

INHERITANCE ADOPTIONS ADOPTIVE COUPLE POLICIES

The following are policies approved by the Board of Directors of Inheritance Adoptions and applicable to prospective adoptive parents. It is important to adhere to all policies; there is a reason for each, be it practical or legal, but regardless Inheritance Adoptions expects good-faith compliance and **may terminate the relationship between it and a couple found to have violated these rules**. Please contact Leslie Howard if there is a question about the application of any policy.

- 1) Leslie Howard is the staff liaison for the adoptive couples. If a couple has questions or information for the agency or birthmother please contact Leslie Howard. If a couple has a complaint or concern, please refer to the appeal process.
- 2) Adoptive couples are not allowed to purchase items on behalf of the birth parents at any time during the adoption process. All birth parent expenditures must be paid by the agency and passed through to the couple.
- 3) Adoptive couples are required to attend training offered by the agency on a quarterly basis before being placed on the agency's website or profile shown to a birthmother. The cost of the training is \$100.00 per couple.
- 4) Adoptive couples must begin paying the \$500.00 a month toward placement fee before being placed on the agency's website or profile shown to a birthmother. Further, if a couple's account is more than two months delinquent on the monthly payments without written approval from the Executive Director, the couple shall be removed from the active waiting couple list and their profile will no longer be shown. The couple will then have to reapply, subject to approval and requirements.
- 5) Adoptive couples will be entitled to a copy of the home screening once the home screening fee is paid. However, under no circumstances will the couple be reimbursed for the home screening fee.
- 6) In the case of emergency placement, the adoptive couple will be responsible for completing training under the direction of the agency.
- 7) Couples are expected to respect the time at the hospital when the baby is born as the birthparent's time. The adoptive couple will come to the hospital only by

invitation from the birthmother, and the amount of time spent at the hospital will be in accordance with the birthmother's wishes. The couple will not invite family and friends to the hospital unless the birthmother has approved their presence.

- 8) Adoptive couples are expected to respect the confidentiality of the birthparents and other adoptive couples they meet through Inheritance Adoptions. We understand that you will want to share your experiences with others and be asked many questions about the biological parents. We request that you respect the privacy of others and their right to share information that they are comfortable with sharing. We promise our birthparents confidentiality. We ask that you use discernment when discussing your situation with others, including extended family. Deidentifying information is helpful, unless birthparents have granted you permission for disclosure. For example, couples who are matched or recently placed should not post pictures of the birthmother on the internet.
- 9) Adoptive couples are expected to fulfill commitment made to birthparents in regard to type and amount of contact with them after the birth of the child.
- 10) When couples are in an open adoption with the birth family, couples need to be aware that open adoption is limited to the contact between the child and the birth family. Open adoption does not allow couples to purchase items for the birth family. Open adoption does not mean for the adoptive couple to take the role of counselor for the birth family. Boundaries must be established and adhered to.
- 11) Adoptive couples that suspect any abuse by birth families to siblings of the adopted child must report the suspected or known abuse to the agency immediately.
- 12) Adoptive couples are expected to understand the risks involved in adoption. The risks may include a birthmother changing her mind after an adoption plan is in place; for example, the birth mother may choose to parent her child after the baby is born, as is her right; or perhaps meeting a birthmother who may choose another couple. Another consideration is a birth mother failing to be completely honest with agency staff about her prenatal care, use of drugs or alcohol, or health care during pregnancy. Inheritance Adoptions will disclose to the couple all history of the birthparents that relates to the pregnancy and health of the child.