

# County of Santa Clara

Social Services Agency



333 W. Julian Street  
San Jose, California 95110-2335

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## GENERAL ADOPTION INFORMATION

Under California law adoption is confidential. A licensed adoption agency cannot disclose information to one party to an adoption, which would identify other parties to an adoption; however, non-identifying information from the file may be disclosed to members of the adoption triad (adoptee, birth parent, and adoptive family). In those instances where unanswered questions remain, please note that the information probably is not in the case record, or else it is considered confidential on the basis that it could be used to reveal the identity or whereabouts of another individual.

Adoption agencies may arrange for contact between an adult adoptee and a birth parent if each has signed a Consent for Contact. If siblings separated by adoption are over age 21 and each files Waivers of Rights to Confidentiality, names and addresses of each may be exchanged. The adoption agency will provide consent and waiver forms only upon request as soliciting consents or waivers is prohibited.

An adoption agency can receive, maintain, and release designated non-identifying letters, photos, or other materials to adult adoptees, birth parents, and adoptive parents of minor adoptees upon request.

Adoptees may request a copy of his/her amended birth certificate from the Office of Vital Records, 304 "S" Street, P. O. Box 370241, Sacramento, CA 94244-0241. Please contact the Office of Vital Records at (916) 445-2684 for any questions concerning birth certificates or fees.

Adoptees and birth parents may be able to obtain the original birth certificate by petitioning the superior court in the county of residence or the county of adoption for a court order to have it unsealed. Please contact the county clerk for information on petitioning the court.

The county clerk in the county where the adoption was granted maintains a closed adoption record. It can be opened only by an order of the superior court. Please contact the county clerk for information on petitioning the court for access to documents (relinquishment, adoption agreement, order, report to the court, etc.) filed in the office of the county clerk.