

ADOPTIONS TOGETHER

Home Study Checklist

If you have a home study completed by another agency, please review the following checklist and include all of the requested information with your home study. In order for your study to be considered, **ALL criteria listed below must be met**. Home studies that do meet the criteria will be retained for the period for which the home study is approved. Families whose home studies do not meet the criteria will not be considered.

- The home study has been completed by a licensed adoption agency. The name, address, and telephone number of the worker is included. All copies are provided on agency letterhead with an agency representative signature.
- The home study is current and is not more than one year old. If an update is being submitted, the original and any other updates or addendums are included. The home study must meet all of the regulations in the adoptive family's state it is from. It must be completely current as to the family situation; all prior adoptions **MUST** be finalized and documentation must be included attesting to the finalizations.
- The home study approval section specifies the type of child approved to adopt. This **MUST** include age range, sex, number of children, race, and an explanation of special needs that are and are not acceptable.
- The home study includes detailed information about the family's understanding of adoption issues, open adoptions and the discipline plan. Note: Adoptions Together and the State of Maryland have a no corporal punishment policy.
- The home study states the race of the applicants and children in the home (if any) and IF the family is approved for a transracial adoption, the home study demonstrates the family's readiness to adopt transracially. This includes how the family intends to address the challenges inherent in such adoptions, their ability to honor heritage, the diversity of their community and neighborhood and extended family support for a transracial adoption. All information on transracial training completed must be included.
- If the family is approved for a child with special needs, the home study demonstrates family's readiness to meet the child's special needs in terms of health care, support and professional services. It must further demonstrate the family's awareness of the impact on the family system and how the child will be integrated into the family. Proof of insurance coverage of special needs newborns must be provided.
- All paperwork for the home study is current on ALL family members. This includes medicals, fingerprints, child protective services clearances, and final decree of adoption for any adopted family members.
NOTE: YOU MUST HAVE AN FBI CLEARANCE PRIOR TO AN ADOPTIVE PLACEMENT WITH ADOPTIONS TOGETHER.
- A one-page narrative summary about the family, including family setting and structure; a one-paragraph description of each family member is also required.
- The home study needs to address the family's understanding of adoption and birthparents.
- The home study needs to include information on health insurance; prior to placement, the family must provide a Certificate of Insurance or a letter from the insurer certifying that the infant will be placed on the family's policy on the date of placement.

If your home study meets all of the above criteria, please be prepared to forward by email or overnight mail service a Dear Birthparent letter and several photos of your family so that we can include your family when we present approved families to birthparents. We will contact you and ask you to fill out an Adoptive Family Profile so that we may begin advocating for you.