

POLICY

Title:	Supporting people who have lodged or are subject to a contact statement
Policy No:	CPD625-2

Policy Statement:

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services will support people who have lodged or who are subject to a contact statement with appropriate and timely information, support and counselling.

Principles:

- The wellbeing and best interests of an adopted person, both throughout childhood and the rest of his or her life, are paramount considerations in all adoption matters.
- The wellbeing and best interests of an adopted person is best met by the timely provision of information, support and counselling to persons who have lodged or are subject to a contact statement.
- The interests of persons affected by an adoption order made prior to 1 June 1991 seeking identifying information and those seeking to preserve their privacy are to be respected.

Objectives:

To ensure people affected by an adoption order made prior to 1 June 1991 receive the information, support and counselling they require to express their contact wishes in a contact statement or to understand the effect of a contact statement to which they are subject.

Scope:

- This policy only applies to the provision of identifying information relating to adoption orders made prior to 1 June 1991.
- This policy does not apply to the provision of identifying information when there is no contact statement in effect.
- This policy only applies to information requested under part 11 of the *Adoption Act 2009*. This policy has no effect on applications for information processed under the *Right to Information Act 2009*.
- Any action required to provide information, support or counselling, which may result in a delay to identifying information being provided, will be managed in a manner to ensure any delay is for a reasonable period only.

To the extent possible, any delay to the provision of identifying information will be avoided or minimised through the efficient operations and processes of Adoption and Specialist Support Services.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Adoption and Specialist Support Services, when considering the need to seek or provide information, support or counselling will have regard to a person's stated views expressed in an existing contact statement or recorded in another document held by Adoption and Specialist Support Services and the time and circumstances in which the views were recorded.

Adoption and Specialist Support Services will:

- provide people seeking to safeguard their privacy or to specify the manner in which they would prefer contact with another party to the adoption to occur, with assistance to lodge, revoke or amend a contact statement
- delay giving identifying information to a person only where satisfied there is a specific reason which makes the delay appropriate and only for the period of time considered reasonable in the circumstances
- offer a person who has lodged a contact statement or a person who is subject to a contact statement with information to assist the person, referral to counselling or other support services or other support as appropriate in the circumstances. This information, support and counselling may be offered before or after information is provided to a party if Adoption and Specialist Support Services is satisfied that it would be appropriate to do so.

Authority:

Adoption Act 2009 sections 5, 269, 271(4), and 271(5)

Delegations:

Executive Director, Operations

Manager, Adoption and Specialist Support Services

Team Leader, Adoption and Specialist Support Services

Senior Adoption Officer, Adoption and Specialist Support Services

Adoption Officer, 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)

Recognising a man as the biological father of an adopted person when providing adoption information (621)

Rescinded policies:

2.10 CHS-16721 Supporting people who have lodged or are subject to a contact statement

625-1 Supporting people who have lodged or are subject to a contact statement

Margaret Allison

Director-General