

GLOSSARY OF ADOPTION TERMINOLOGY: WHAT DOES THIS WORD MEAN?

Adoption facilitator – a person or nonprofit entity that assists birth parents in locating and evaluating prospective adoptive parents without charge.

Affidavit of parentage – the document (DSS-1809) executed by a parent or other knowledgeable individual that sets out the names and addresses of all parents of the adoptee.

Confidential intermediary – a county DSS or licensed adoption agency that assists birth parents or adult adoptees locate each other, obtain updated non-identifying information, and share that information or identities with the consent of both parties, pursuant to 48-9-104(b).

Consent - a sworn legal document executed by the parent or guardian of a child consenting to the adoption of the child by the adoptive parents named in the consent and giving them legal and physical custody of the child.

A consent is also the sworn legal document executed by a child, 12 or older, agreeing to the child's adoption by the adoptive parents named in the consent.

There are different consent forms depending on the type of adoption: adoption of children by relatives or unrelated persons (DSS-1802), adoption of children by stepparents (DSS-5189 and 5190), the consents signed by the child 12 or older in those adoptions (DSS-1803 and 5169), and consents used in adoption of adults (DSS-5164 and 5165).

A consent (DSS-1801) is the legal document signed by the director of a county DSS or licensed adoption agency with custody of a child who has been cleared for adoption, authorizing the child's adoption by specified adoptive parents.

Division of Social Services – a Division of the Department of Health and Human Services that includes the **Adoption Review and Indexing Team** where all adoptions are sent following entry of final decree to be reviewed and permanently indexed.

Guardian – a person, other than a parent, appointed by the clerk of court to exercise the powers of 35A-1241, or such a person in another state who has the power to consent to an adoption under the laws of that state. This term does not include guardians appointed in juvenile court under Chapter 7B or guardians ad litem who represent children in juvenile court.

Home study – this is not a legal term used in Chapter 48. It is sometimes used as "shorthand" for both a preplacement assessment and the post-placement report to court (DSS-1808).

Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) – a federal law that requires additional procedures in adoptions that involve an “Indian” child, that is, a child who is a member of a federally recognized Tribe or child of a member and eligible for membership. Only the tribe can determine this membership status.

Preplacement assessment – the term used in Chapter 48 to describe the adoptive home study that must be completed prior to placement in all agency adoptions and all independent, unrelated adoptions, following the requirements in 48-3-301 through 309. The Division of Social Services has not promulgated a standard form for a preplacement assessment

Report to court – a report (DSS-1808) to the clerk following the child’s placement in the adoptive home and the filing of the petition, pursuant to 48-2-501 through 504, meant to assist the clerk in determining if the adoption is in the child’s best interest. This report is completed by the county DSS or licensed adoption agency that placed the child, the agency that completed the preplacement assessment, or in independent adoptions that do not require preplacement assessments (relative and stepparent), by any county DSS or licensed adoption agency.

Relinquishment – a sworn document (DSS-1804) executed by a parent or guardian to a county DSS or licensed adoption agency, which gives legal and physical custody of the child to that agency and authorizes the agency to place the child for adoption (and execute a consent for that adoption).

Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act (UCCJEA) – this Act is found in Chapter 50A and has been agreed to by all 50 states. It governs which state has jurisdiction to make a child custody determination. It affects adoptions pursuant to 48-2-100(c) when the adoptee is the subject of a child custody order in another state.