



Adoptions From The Heart®

AGENCY POLICIES FOR DOMESTIC ADOPTIONS

Levels of Openness

- Adoptions From the Heart requires each family in our program to be open to a minimum level of contact after placement. The minimum level of contact is defined as an exchange of names, exchange of letters and pictures through AFTH and two-yearly visits (can be at our agency picnic or other agency sponsored events if the date and time work for all parties). Not all parents considering adoption are looking for openness initially, but families applying to the program must still be open to the minimum contact described above in the future. The adoptive parents must be willing to go to the state/area where a child was born for any visits promised when shown to parents.
- Not all states have legally binding contact agreements. Agreeing to a level of openness is based on the honor system. We expect you to abide by the terms you agreed upon. You are committing to people who are placing their trust and their baby in your care, and to your child.
- Expecting parents who reside in states with legally binding contact agreements may choose to use one or not. Expecting parents may also choose to only select families in a state with legally binding agreements. Legally binding agreements require signature and notary witnesses which requires full legal names to be listed.

Eligibility

- Adoptions From The Heart places children with single persons, married couples and families in partnerships where allowed by state law.
- Families in partnerships where adoption as a family is not allowed by state law may have one person adopt as a single parent. Married and partnership applicants must have had a two-year, permanent, co-habitation relationship before being approved.
- Prospective Adoptive Parents must attend a free information meeting webinar prior to submitting their application.
- Prospective adoptive parents must be 21 or older at the time of application.
- Applicants must be a minimum of 10 years older than the child they are seeking to adopt or a maximum of 50 years older than the child they are seeking to adopt.
- Applicants should be citizens of the United States or Permanent Residents (green card holders)

Infertility

- All families must agree not to participate in or continue infertility treatments once they have submitted their application to Adoptions From the Heart for the placement program. Adoptions From The Heart believes that for a successful adoption placement to occur, a family must have stopped medical treatments to concentrate on their adoption plan.

Application for Home Study

- Once the agency receives the application and required paperwork, you will be notified within one week regarding the acceptance or denial of your application.
- Families must RSVP and begin attending courses within 3 months of their application date.
- Required Education Courses must be attended before the Home Study meetings will begin

Home Studies

- Adoptions From The Heart will conduct a home study review of a home study completed through another agency, attorney, or social worker if it was completed prior to the family's application date to AFTH, depending on state regulations.
- Upon review of the home study, the family may be required to have their home study updated or addended, if necessary.
- If a family has a home study completed from another state, AFTH will complete a full home study, depending on the date of the original home study and the receiving state's regulations. Addendums are not approved for relocations out of state.
- Adoptions From The Heart requires that all families have their home studies completed/updated by AFTH after submitting their application.
- If a family comes to AFTH with a **home study over three years old, a review will not be completed, and it's required to have a full home study completed by AFTH.**
- Families must always keep their home study current. If the home study expires, the family will be placed on hold from the Profile Book until an update is completed. AFTH encourages families to start on their updated paperwork before their home study expires to ensure the length of time families are on hold from placement possibilities is minimal.
- Home studies must be current at the time of placement of a child.
- Families who have a valid home study (within 3 years), but who have adopted a child since its completion, must have an update completed by AFTH in order to adopt another child through AFTH. A full new home study may be required, depending on state regulations.
- Prospective adoptive families agree to be open and honest with the agency and participate in a self-evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses.
- Home studies must be completed within 6 months of the recesoipt of your home study paperwork. In NY, regulations state the home study should be completed within 6 months of the application date.
- Families who cannot or do not meet this time deadline will not be considered ready to adopt, and their file will be closed. The home study will not be written since non-compliance was on the part of the prospective adoptive parents. On a case-by-case basis the agency will review individual files to determine if the family is eligible for a 3-month extension, and a fee will apply. If the family is deemed ineligible and wishes to have their home study completed in the future, they will be required to have additional sessions and furnish current paperwork. They will also be required to pay a new application and home study fee. Families are only eligible for review for a home study extension one (1) time.
- AFTH also requires that post-placement supervisory reports must be done by AFTH unless the family resides in a state where AFTH is not licensed, or if a state licensing body has different regulations.

Home Study Update

- Home study updates will be completed in lieu of a full home study where the state regulations allow. Each state has different regulations on when a home study can be updated, and when a full new home study needs to be written.
- Families will receive a home study update application 3 months before their home study expires. All update paperwork must be received at least 2 weeks before the expiration date or their file will be placed on hold. If the update cannot be completed and approved within 3 months of the expiration date, their file will be closed. Home Study Restart fee does not apply to Home Study Updates. Families must complete their home study update within 3-month of its expiration.

Education:

- All prospective Adoptive Parents are required to complete education with AFTH regardless of previous training provided.
- AFTH required courses include: Transracial Adoption Education, Preparing for Open Adoption (Ed Course I), and Intersectionality Education.
- For families requesting to be considered for placement/approval for a child over 12 months of age, they must attend the Non-Newborn Adoption Education Course.
- Families who return to AFTH's Domestic Program for a second adoption must complete the Education 2 course, Transracial Adoption Education Course (updated in 2024), Intersectionality if not taken previously, and Non-newborn if applicable.
- AFTH wants families to make informed decisions when completing their profile keys and requires a mandatory education course regarding prenatal substance use before entering into the profile books. The agency-sponsored webinar, Prenatal Substance Use, discusses the effects of drug and alcohol use on the newborn during pregnancy, as well as withdrawal symptoms and short and long-term effects of exposure.
- All prospective adoptive families are required to take an infant childcare class before entering the profile books. AFTH offers three different ways to fulfill this program requirement: In-Person, Live Virtual, and On-Demand Webinar. All of these options will cover the basics of infant and childcare, including newborn appearance, behaviors, diapering and dressing, feeding, umbilical cord care, newborn health, and safety basics, when to call your pediatrician, car seat safety, and other changes that come with new parenthood. They are exclusively designed. Clients can elect to take the agency on-demand course, in-person course, or a class in their community, as long as it covers topics listed in this section.

Continuing Education

- All prospective adoptive families waiting for placement are required to complete 5 hours of continuing education per person per year. Requirements include one hour of the agency's Waiting Family Refresher Webinar and at least one additional hour of an agency-sponsored event or webinar. Additional details about this requirement are available from the local office. This requirement is due by the date of the home visit for home study update or new full home study.
- AFTH highly recommends and will accept credit hours for families who complete CPR and Car Seat Safety courses.

- Adoptive families who reside in CT, DE, NJ, NY, & PA and complete a home study update after placement for the purpose of finalization are waived from the continuing education requirement.

Appropriateness of Families for Open Adoption

- Adoptions From The Heart reserves the right, at any stage of the process, to exclude any couples or individuals deemed by our staff to be in need of further psychological evaluation, counseling, or anger management. They will be considered once again when they have completed requested services.
- Evaluation of couples' and individuals' suitability for Open Adoption is ongoing and continues throughout the family's contact with the Agency. This includes the time of being chosen, at the hospital, and during the post-placement process.
- Families must be willing to enter into a legally binding future contact agreement where states allow it according to the openness listed on the adoptive parent profile key.

Medical, Mental Health, and Social Issues

- Adoptions From The Heart does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or employment status or other classification protected by federal and state law.
- The agency does not impose or apply eligibility criteria that screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities from fully and equally enjoying any adoption-related services unless the criteria can be shown to be necessary for the provision of those services.
- Medical, psychological, drug, and alcohol or other social issues will need to be documented by one or more treating professionals to ensure that the health and safety needs of children will be met. All Agency decisions are based on a "best interests of the child standard" and will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- The agency may request individualized assessments in consideration of applicants as prospective adoptive parents. Assessments may include professional evaluations and/or references.
- Once a prospective adoptive parent is approved for consideration, expectant parents select the prospective adoptive parents for their child based on their preferences. In furtherance of the agency's obligation to match children born to biological families with prospective adoptive parents based upon the mutual goals of both parties, the agency will share non-identifying information with the expectant parents & their family to permit them to make an informed decision about who they select to parent their child. *This information may include such issues as the prospective adoptive parents' age, race, religion, education, sexual orientation, gender, weight, social history, health and medical history, mental health history, and drug and alcohol. All prospective adoptive parents must expressly provide their acceptance of this provision by signing these policies to be eligible for consideration by expectant parents making an adoption plan.*

Corporal Punishment

- Adoptions From The Heart does not condone any form of corporal punishment. Adoptions From The Heart will not approve home studies for families using this means of discipline.

- Additionally, AFTH firmly believes that youth should not be treated as deviant, pathological, immoral, or in need of changing because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or questioning status. Do not contract or seek treatment services with mental health whose purpose is to help the child be “cisgender” and/or follow your ideals of gender/sexual identity or dismiss the youth’s understanding of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or questioning status. In addition, do not seek out providers who continue to subject young LGBTQ people to conversion therapy, these practices have been condemned by major medical and mental health organizations in the country.

Sharing of Confidential Information

- Confidential information will only be shared with permission from either party.

Placement Fees

- Adoptions From the Heart collects the placement fee at the time of the match. If fees change after the payment is collected, but before placement, the family remains responsible for the fee paid at the time of the match.
- Placement fees are deemed earned when the Adoption Placement Agreement is signed (Foster Care Agreement in VA).
- For the agency’s Domestic Infant Adoption Program, in the event of a disruption, the placement fee earned and credited, but the fee will not be returned under any circumstances. If eligible, for the next placement with AFTH:
 - If the placement fee that was paid is lower than the new placement fee, families will need to pay the fee in effect at the time of the next placement.
 - If the placement fee that was paid is higher than the fee in effect at the time of placement, there will be a refund of the difference.
- For the placement of a young child, (children 4 years of age or older), in the event of a disruption, the agency will automatically earn \$3,000 for birth parent assessment, records and counseling. The remaining fee will be returned to the prospective adoptive parents.

Legal fees

- All legal costs pertaining to your adoption, including but not limited to termination of parental rights, contested adoptions, and adoption finalizations are the full responsibility of the adoptive family.
- Some states require that expectant parents be seen by an attorney prior to the birth, or in case of an emergency situation, before signing legal paperwork for the termination of their parental rights to advise them of their legal rights under their State’s law. In these situations, the prospective adoptive parents are responsible for the attorney fees associated with this requirement, whether or not the expectant parents follow through with their plan for adoption.
- All court costs of processor server charges involving your adoption are your responsibility and are usually in addition to the fee your attorney charges.

Pregnancy

- All applicants must notify the Agency immediately if they become pregnant. Failure to do this will result in their immediate removal from all AFTH programs.

- AFTH understands that families may become pregnant but are not able to carry a baby to term. When the Agency is notified of a pregnancy, temporary removal from the Profile Book will occur (placing the profile “on hold”).
 - Families will be put back into the program as soon as they request if there is a disruption in the pregnancy.
 - If the family has a successful pregnancy, their file will be closed, and all fees will be considered earned. After one year from the birth of their child, the family may reapply for the Domestic Program, and all applicable fees must be paid again.
 - If a pregnancy occurs after a family has been selected by expectant parents, a discussion of this situation will take place between the prospective adoptive parents and the expectant parents (assisted by the social workers), unless the prospective adoptive parents choose to terminate their commitment to the adoption placement.
 - If a pregnancy occurs after the Termination of Parental Rights, the Agency recommends that the adoptive parents inform the birth parents so that they can maintain trust in their relationship.

Other Adoption, Placements, Surrogacy Arrangements or Foster Care

- All applicants must immediately notify the Agency if they are actively engaged in a private adoption placement, an adoption placement with another agency/ attorney, or are expecting a child through surrogacy. When the Agency is notified, the family's file will be placed on hold. Once the legal risk period has passed, the file will be closed.
- Adoptions From the Heart will gladly work with prospective adoptive parents who are also licensed foster parents by their local state or county, including those who are considering adoption through the foster care system where states allow. Upon placement of a foster child, the family must notify AFTH immediately and the family must go on a profile hold until the agency can conduct an interview, clearances, and addendum if necessary.
- AFTH understands that the foster care adoption process can be difficult and complicated and will make efforts to accommodate families participating in both the foster care adoption process and the private adoption process. Some parameters must be put in place to ensure that prospective adoptive parents who are also foster parents are able to handle all potential placements appropriately, however. For this reason, prospective adoptive parents who are also foster parents must put their profile on hold for potential placements with AFTH when their foster care placement enters the Termination of Parental Rights phase and they move forward to become a pre-adoptive family. They can remain on hold for a period of up to 6 months. If the adoption of their foster child is successful, they will be eligible to re-enter the adoption process with AFTH after the finalization.
- A home study addendum, clearances, medical and additional paperwork may be applicable with each foster child placement.
- Prospective adoptive parents who are also foster parents must also make arrangements for temporary respite care for their pre-adoptive foster child(ren) in the case of an out-of-state emergency placement.
- Adoptions From The Heart, with its years of experience, discourages families from receiving the placement of a second child, from either another agency or private source, until after their first adoption is finalized.

Retention of Case Records

- Adoptions From The Heart keeps all placement records on file for 99 years.

HIV Testing of Child

- AFTH wants to make sure that prospective adoptive parents have as much information available to them as possible when receiving a placement. Most of the hospitals at which parents deliver routinely test for HIV in their clinics and others do not. Some facilities will only test parents who fall into the high-risk groups. The social service staff at AFTH encourages all pregnant parents to have an HIV test performed. However, AFTH cannot force them, and they may or may not agree.
- If the prospective adoptive parents wish to request the expectant parent undergo an HIV test, the parent can then agree to the test, disagree, and not have the test or may decide to choose another family.
 - If the expectant parent agrees to the testing, the prospective adoptive parents will be responsible for the costs, whether or not the placement occurs.
 - The prospective adoptive parents can also request that the baby be tested, although this testing best reflects the baby's true HIV status if completed 12-18 months after birth (according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Institute of Health). Before that time, the baby will continue to have the parents's antibodies in its system and will test how the parent tests, which may not reflect the baby's true status.

Payment of Medical Bills for Expecting Parents

- Adoptions From The Heart assists expecting parents in applying for medical coverage for which they are eligible if they do not have insurance. There may be compelling reasons, however, why a parent does not want to or is unable to use their own insurance. In these cases, the prospective adoptive parents will be responsible for the medical bills (every effort is made to be informed of this before committing to the placement).
- AFTH also attempts to secure the best, low-cost care that is acceptable to the pregnant parent at a medical facility near them.
- Assistance with medical costs is not dependent upon the parent's decision to place their child for adoption.
- Medical bills are paid as received with escrowed funds. Any remaining escrowed medical funds will be held in escrow until after finalization.
- Post-birth pregnancy-related expenses will be paid for from the prospective adoptive parents' escrow account.
- Although every effort is made to secure medical coverage and know copays and deductibles prior to picking a family, prospective adoptive parents should be aware that any and all unforeseen medical bills related to pregnancy and delivery will be their responsibility.

Children's Medical Care

- AFTH reserves the right to refuse to accept applications from prospective adoptive families whose philosophical beliefs discourage the use of traditional medical practices, including physical examinations, immunizations, and prompt medical attention when ill or injured.

We expect families to follow a schedule like the CDC's schedule for children's vaccinations.

- AFTH requires that families agree not to co-sleep or share a bed with the child they are placed with for adoption, as this practice is unsafe and is not recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- Families must secure medical insurance for their child immediately after placement and must have evidence of this coverage.

Written & Video profiles

- A family's written profile is shown to all expectant parents whose requests fit the family's profile information form ("profile key"). A family may be called or emailed to see if they will consider a particular set of circumstances that falls outside of the profile key and will be notified immediately if they are chosen by expectant parents. Written confirmation of acceptance of the email situation must be received from both prospective parents (if applicable).
- Adoptions From The Heart has a contract with Parentfinder. Parentfinder assists prospective adoptive families in creating their profile pages and placing their profile online for a fee. Prospective Adoptive parents are eligible to elect in or out of parentfinder services.
- AFTH requires written profiles to be up to five (5) double-sided pages (or ten (10) single-sided pages) Each page must be in a three-hole punch plastic sleeve --each plastic sleeve should then be stapled together along the left side (like a booklet). We do not accept hardbound books. Cannot be larger than 8.5 x 11. If prospective adoptive parents completed a profile prior to applying to AFTH they will be required to re-do their profile to meet these guidelines.
- Prospective Adoptive Parents are required to have their written profile approved by Adoptions From The Heart.
- Adoptions From The Heart has a contract with All Ways Video to video all families working with our Agency inside the service area. Cost of videos will be paid to All Ways Video and given directly to the videographer at the time of your video recording. You will be informed about this in more detail at the Profile Meeting.
- Video and written profiles must be updated after three (3) years.
- If the family has a child, the child must be included in the video for a short time.
- Families outside of the states where the Agency is licensed can have their video done by traveling to an agency office or using an independent videographer who then must send it to one of All Ways Video staff to edit and format to the Agency specifications.

Acceptance of Child Match & Profile Key

- Families will be asked to complete a form that indicates which background circumstances are acceptable to them. This form can be changed at any time by the family. However, if a family is selected and declines the placement based on a criterion that they agreed to (including all financial obligations), AFTH will no longer be able to work with the family.
- All placements are done at legal risk as AFTH does not use foster care, except when deemed appropriate.
- Families must be willing to accept emergency placements with little or no opportunity to meet the biological parents and must be available to travel to pick up a baby with only 24

hours' notice. If a family is not available in that short amount of time, including an illness such as COVID-19, then they must place themselves on hold for placements until they are available.

- Families must be willing and approved to accept a child of either sex.
- Families must be willing and approved to accept a newborn with a gestational age of 37 weeks or more.
- Families must have all agency fees required for placement available at the time of the match.
- Families must be able to travel to the state where the baby is born and remain there until the Interstate Compact has been processed and approved.
- Families must be willing to accept a child whose parent's social/medical history may be limited or unknown.
- Families must be willing to accept a child born to an expecting parent who may or may not have received prenatal care.
- Families must be willing to adhere to the agency's profile key, which allows them to choose some criterion for potential matches, but also limits their choice regarding certain factors. Some factors that families are NOT able to choose include gender/sex of the child, cigarette smoking, marijuana smoking, birth parent history of depression, anxiety, and ADHD without medication, and birth father history of incarceration and drug/alcohol use.
- Families must honor the future contact agreed upon in their Profile Key.

Out of Area Expectant Parent Placements

- Families electing to be matched with expectant parents outside of our Agency's service area will be responsible for the additional costs of services provided to them.
- Adoptions From The Heart will provide initial phone counseling to the expectant parents and obtain basic social and medical backgrounds to ensure they are compatible with the family's key. The agency will then contact a licensed adoption agency and/or attorney in the state/area where the expectant parents resides to ascertain the costs to provide them with services. Adoptions From The Heart will then enter into an agreement for Out Of Area Expectant Parent Program with the out-of-state agency and/or attorney and the family will be asked to sign a Placement Agreement for Out of Area Expectant Parents with AFTH's placement fee being reduced by \$3,000 less than the fee that is in effect at the time of the placement. Any family selected by expectant parents that AFTH can provide in-person counseling to will not be eligible for the discount.

Re-Applicants for Open Adoption

- Families wanting to reapply to the Open Adoption domestic program will need to wait until after their first adoption is finalized, and the child is a year old.
- If a family has a birth child, they must wait a year from the birth of the child to apply to adopt.
- Families will need to pay the application fee so that a new file can be opened.
- Please be aware that if a family has not honored the future contact commitment to the first birth parents of their child(ren), they will not be eligible for this program.

- For families that become pregnant after paying their Program Fee, they will go on hold and when they want to go back into the program after the birth they will need to reapply. If your pregnancy is not successful, the hold on your file will be removed.

Disruption Policy

- If either of the biological parents changes their mind about the adoption and wants the baby returned, and the prospective adoptive parents have signed the Agency Placement Agreement, or in VA the Agency Foster Home Agreement and At-Risk statement, but before the biological parents' parental rights are officially terminated, it is considered an "adoption disruption". Prospective Adoptive Parents must work with the AFTH social workers to arrange a return of the child to the Agency as soon as possible.
- Adoptions From The Heart and its staff acknowledge that an adoption disruption is an emotionally distressing experience for prospective adoptive parents. Our counselors are available to support families during this difficult time.
- If a disruption occurs by the birth family, placement fees are credited toward the next placement for the agency's Domestic Infant Adoption Program
- For a child 4 years and up, if a disruption occurs, \$3,000 of the placement fee is earned and the remaining placement fee will be returned to the prospective adoptive parents.
- AFTH arranges the match between expectant parents and prospective adoptive parents and if the family chooses to circumvent the agency and arrange a private adoption either for the current placement or any subsequent placement, the full placement fee at the time will be considered due and earned. The agency will, of course, be willing to provide all adoption services for any of these placements.

Transracial Placements

- Adoptions From The Heart has always allowed expectant parents to use their own criterion in choosing a prospective adoptive family. The Multi-Ethnic Placement Act stipulates that agencies cannot use race as a determinant in adoption placement, and the Agency has always agreed with this philosophy.
- Adoptions From The Heart requires that all families considering the placement of a child outside of their own race must attend the agency's Transracial Education Course before being eligible for such a placement.
- Adoptions From the Heart staff will assess a family's appropriateness for transracial adoption throughout the home study process and will make a determination regarding a family's approval for transracial adoption. A family's approval for transracial adoption may be reassessed in the future.

Race of Infants

- Adoptions From The Heart adheres to the National Census Bureau's classification on race and ethnicity, including Caucasian, African-American, Asian, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander races and Hispanic ethnicity. Adoptions From The Heart welcomes families interested in transracial adoption.
- Families cannot indicate preferences regarding the child's hair, eye color or skin tone.
- Adoptions From the Heart is only accepting applications for families open to all racial backgrounds and ethnic heritages.

Availability of Infants, Toddlers and Young Children

- All families in the Domestic Open Adoption program have the opportunity to have their profile shown to expectant parents in PA, DE, NJ, NY, VA and CT. Families must agree to consider placements from all of these states, all of which have different laws determining termination of parental rights of the biological parents. Additionally, if a family receives a placement from a state other than their own, they must be prepared to stay in that state while awaiting approval from the Interstate authorities post-placement.

Post Placement Supervisory Visits for Children 4 and Younger

- All adoptive parents placed through the agency's Domestic Program are required to have post placements visits completed by an AFTH staff member.
- AFTH completes three (3) to four (4) post placements visits based on the adoptive parent's home state, as well as the state of the placement.
- Adoptions From The Heart reserves the right to request additional post-placement supervision outside of the minimum requirements while evaluating "the best interest of the child".
- AFTH is required to visit adoptive parents and the child on a quarterly basis, after the initial three (3) to four (4) visits until the adoption is finalized. Additional costs may apply.
- While post placement visits are most often required to be conducted in the home (A travel fee may apply. See Travel Fee), adoptive parents must also travel to a branch office for visits under certain circumstances.
- Adoptive parents must return to the home in which the home study was approved. Should the adoptive parents return to a vacation home or another residence, they will be required to have their home study redone or addended. The home study will be considered an emergency home study and required to be completed within 30 days. Should the home be in another state, the agency will be required to refile Interstate Compact (ICPC) for an additional cost. Adoptive Parents will be required to complete additional child abuse, FBI and state clearances.
- Families are eligible to travel domestically pending finalizations but must provide the agency with the address, contact information and dates of travel prior to their departure. If an adoptive family travels for a period of longer than 30 days, then this is considered a change of residency. A home study and state clearances must be completed.

Post Adoption Counseling

- Adoptions From the Heart believes adoption is a lifelong process and will be available for continuing counseling services after the finalization of an adoption, whenever it is needed. Adoptions From The Heart will also provide or refer an adoptive parent and/or an adoptee for any post-finalization services or resources as needed.

Adoption Subsidy/SSI/Disability

- Each state regulation provides that children adopted through private agencies may be eligible for adoption assistance benefits if they meet certain requirements. Each state has its requirements for eligibility, and the guidelines for these are defined on AFTH's Post Placement Process form. Families who adopt children who they believe meet these requirements and who wish to apply for adoption assistance should follow these guidelines

and should make such application prior to finalization of their adoption. Adoptions From The Heart will provide documentation and assistance if needed.

Policy Regarding Families on Hold

- If a family needs to put their file on hold, they must inform their adoption counselor/social worker of their decision and reasons for being placed on hold in writing. The file can remain on hold for a period of six months. Families must send an email or letter in order to reactivate their file. Their clearances and home study must be current at the time of their reactivation. If the family is not ready to resume the adoption process within six months, their file will be closed and all fees paid will be considered earned.
- Families who wish to reactivate their file with the agency within six months of being placed on hold will be responsible for all current fees in effect at the time of reactivating their file, including but not limited to any home study fees and program fees.
- Families cannot be placed on hold until they enter the Profile book.

Relocation of Family

- If a family relocates after they have completed their home study, education course, profile meeting, and video filming, they may remain in the Agency's program. Their profile will need to be placed on hold until they have completed a home study addendum or update regarding their new home. If the family has moved within the same state, they can complete this process with AFTH and will need a home visit. If the family has moved to another state, they will need to identify a licensed, non-profit adoption agency in their new state of residence to complete a home study update for them, including a visit to their home and new clearances for that state. Their profile will remain on hold until the update is received by their AFTH counselor. The family must also be willing to travel for pre-placement meetings and hospital visits and comply with interstate regulations.
- In addition, the family will need to review their written profile key and profile to make sure all information is current. They should update their home and community page of their profile to reflect their new residence.
- AFTH can provide adoption services to both military and non-military families as long as they physically reside in the United States. AFTH practices Open Adoption and expectant parents and their partners may want to meet prior to placement as well as after placement and families need to be present in the United States in order for the process to work. AFTH does not place with families once they leave the United States, and no fees once paid will be refunded.

Divorce and/or Death of a Spouse

- If divorce or death of a spouse occurs, the family needs to notify the agency immediately so that their profile can be pulled from consideration. They cannot be placed "on hold" during this time but must close their file.
- If the surviving spouse or divorced spouse wants to pursue adoption still, he or she needs to apply as a new applicant (application fee will be waived in this case) after a minimum of 6 months. A new home study will then be written only on this applicant. There may not be a need for another education class or profile meeting, but an entirely new home study must be written. A new profile, profile key and video must also be submitted.

Confidentiality and Sharing of Information

- Sites such as Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, Tik Tok and personal blogs allow us to communicate quickly with multiple people. We want to remind you that adoption is confidential and all discussions regarding any potential adoption situations, expectant parents, and children is done in the strictest of confidence to protect the privacy of you, the expectant parents and the child. Breaching this confidentiality by posting or sharing this information with others may result in your removal from our programs. It is our goal to provide this protection of confidentiality to all clients.
- Be aware that any personal information about a child or the child's biological parents or guardian, or any other family member shall be held in a confidential manner except as authorized by law.

Quality Control Process

- If a family has concerns about the services being or have been, provided, they may put their concerns in writing to the District Supervisor of their local office. The District Supervisor will review the information with any staff involved and will then meet with the family to discuss their issues. Within thirty days after the meeting, the District Supervisor will send the family a written response to their concerns.
- The family will be informed that if they are not satisfied with this discussion and decision, they can contact the Executive Director after which time a final decision will be made. This final decision will be sent in writing to the client by the Executive Director within 30 days of their receipt of the complaint.

I/we hereby acknowledge that I/we have read and understood the above policies and agree to comply with them. I/We acknowledge that if I/we do not comply with any of the above policies or requirements, I/we will be removed from the full placement program.

Signature

Date signed

Signature

Printed name of family

Adoptions From The Heart is a private, non-profit, non-sectarian agency licensed in PA, DE, NJ, VA, NY, and CT. Adoptions From The Heart provides services to all of their clients without regard to age, race, nationality, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Please remember that with Open Adoption the biological parents determine which family will receive their baby.