements relating to post-adoption contact;
17. Any other key correspondence to and from members of the child's birth family;
18. Minutes from Placement Planning Meetings;
19. Itemised List and copies of information supplied to child;

20. Itemised List and copies of information supplied to adopters;
21. Any letters/information from the birth parents to the child;
22. Letter of Origin from the social worker outlining the circumstances of the adoption plan;
23. The **Adoption Placement Plan** and any amendments;
24. Reports of visits to the child post-placement and records of any **Adoption Review** Meetings;
25. Court reports and other documents prepared for **Placement Order** application (if applicable) and adoption application;
26. Copy of **Care Order** (including **Interim Care Orders**);
27. Copy of **Parental Consent to Adoptive Placement** and copy of the Placement Order or **Freeing Order**;
28. Copy of **Adoption Order**;
29. Any recording relating to requests for access to birth records by the adopted person or the Adoption Case File by any person;
30. Any **Veto** - absolute or qualified - registered by the adopted person.

2.2 Applicants to Adopt

1. The prospective adopter's Adoption Case File should contain all the information obtained about him or her in relation to their application for approval, including the CoramBAAF Form F1 or **Prospective Adopter's Report**, photographs etc;
2. All relevant checks;
3. References;
4. All relevant Panel minutes and the **Agency Decision-Maker's** decisions in relation to the suitability of the adopters and the placement of the child with them;
5. Assessments, correspondence and signed agreements relating to post-adoption contact;
6. The Adoption Placement Plan;
7. Itemised List and copies of information supplied to adopters;
8. Any other key correspondence;
9. Reports of visits to the adopters.

Note: Where the placement of a child is with an adopter approved by another adoption agency, an Adoption Case File for the prospective adopter(s) must still be set up and maintained by the relevant placing Local Authority.

3. Security and Retention of Records

Adoption Case Files must be stored in secure conditions. Paper records should be kept in locked cabinets that are sufficiently fireproof and waterproof. Electronic records should be password protected.

In cases where an Adoption Order is made, Adoption Case Files will be retained for a minimum of 100 years after the Adoption Order is made. The relevant Child Care Manager will first ensure that the Adoption Case File is complete, and especially contains the 'Letter of Origin' and Post-Adoption Contact Agreements.

Where an Adoption Order is not made, children's Adoption Case Files should be transferred back to the child's Looked After file. Any duplicated information should be shredded.

Where an Adoption Order is not made and the child is no longer in the placement, the prospective adopter's Adoption Case File should be retained until both applicants would reach 70 years of age.

End

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Last Updated: June 2021

Date: 01/06/2021

Next Update: June 2024