



Antioch
A D O P T I O N S

Making Family A Reality For Every Child

Dear Applicants:

****FBI Background Checks now Required for All Adoption Homestudies****

We are aware of recent changes to our state law relating to the required elements of an Adoption Homestudy or Pre-Placement Report under a Federal requirement. Washington State is now requiring a FBI background check on all Adoption Homestudies before a placement can occur. In order to meet these requirements for child placements and finalizations, all families must have all adults in the home, and anyone over 15 years of age, complete FBI background checks.

In the fall of 2006, the United States Congress passed a new Federal law called the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act. This law became effective in October, 2006 and in short, required all states to make a change regarding their Adoption Homestudy requirements for families who adopt children from the state foster care system. These new requirements include a FBI fingerprint background check as well as a state CPS Child Abuse Registry clearance check on all adults living in the prospective adoptive home. In perhaps one third of the states, this level of background checks has been required for some time. However, until now, Washington state law and the majority of other states have mandated only a state police criminal background check be done in most instances.

In response to the Adam Walsh federal law, the Washington State Legislature passed a new law in the 2007 Legislative Session that requires all Adoption Homestudies, including Adoption Homestudies for private placements of children not in the state foster care system, to have FBI fingerprint criminal background clearances, as well as the state Child Abuse Registry clearance checks. It appears as if these new background check requirements will become law by the 1st of July, 2007.

This law is new and DSHS does not yet have a process to implement these FBI background checks for adoptive families. They will be working this out. Meanwhile, this means that everyone individually needs to submit applications for background checks directly to the FBI. We have specific instructions attached! Please, read the instructions thoroughly. This is an inconvenience we know, but

we want to be prepared for the court requirements rather than wait and encounter delays.

All families applying to Antioch Adoptions will automatically have a Child Abuse Registry clearance check done if you have lived in Washington for the past five years. If you have not resided in Washington for at least five years, then we will be contacting you to get releases to get the Child Abuse Registry clearance checks from the state of previous residence.

If you have not lived in Washington State for more that three years you will need two sets of fingerprint cards. See the instructions for the Washington State Background Clearance. In addition to the set for the FBI that you will submit yourselves, you will need to submit a set to us with your application for the Washington State Clearance requirement for residents of less that three years.

The FBI background checks are necessary, so get them submitted now as part of your Antioch Adoptions application. We will help as much as possible. Again please read the detailed instructions and begin the process.

Very truly yours,

Kerry Ann Shaughnessy, MSW
Moses Project Director

Tammie Snyder,
Executive Director