



Families through  
**ADOPTION**

*Creating a legacy of thriving families from the adoption plan to child's independence*

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Phone: (616) 242-9696 | [www.FamiliesThroughAdoption](http://www.FamiliesThroughAdoption)

Thank you for choosing Families Through Adoption as your supporting agency here in Michigan. We are proud to provide a wide array of services to help you build your family through adoption. From the decision to adopt until your child is established as an adult, we are here to assist you by providing quality home study services, education and support, as well as post placement services.

**Our Core Beliefs Are:**

- Every child deserves to grow up in a loving and nurturing home
- Every child deserves an opportunity to grow to their fullest potential
- Cross-cultural and domestic adoptions are beneficial to both children and those seeking to parent them
- Families need support and education in raising their children

We provide services throughout the entire state of Michigan to single, married, and divorced individuals who are physically, emotionally, and financially able to provide a stable and loving home. We will not discriminate or deny services to anyone based on nationality, race, sexual orientation, or religion. Please note that international adoptions may have additional requirements based on the country the child is from. These may include age, number of marriages/divorces, marital status, health issues, legal history, sexual orientation, and/or religion as well as other requirements.

**Our Fees:**

Home Study: \$2,750. There is a \$500 non-refundable application fee due at the onset of the process, and 2 payments of \$1,125, the first of which is due when you first meet with the social worker, and another \$1,125 when paperwork is complete.

Home Study Renewal (for a new adoption): If the home study was done by this agency, or by a social worker in this agency, the cost is \$2,000.

Home Study Updates (for current families where no child is placed but the home study is expiring): The cost is \$700.

Educational Services: Families Through Adoption conducts risk counseling/orientation which is included in the home study price. Additional educational cost will be the responsibility of the family, and FTA provides resources that are available.

Post Placements (per report): \$400 per report for not pre-paying, or \$350 per report if you pre-pay, plus mileage.

Formal Counseling/Consultation: We do not provide psychological counseling. When those needs are identified the family will be referred to an appropriate service provider. It may be necessary to meet with a family and provide short term information and prevention strategies. Consultation includes services beyond the scope of normal duties to complete a home study, such as extra services required by a placing agency or the court system. Families will be charged \$50 per hour for those services.

Misc. Expenses: We charge the federally allowed mileage for travel. Any travel over 2 hours to a home visit will incur a \$30 per hour fee. If the social worker must be gone overnight, the family will need to pay for lodging and meal expenses.

Normal mailing costs are included, but any overnight/priority services needed will be paid for by the family.

Refunds: If a home study is interrupted or terminated for any reason, the amount due will be based on the work already done, calculated at a rate of \$50 per hour. Any fee paid in excess of this will be refunded.

**Time Frame and Home Study Process:**

The time it takes to complete the home study process will vary because of several factors, including the time it takes you to complete the initial paperwork, the time it takes you to collect documents, and the flexibility you have in scheduling appointments. We attempt to have our first contact with you within 10 business days after you submit your documents, and to have the whole process completed within 12-16 weeks, but there is no guarantee in this timeframe. For international adoptions, each country has different requirements and this may affect the number of meetings and the overall amount of time it takes for completion.

No home study can be written prior to the collection of all supporting documentation, including medical, financial and personal reference forms, and the completion of all meetings. Once your social worker has the documents, they will write the report. Your worker will attempt to provide your rough draft within 30 business days after you submit all documents, and you will be responsible for proofreading the document for family and informational errors. You are not able to change the recommendation of the report. If you feel that the home study does not reflect your situation we will address those concerns with you.

The next step in the process is the review and approval stage, with many different organizations reviewing the report. Our goal is to write your home study report so that it will convey what we have learned about you in an effective manner. The report will meet the requirements of Families Through Adoption, the State of Michigan, the placing agency, and for international adoptions, USCIS and the birth country of the adoptive child. We strive to the best of our ability to produce documents that meet all of these standards.

The finalization stage: After your home study has been approved it will be finalized and printed. You will receive three signed and notarized copies of the report as well as required supporting documentation. This package can be sent on a next day delivery if arrangements are made. Before we release the finalized copies, the final payment and the consumer satisfaction report is due.

According to Michigan law, your home study is valid for one year from the date of finalization. If you have not completed the adoption (or do not have guardianship or custody) before the home study expires you will need to update your home study with your caseworker. This will include a visit to your home, new background checks, medical evaluations, financial information, and other information necessary to ensure your home study is current and valid (see pricing above for “Home Study Update”).

Domestic Adoptions: The State of Michigan holds adoption laws that might differ from other states in the USA. Your placing agency or legal representation is responsible for your referral and for guiding you through the interstate adoption process, or requirements with representatives outside of Michigan.

International Adoptions: The State of Michigan honors all foreign adoption and there is no need or legal mechanism for re-adoption if your adoption is completed in your child’s birth country. If you become guardians in your child’s birth country then you will be required to finalize your adoption in Michigan and we will be part of the team that helps you complete that process. Your placing agency is responsible for your referral and for the in-country adoption process.

**The Grievance Procedure:**

You are advised to talk to your caseworker at any time during the home study process if you have concerns or questions. If you do not feel that the issue has been resolved please contact the Social Worker Supervisor, Audrey Brown, or Char Lanning, Executive Director to begin the grievance process.

Families have four options, which they may use to facilitate remediation of a grievance:

- 1) They are encouraged to discuss their concern with any staff at any time and request assistance with remedying the situation. FTA staff will attempt to resolve the issue using reasonably appropriate interventions or actions.

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If the disagreement involves concerns about documentation, they may file in writing a “correction” which will be attached to the document in FTA files. FTA may choose to not amend documentation produced by the organization, but anytime FTA discloses the FTA document, the family’s statement will automatically be disclosed simultaneously.

- 2) They may utilize a formal grievance procedure within FTA. FTA will attempt to resolve the issue using informal methods. If the family chooses to proceed with the formal grievance procedure, the Social Worker Supervisor will remind the family that the grievance must be put in writing and submitted to FTA. The formal grievance procedure is described immediately hereunder:
  - Any adult member of the family is encouraged to discuss any concerns or grievances with any FTA staff at any time.
  - Should such conversation not result in a satisfactory outcome from the family’s point of view, they may put their concern(s)/ grievance(s) in writing and submit that written grievance to the Social Worker Supervisor at FTA.
  - The supervisor will contact the family and respond in writing within 10 business days of receipt of the grievance.
  - Should the family still wish to grieve the issue, they may resubmit a written request to the FTA director who will again respond in writing within 10 business days of receipt.
- 3) The Board of Directors holds the last decision and can be contacted in writing after the family has received what they consider to be an unsatisfactory response from the director. Select members of the Board will meet with the family within 25 business days of receipt of the written grievance. They will document their findings in meeting minutes.
- 4) Lastly, the family may contact the local office of the State of Michigan’s Department of Human Services and file a complaint with the licensing officials. The local contact person is Vernon Oard, and his phone number is 616-356-0127. The state number is 866-856-0126.

FTA’s responsibilities in the grievance procedure include:

- Respond to grievances in a timely manner as specified above. (This includes acknowledging receipt of the grievance to the family and/or including any written dispute attached to FTA documents.)
- Provide an opportunity to the family to examine the case file including any documents considered in the process.
- Provide reasonable assistance accessing agency staff.
- Maintain documentation relating to a grievance in the case file.
- Document receipt of verbal or written grievances for quality improvement purposes.
- Review disputes, complaints, and grievances as part of the quality improvement program to identify opportunities for improvement.

On behalf of all of us at Families Through Adoption, we welcome you to the program, and look forward to a long and successful partnership as we assist you in growing your family.

The Families Through Adoption Team  
Char Lanning  
Executive Director

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