HOME STUDY REQUIREMENTS FOR PROSPECTIVE ADOPTIVE FAMILIES IN NEW JERSEY
DOMESTIC ADOPTION—AGENCY PROGRAM

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

FORMS (accessed on client only website)
- Home Study Evaluation Agreement – (AP-52-AG)
- Medical Examination Form (one for each household member) - (AP-67-AG)
- Pediatric Report (all children in household) – (CH-02-AG)
- Financial Form (with supporting documents) – (AP-87-AG)
- Notification of Placement of Child in Home- (AP-45-NJ)
- Discipline Policy – (AP-55-AG)
- HIV Policy – (AP-58-AG)
- Guardianship – (AP-70-AG)
- Questionnaires for TransRacial Adoption (one per applicant) – (AP-30-AG)
- Verification Questionnaire (one for each household member over 18) – (AP-91-AG)
- Medical Living expense Non Reimburse Acknowledgement NJ – (AP-84-NJ)
- Local Police Clearance (one per household member over the age of 18) (AP-208-NJ)
- Adoption Issues – (AP-37-AG)
- Information on Rights of Clients – (AP-127-NJ)

DOCUMENTS
- Copy of Valid Driver’s License for each applicant
- Copy of current medical insurance health card (one per applicant)
- Copy of Birth Certificate for each household member
- Copy of Marriage License
- Copy of Divorce Decree for each applicant (if applicable)
- Copy of Social Security Card or Passport for each household member
- Employment and Income Verification Letter (one for each applicant-sample online)
- IRS Forms: W-2 & 1040 (First page of 1040 only)
- Autobiography (one per applicant)
- Child Care Class Certificate
- Pet Vaccine Documentation
- MapQuest directions to your home from 451 Woodland Avenue, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002

OTHERS IN THE HOME:
- Copy of Valid Driver’s License with photograph, a valid passport or other government-issued picture identification for all household members over 18
- Medical Examination for all household members – (AP-67-AG)
- Local Police Clearance (one per household member over 18) – (AP-208-AG)
- NJ State Criminal Fingerprint Clearance (one per household member over 18)
- NJ FBI Criminal Fingerprint Clearance (one per household member over 18)
- NJ State Child Abuse Clearance (one per household member over 18 – please provide name and email address for each member)
- Out of state Child Abuse Clearance (if applicable)
TO DO CHECKLIST:
1. Schedule State/FBI clearances prior to 2nd home study session
2. Schedule medical examinations
3. Complete Child Abuse Clearances on the portal site that will be emailed to you

NOTE: All paperwork (Clearances and Medical Exams included) can be no older than 6 months at the time of the Home Study approval

Please scan and email all forms and documents in one package and mail all originally signed documents (see list). Please allow a minimum of 5 working days for the paperwork to be reviewed. You will be contacted after the paperwork is reviewed to request any additional paperwork and or to schedule your home visit. Please save copies of all documents and paperwork for your personal record.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY - Explanation and Guidelines

The autobiography is one of the primary ways we have of getting to know you. We are not looking for literary style; rather we are looking for a realistic picture of you -- your experiences, feelings, relationships, etc., which have made you the person you are, today. Please feel free to talk about difficult times, as well as good times. We know that everyone has had successes and failures in life, and that sometimes the struggles, themselves, are what has had the greatest impact upon your growth, development, self-awareness and self-actualization.

Please type your autobiography. Always save a copy for yourself.

Here are the types of topics to include and cover in your autobiography:

1. **Introduction and Personal Profile**
   - Describe yourself; include physical description, personality and temperament.
   - Describe your strengths and weaknesses.

2. **Your Background**
   A. **Family Composition**
      - Describe your parents: Please include: names, ages, overall description, current residence(s), occupations, significant background information about your parents. If deceased, how they passed away and how you dealt with the loss.
      - Describe your siblings: Please include names, ages, overall descriptions, current residences, marital status, name, age, and occupation of spouse, children’s names and ages, occupations, significant background information about your siblings.
   
   B. **Family Relationships**
      1. **Parents**
         - Describe your parents’ relationship with each other.
         - Describe your relationship with your parents, past and present. How often do you have contact with your parents?
         - How did/do they display love for each other?
         - How did/do they display love for their children?

      2. **Siblings, if applicable**
         - Describe your relationship with your siblings, past and present.
         - How often do you have contact with your siblings?

3. **Growing Up -- Childhood through Adolescence**
   A. **Activities**
      - What were your favorite interests, hobbies and activities?
B. Hardships
- Did you experience any significant hardships or problems during your childhood development?
- Was there anything that made you feel different or unlike other children? If so, please explain.

C. Teen-age years and adolescence
- What were your biggest problems during your teen-age years?
- Did you experience adolescent rebellion?
- Who was your primary support group? (With whom did you identify?)
- Did you experience identity conflicts or confusions during this stage of development?
- If you identify as LGBTQ, please describe your coming out experience. When did you realize you were gay? How did your family react to your coming out?
- Comment about your dating history during your adolescence.
- Did you have any serious relationships during that time?

4. Educational History
- Please provide a chronology of your education, including grade school, high school and post high school. (Include name of school, major/minor and degree earned if applicable)
- What was school like for you?
- What kind of student were you?
- Did you have to study hard, or did school come easily to you?
- Did you enjoy school?
- What were your favorite and least favorite subjects?
- Did you participate in any activities, clubs, etc?
- Did you have any learning problems?

5. Employment History and Current Occupation
- Please give a summary of your job history, including the name of the company and position, length of time at each job, and reasons for leaving.
- Describe the type of work you do now.
- What do you enjoy about your work? Is there anything you dislike about the type of work you do or the specific job you now have?
- Will your employment change after you are placed with a child/children?

6. Courtship and marriage/committed relationship to current spouse/partner, if applicable
- How did you and your spouse/partner meet?
- What attracted you to your spouse/partner?
- Describe your spouse/partner. Are there any changes you would like your spouse/partner to make?
- How long did you date? What was the courtship period like?
- Why did you decide to get married/committed relationship?
- When and where did you get married/committed relationship?
- Describe your marriage/committed relationship.
- What do you feel are the strengths of your marriage/committed relationship?
- What are the weak points or areas for improvement in your marriage/committed relationship?
- What are the areas of disagreement? How do you resolve these conflicts?
- What problems have you and your spouse/partner had to overcome in your courtship or marriage/committed relationship?
- Do your respective families accept your spouse/partner?
- How did you initially get along with your in-laws? How do you get along, now?

7. Questions for Single Applicants, if applicable
- Why are you deciding to adopt as a single person at this time?
- Would your plans to adopt change if you were to meet a partner?
- Please describe your support systems and identify those who will assist you in parenting the child(ren) you adopt.

8. Previous marriage(s) and divorce(s), if applicable
• Please describe your previous marriage(s) and circumstances of divorce, if applicable
• What did you learn from this experience?
• Were there children born of this union? If so, what were/are the custody and visitation arrangements? Are you responsible for child support? What are the terms and conditions for child support?

9. **Lifestyle – History, Activities, Hobbies, Interests, Etc.**
• Do you have a criminal history? If yes, please explain. (This includes arrests and convictions, even if charges were later dropped or history was later expunged. Please note, even if the record was expunged, it will come up on the FBI clearance)
• How would you describe your lifestyle?
• What do you enjoy doing during your leisure time?
• Do you have any special interests, activities, hobbies, etc.?
• If you are married, what activities do you enjoy doing, together?
• How will the addition of a child, twins or sibling group impact your lifestyle?

10. **Religion**
• What religion do you practice, if any?
• If you are married, do you and your spouse share and practice the same or different religions? Please explain, if applicable.
• Describe your level of involvement in your religion.
• How often do you attend church/synagogue?
• In what religion, if any, would you raise your child?

11. **Parenting Experiences, Issues, Attitudes, Nurturing and Discipline**
• Are you currently parenting? If so, are they biological or adopted children? Describe your parenting experiences.
• Have you ever provided foster care for dependent children? If so, what was that experience like?
• Comment on any significant experiences you may have had with children.
• What adjustments do you anticipate when a child (or another child) enters your family?
• If you are open to twins or siblings, what additional adjustments do you anticipate?
• If you are married or in a committed relationship, how will a child, twins or siblings affect your marriage?
• How do you feel a child should be shown love and nurturing?
• What is your definition of discipline?
• How do you feel about corporal punishment?
• How do you plan to discipline your child?
• If you are married, do you anticipate different child-rearing methods, discipline approaches, etc. that may cause conflicts between you and your spouse? How will you handle these conflicts?

12. **Plans For When You Are Placed with a Child**
• What is your childcare plan? How much time, if any, will each partner be taking off from work? What is the plan if/when both partners return to work?
• How will your childcare plan be different if you are open to twins or a sibling group?

13. **Infertility And Childlessness, if applicable**
• Describe your infertility history. Include length of time in infertility treatment, procedures, etc.
• State the medical facts regarding your infertility problem. Is your infertility conclusive or inconclusive?
• Does the doctor advise further testing and treatments?
• Have you considered the option of remaining childfree?
• What effect would continued childlessness have on your marriage?
• What impact has infertility had on your life?
• Have you sought counseling or therapy to deal with the losses associated with infertility?
• Do you feel you have resolved your infertility -- both individually and as a couple?
• What have you learned from this experience?

14. **Adoption Issues and Motivations**
• When did you begin to consider adoption as a means to building or enlarging your family?
Please discuss your motivations to adopt.
Describe any personal experiences you have had with adoption.
Have you read any books or attended any courses about adoption? If so, what have you learned about adoption losses? Have your opinions regarding adoption changed?
What are the differences between raising a biological child vs. raising an adopted child?
Have you shared your decision to adopt with family members and friends? What have their reactions been? If you have not yet shared your decision, why not?

15. Views on Expectant/Birth Parents and Openness in Adoption
- What are your feelings and attitudes about women/men who place their child for adoption?
- Adoption is a lifelong process – do you think you will be able to comfortably discuss adoption with your child?
- How would you address the subject of birth parents with your child? When would you begin to talk to your child about their birth family?
- What questions do you anticipate your child having about adoption and his/her story? How would you address these questions?
- If your child had questions or adoption issues that you were unsure of how to handle, what resources would you call upon?
- What information do you plan to share with your extended family about your child’s birth family/birth history/reasons for placement?
- What is your understanding of an open adoption? How would you define open adoption?
- Why is open adoption vs. closed/traditional adoption or international adoption your choice for building your family?
- What are your feelings on exchanging information, including sending and receiving letters, pictures, gifts from time to time, from and to your child’s birth family members, if requested, until the child reaches age 18?
- How do you feel about exchanging identifying information with your child’s birth mother?
- What are your feelings about having visits with your child’s birth family members on a yearly basis?

16. Preparedness for Transracial Adoption
- What racial backgrounds are you open to in the child you hope to adopt? AFTH adheres to the National Census Bureau classification of race and ethnicity, which includes the following races: White/Caucasian; Black/African-American; American Indian/Alaska Native; and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. Race is different than ethnic heritage. People of Hispanic ethnicity may be African-American or Caucasian.
- If you are open to a child of a different race (any race other than your own), please describe the challenges you anticipate and your plans for dealing with those challenges within your family and community.
- If you are open to adopting a child of a different race, please complete the Questionnaire for Transracial Adoptions (Attached).

17. Openness to Expectant Parent Situations
- What age range are you open to? (Newborn to what age?)
- Are you open to twins or siblings? If yes, how are you prepared to parent more than one child? What age range are you open to for siblings?
- What is your openness regarding pre-natal alcohol and/or drug exposure?
- What is your openness regarding birth parent mental health issues?
- What is your openness regarding birth parent criminal history?
- What is your openness regarding pregnancy which is the result of rape or incest?
- What is your openness regarding a birth parent who tests positive for HIV or Hepatitis B or C?
- Are you open to any known special needs? If so, describe.
- Describe what research you have done to assist you in determining your openness regarding various expectant parent backgrounds or circumstances.
- Please include any other information regarding the type of child you are hoping to adopt that you feel would be important for us to know.

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