

POLICY

Title: Considering child protection history when assessing a person's suitability to be an adoptive parent

Policy No: CPD616-2

Policy Statement:

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services will consider a person's child protection history, and that of any adult member of the person's household, where it is relevant to making an assessment of the person's suitability to be an adoptive parent.

Principles:

- Adoption and Specialist Support Services requires access to information and documents relating to a person's child protection history to perform functions under the *Adoption Act 2009*.
- The wellbeing and best interests of an adopted child, both through childhood and the rest of his or her life, are paramount in all adoption matters.
- An adopted child should be cared for in a way that ensures a safe, stable and nurturing family and home life.
- A person is not suitable to be an adoptive parent if the person or an adult member of the person's household would pose an unacceptable risk of harm to a child adopted by the person.
- An individual's personal information, obtained for purposes under the *Adoption Act 2009*, will not be disclosed to another person, unless that person is legitimately performing a function under the *Adoption Act 2009*.
- A person has a right to respond to child protection information that is likely to affect the assessment of his or her suitability to be an adoptive parent before a decision regarding suitability is made.

Objectives:

To ensure the wellbeing and best interests of children requiring an adoptive placement are met by thoroughly assessing and appropriately selecting suitable adoptive parents.

Scope:

Child protection history is a relevant consideration in assessing or reassessing a person's suitability to be an adoptive parent.

A person's child protection history includes any information recorded by Child Safety Services in administering the *Child Protection Act 1999* that relates to the person, when the person was a child or an adult or to a member of the person's household.

Unless Adoption and Specialist Support Services is satisfied that based on child protection history a preliminary report demonstrating a person is unsuitable to be an adoptive parent can be made, a person's child protection history, if any, is considered in the overall assessment of the person's suitability.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Adoption and Specialist Support Services will request a person's child protection history only after a person has been selected for assessment, or been selected to be assessed to meet the anticipated placement needs of a particular child or after the consents of each parent as required prior to a step-parent adoption assessment commencing has been obtained or dispensed with by the Childrens Court and the person's consent has been received.

Adoption and Specialist Support Services will review the child protection history of a person, or an adult member of the person's household, to determine whether:

- there is any child protection history
- the child protection history is such that no further consideration of it is required in the overall assessment of the person's suitability
- the child protection history is such that it requires further consideration in the overall assessment of the person's suitability
- the child protection history is such that a preliminary report based on this information should be prepared.

Authority:

Adoption Act 2009, Sections 104, 109, 119(i), 121,
Child Protection Act 1999, section 187(3)(c)

Delegations:

Executive Director, Operations
Manager, Adoption and Specialist Support Services
Team Leader, Adoption and Specialist Support Services

Records File No.: CHS-16721
Date of approval: 04 March 2013
Date of operation: 12 March 2013
Date to be reviewed: 04 March 2016

Office: Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
Help Contact: Child Protection Development

Links:

Adoption Practice Manual

Related Adoption policies:

The wellbeing and best interest of the child in adoption (626)

Regular re-assessment of persons whose names are included in the suitable adoptive parents register (623)

Rescinded policies:

2.1 CHS-16721 Considering child protection history when assessing a person's suitability to be an adoptive parent

582-1 Considering child protection history when assessing prospective adoptive parents' suitability

616-2 Considering child protection history when assessing a person's suitability to be an adoptive parent

Margaret Allison

Director-General