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Adoption Overview

At the Sacramento Adoption Center, openness and honesty are central to the adoption process. We make sure everyone's interests are considered and that adoption plans are built on a foundation of mutual trust. We are not an adoption agency or an adoption facilitator. Our adoptions are direct and we charge flat fees to lower your overall costs in the adoption process.

- Birth parents and adopting parents are completely involved in the entire adoption process.
- Birth parents choose their child's adopting family.
- Both families mutually decide how much future contact (involvement) they want to have.
- Adopting parents are present when their child is born.
- Child will be discharged directly to adopting parents from the hospital.

Adoptions at the Center are planned in three Phases:

Phase 1: Initial Consultation

We will schedule a private conference with you to learn what your adoption expectations are — and provide you with the information you'll need to get started. At this conference, we will explain the different adoption procedures available to you and help you decide which process suits you best — with input from our in-house adoption attorney. We will describe how the Center becomes your advocate and we will answer all the questions you have about us, our services and the costs related to specific adoption plans.

The fee for Phase 1 services is \$350.00, which is credited toward your Phase 2: Adoption Outreach fee if you decide to move forward with us.

Phase 2: Adoption Outreach (pre-match)

After adopting parents have registered as clients at the Center, we will:

- Identify with prospective adoptive parents the parameters of their adoption plan and acquire biographical and other information needed to facilitate a match with a birth mom;
- Create an adoption family profile and dedicated webpage;
- Plan and implement print & digital marketing plans to advocate for the adopting parents;
- Share the adoption family profile with our pregnancy center referral network;
- Secure pregnancy verification and medical reports documenting a birth mom's health and baby's health;
- Present information about prospective adoptive parents to birth parents;
- Help prospective adoptive parents prepare for birth parent contact;

- Assess birth mom (a) to determine her sincerity concerning the proposed adoptive placement and what her adoption expectations are; (b) to establish that her adoption decision is free of coercion; and (c) to acquire background information and health history;
- Document birth mother’s eligibility to receive Medi-Cal benefits;
- Assist in arranging meetings between prospective adoptive parents and birth mom;
- Provide information to birth mom and prospective adoptive parents about the legal aspects of the adoption plan prospective adoptive parents are considering with birth mom;
- Establish birth mom’s budget regarding adoption-related living expenses, if any, incurred post-match during pregnancy and the six-week to two-month period post-birth.

The flat fee for Phase 2: Adoption Outreach is \$7,500. It is payable when adopting parents register with the Center.

Phase 3: Case Management *(post-match through pregnancy and delivery)*

After adopting parents are chosen by birth mom to parent her child and have committed to proceed with her in adoption planning, we will:

- Maintain contact with birth and adopting parents to facilitate on-going adoption planning that meets everyone’s needs;
- Schedule and attend hospital tour and prenatal care/ultrasound appointments on dates and times convenient for everyone;
- Provide adopting parents with copies of birthing records and all medical records generated pre and post-birth;
- Interface with adoption counselor who may be asked to provide birth parent with adoption-related counseling;
- Supervise birth and placement process;
- Facilitate agreed-upon post-adoption contact, if any.

The flat fee for Phase 3: Case Management is \$7,500. It is payable when adopting parents are chosen by a birth parent to parent her baby and they have agreed to move forward with her in adoption planning.

Other Costs of Adoption

Legal Help

After your match with a birth mom, you will choose an attorney with adoption expertise to help you finalize the legal aspects of your adoption plan. The attorney you choose will provide you with an Attorney-Client Fee Agreement applicable to the specific circumstances of your particular adoption plan.

The Center’s in-house adoption attorney, Tom Volk (CA State Bar No. 67904), will provide you with a complete assessment of the legal aspects of any adoption plan you are considering. The fact that Tom provides you with the up-front legal assessment needed to ensure a good outcome does not in any way obligate you to choose him as the attorney who helps you finalize your adoption plan — although, under most circumstances, he will be available to do so, if that is your request.

Sample Adoption Budget – \$25,000 – \$35,000

- **\$7,500.00 – Adoption Outreach flat fee (pre-match)** – *see above description*
- **\$7,500.00 – Case Management flat fee (post-match)** – *see above description*
- **\$7,000.00+ est. – Attorney Fees – (20 hours or more at average of \$350.00/hour, dependent on attorney chosen)** – A legal fee to an attorney selected by you to legally finalize the adoption plan with the birth mom whose baby you are adopting. The attorney will provide you with a written attorney/client fee agreement identifying the legal steps needed to finalize your adoption plan – and the legal fees and costs related thereto. Realistically, it may take 20 attorney hours, or more, to finalize the adoption, depending on case circumstances;
- **\$500.00 est. – Birth Parent legal fees** – A reasonable attorney fee (up to a maximum of \$500.00, unless a higher fee is agreed to by the parties) for legal services rendered on behalf of the birth parent, if she elects to be represented by separate counsel (please see *Family Code §8800(d)(1)*);
- **\$1,000.00 est. – Social Worker fees** – A reasonable fee to the adoption services provider who is statutorily mandated to provide specified adoption-related services to the birth parent (please see *Family Code §8801.5(f)*);
- **\$300.00 est. – Birth Parent Counseling fees** – A reasonable counseling fee to the adoption services provider or licensed psychotherapist who may be asked by birth parent to provide her with adoption-related counseling (please see *Family Code §8801.5(c)(5)*);
- **\$4,500.00 – Adoption Investigation fee** – A statutory fee due to the state agency [the CA Department of Social Services] which investigates your adoption and submits a report regarding the granting of your adoption petition to the court in which your adoption petition is pending (please see *Family Code Section 8810(a)(1)*); and
- **Travel expenses** – Charges for travel expenses (e.g., mileage at prevailing IRS rate) related to the adoption services which you and your baby’s birth parent(s) are provided at the Center.
- **Birth Parent Expenses, if applicable** – In addition, you may agree to pay birth parent adoption-related expenses — e.g., uninsured medical expenses incurred during pregnancy, if any, and adoption-related living expenses (food, housing, utilities, cell phone, transportation and maternity clothing) incurred post-match during the pregnancy and the six-week to two-month postpartum period [depending on whether your baby is delivered naturally or via c-section]. Any request by birth mom for adoption-related financial assistance must be in writing; and you will be provided written receipts for any money disbursed to birth parent. (Please see *Family Code §8812.*)

Note: “est.” is an estimated cost depending on the actual circumstances of your adoption plan. Adoption budgets will vary; this sample budget is provided for informational purposes only.