



# PRE-APPLICATION: PART 1

Thank you for your interest in Zoe's House Adoption Agency. We look forward to partnering with you during your adoption journey! Enclosed is a packet meant to orient you to the services provided by our agency, as well as the documents you need to begin the process. Choosing an adoption agency is one of the most important decisions you will make during your adoption journey, and we are honored that you would consider us to play a part.

## Pre-Application Packet 1

To begin the process with Zoe's House, please complete and return the following items.

- Pre-Application
- Adoption Services Overview
- Fee Schedule
- Statement of Faith
- Faith Questionnaire
- Pastoral Reference (must be returned directly from the pastor)
- Email Family Photo to [info@zoeshouseadoptions.com](mailto:info@zoeshouseadoptions.com)
- Digital Family Profile emailed to the above email address (if you have one currently)
- Copies of current and any previous home studies or updates, if applicable

Once we receive all Packet 1 documents, including the pastoral reference, the pre-application will be reviewed, and Zoe's House will notify, in writing, the prospective adoptive family whether they are pre-approved to continue to the next step within 30 days of receiving the pre-application. Receipt of the pre-application does not guarantee the prospective adoptive family will be able to move forward in the adoption process with Zoe's House. Pre-approval is valid for six months from the date of approval, after which the family will need to reapply to continue the process. Additionally, pre-approval does not make the family eligible to be presented to Expectant Families, only to move to the next step of the process.

Please mail your pre-application packet to us at:

Zoe's House Adoption Agency  
13200 Metcalf Ave, Ste 100,  
Overland Park, KS 66213

Or submit your packet over email at [info@zoeshouseadoptions.com](mailto:info@zoeshouseadoptions.com)

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us. Our staff is ready to assist you. May God bless you and your family!



# Pre-Application

HUSBAND			WIFE		
Last Name:	First Name:		Last Name:	First Name:	
Cell #:	Work #:		Cell #:	Work #:	
DOB:	SS#:		DOB:	SS#:	
Email:			Email:		
Highest Grade Level:	Race:		Highest Grade Level:	Race:	
Occupation:			Occupation:		
Employer:	Annual Income:		Employer:	Annual Income:	
Please list states resided in during past 5 years:			Please list states resided in during past 5 years:		
Do you have any criminal history? <input type="checkbox"/> Y or <input type="checkbox"/> N If yes, please explain:			Do you have any criminal history? <input type="checkbox"/> Y or <input type="checkbox"/> N If yes, please explain:		
FAMILY					
Home Address:			Religious Affiliation:		
City:	State:	Zip:	Christian? <input type="checkbox"/> Y or <input type="checkbox"/> N		
County:			Do you attend church regularly? <input type="checkbox"/> Y or <input type="checkbox"/> N		
Years of Marriage:	Approximate Adoption Budget:		Church Name and City:		Member? <input type="checkbox"/> Y or <input type="checkbox"/> N
CHILDREN – If needed, list additional children on a separate page.					
Child's Name:	DOB:	<input type="checkbox"/> Biological <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted		Race:	
Child's Name:	DOB:	<input type="checkbox"/> Biological <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted		Race:	
Child's Name:	DOB:	<input type="checkbox"/> Biological <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted		Race:	
Child's Name:	DOB:	<input type="checkbox"/> Biological <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted		Race:	
Child's Name:	DOB:	<input type="checkbox"/> Biological <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted		Race:	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION					
Do you have a Home Study? <input type="checkbox"/> Y or <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Current or <input type="checkbox"/> Previous Home Study?			Date Home Study Signed: _____ What agency did you use? _____		
Do you have a current family profile? <input type="checkbox"/> Y or <input type="checkbox"/> N			Do you have your adoption funds ready and available? <input type="checkbox"/> Y or <input type="checkbox"/> N		
Have you adopted before? <input type="checkbox"/> Y or <input type="checkbox"/> N If so, which agency did you use? _____			Are you working with other agencies/attorneys? <input type="checkbox"/> Y or <input type="checkbox"/> N Are you working with a consultant? <input type="checkbox"/> Y or <input type="checkbox"/> N		
Are you bi-lingual? <input type="checkbox"/> Y or <input type="checkbox"/> N If so, what language(s) do you speak?			How did you hear about Zoe's House? <input type="checkbox"/> Friend _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Internet <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
Childcare Plans:					
Please continue on to the next page.					



# Pre-Application

-- Check all that apply --		CHILD TO BE ADOPTED			-- Check all that apply --
<b>Sex:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> No Preference	<b>Age:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Newborn <input type="checkbox"/> 0-12 months <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 years <input type="checkbox"/> 4+years	<b># of Children:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Single Birth <input type="checkbox"/> Twins <input type="checkbox"/> Sibling Group	<b>Type of Adoption:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Open – sharing information, scheduled meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-open - willing to send letters & pictures and meet the expectant mother/ parents prior to delivery		<b>Are you open to a Special Needs adoption?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Would Consider
<b>Special Situations:</b> Drug Exposure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Would Consider History of Mental Illness <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Would Consider Alcohol Exposure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Would Consider Marijuana Exposure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Would Consider Other Situations you would consider: _____ _____			<b>Ethnicity:</b> Please check and/or list all ethnicities that you would consider. <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Bi-Racial (Caucasian/African American) <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Native American/Pacific Islander Other ethnicities or mix of ethnicities: _____ _____		
OTHERS IN HOUSEHOLD, if applicable – Please list all others and their relationship to you. Use an additional sheet if necessary.					
<b>Name</b>		<b>Relationship to You</b>		<b>States Lived in for Past Five (5) Years</b>	
MOTIVATION					
<b>What is your motivation to adopt? (Please be specific and detailed.)</b>					
<i>I understand that by signing below, I am submitting this pre-application to Zoe’s House Adoption Agency for the purposes of adoption-related services. I understand that upon invitation to Orientation, I will need to pay a non-refundable \$100 pre-application fee made payable to Zoe’s House Adoption Agency. I understand that we will not be eligible to move to the next step without this fee. I also understand that Zoe’s House is not obligated under any circumstances to place a child with me and I am simply submitting my pre-application to be considered.</i>					
<b>Husband Signature:</b>			<b>Wife Signature:</b>		
<b>Date:</b>			<b>Date:</b>		



## ADOPTION SERVICES FEE SCHEDULE

Fees are subject to change and apply only to the current adoption.

### APPLICATION AND AGENCY FEES

Fee	Amount	Note
Pre-Application Fee	\$100	Non-refundable. Due upon submission of part 2 of the Pre-Application.
Full-Service Activation Fee	\$250	Due after full home study and application process, once family is approved as eligible to be matched. Does <b>not</b> apply to home study only families.
Background Check Fees (per person)	\$45-\$70	Due upon submission of application. Paid directly to the service provider.
Full-Service Adoption Placement Fee	\$17,500	50% due at match, remainder due 30 days prior to birth (immediately if due date is less than 30 days).
Interstate Compact (if required)	\$750	Due at match if service provided by Zoe's House. Required when the adoption involves two states. Paid to the attorney if they provide the service.

### HOME STUDY FEES

Fee	Amount	Note
Full Home Study Expedited Home Study – a month once all paperwork and visits are completed.	\$1,050 \$1,450	Non-refundable - 50% due at initial visit, 50% due at last visit. For Home Study Only, \$100 Pre-Application fee applies to this fee if you move forward.
Home Study Update Expedited Home Study Update	\$400 \$750	Non-refundable and due at the time of home visit.
Home Study Addendum*	\$200	Non-refundable and due at the time of home visit.
Addendum for Out-of-State Families	\$400	Due at time of service (only required if the home study does not meet KS/MO requirements)
Subsequent Home Study within 2 yrs (from last post-placement visit) Subsequent Home Study <b>after</b> 2 years	\$700 \$900	Non-refundable and due at the time of home visit.
Post Placement Supervision	\$250/visit	Non-refundable and due at the time of visit.
Court Appearance (per appearance)	\$100	Non-refundable and due at the time of hearing.
*A home study addendum is necessary to document a new household member (child, roommates, etc.), change in residence, job change, significant financial or medical change, recent criminal charges or child abuse allegations, or any other significant events that occur after the current home study was completed.		
Families with a current home study meeting KS/MO regulations will not be billed for home study services.		

**ADDITIONAL ESTIMATED FEES** - Fees are an estimate only and may change due to circumstances outside of Zoe's House control. Fees will be estimated at the time of match.

Fee	Amount	Note
Expectant Mother Living/Medical Expenses	Estimated at match	Due at match. The balance is due at placement if the amount is different than estimated.
Transition Care for Baby/Child	\$35/day, if needed	
Legal Expenses	Attorney Provided	Paid directly to the attorneys



## ADOPTION SERVICES FEE SCHEDULE

Fees are subject to change and apply only to the current adoption.

### BIRTH PARENT SERVICES (if needing birth parent care outside of Zoe's House placing services)

Fee	Amount	Note
Birth Parent Care	\$4,000	If needed, this covers social history, coordination of services, counseling, creation of birth plan, and any other identified needed support. Paid directly to the adoptive family's attorney.

Thanks to the donations from generous supporters who understand the importance of adoption, our placement fees are about half the national average. To maintain clear ethical boundaries, we ask that families in process with our agency do not donate to Zoe's House until their process is completed. We always welcome referrals.

### REFUND POLICY

*All fees are non-refundable except as stated below due to a disrupted or failed adoption.*

In the case of a failed adoption, Zoe's House Adoption Agency will roll 100% of the Adoption Program Fees over to another adoptive placement. Unused Birth Mother Living/Medical Expenses will also be rolled over to another placement. If prospective adoptive parents do not wish to continue the adoption process due to a failed or disrupted adoption, all unused Expectant/Birth Mother Living/Medical expenses, all unused transition care expenses, and all Adoption Program fees will be refunded minus \$3,500 to cover administrative and social service costs. Zoe's House Family Grant Fund recipients will not receive a refund of any portion of the amount granted by Zoe's House. If the failure is due to the adoptive family causing disruption or their decision not to proceed (except in cases of special needs delivery or placement), all fees are non-refundable, except the unused Expectant Mother's Living/Medical and Transition Care expenses. This refund policy only applies to fees paid by the adoptive family to Zoe's House Adoption Agency and not to fees paid to third parties. Home Study, Post Placement, Family Profile, and ICPC Fees are billed when services are rendered and are non-refundable.

Zoe's House Family Grant Fund recipients will not be refunded for unused living expenses. These will be rolled back into the Family Grant Fund to help other families adopt.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We understand and acknowledge that we have read this document in full and that this is an estimate only and not a guarantee of the cost of an adoption. We understand that Zoe's House cannot predict the amount of casework involved due to the fact that a birth mother's situation may change during the pregnancy, necessitating more or less casework. We understand that all pregnancy-related living and medical expenses are estimated and itemized at the time of the match and provided to us. We further understand and acknowledge that the total estimated amount must be paid via cash, cashier's check, or check at the time of signing the contract and accepting a match with a birth mother. We understand that there will be a \$40 returned check fee.

Husband Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Wife Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God revealing the love of God to the world. *1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; John 3:16*
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. *Matthew 28:19; John 10:30; Ephesians 4:4-6*
3. We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood on the cross, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory. *Matthew 1:23; John 1:1-4 and 1:29; Acts 1:11 and 2:22-24; Romans 8:34; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 1:1-4 and 4:15*
4. We believe that all men everywhere are lost and face the judgment of God, that Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation, and that for the salvation of lost and sinful man, repentance of sin and faith in Jesus Christ results in regeneration by the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, we believe that God will reward the righteous with eternal life in heaven, and that He will banish the unrighteous to everlasting punishment in hell. *Luke 24:46-47; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:23; 2 Corinthians 5:10-11; Ephesians 1:7 and 2:8-9; Titus 3:4-7*
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, whose indwelling enables the Christian to live a godly life. *John 3:5-8; Acts 1:8 and 4:31; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Galatians 5:16-18; Ephesians 6:12; Colossians 2:6-10*
6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; the saved unto the resurrection of eternal life and the lost unto the resurrection of damnation and eternal punishment. *1 Corinthians 15:51-57; Revelation 20:11-15*
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and that all true believers are members of His body, the Church. *1 Corinthians 12:12, 27; Ephesians 1:22-23*
8. We believe that the ministry of evangelism (sharing and proclaiming the message of salvation only possible by grace through faith in Jesus Christ) and discipleship (helping followers of Christ grow up into maturity in Christ) is a responsibility of all followers of Jesus Christ. *Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:9-15; 1 Peter 3:15*
9. We believe God's plan for human sexuality is to be expressed only within the context of marriage, that God created man and woman as unique biological persons. God instituted monogamous marriage between male and female as the foundation of the family and the basic structure of human society. For this reason, we believe that marriage is exclusively the union of one genetic male and one genetic female. *Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5-6; Mark 10:6-9; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9*
10. We believe that we must dedicate ourselves to prayer, to the service of our Lord, to His authority over our lives, and to the ministry of evangelism. *Matthew 9:35-38; 22:37-39, and 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:9-15 and 12:20-21; Gal 6:10; Colossians 2:6-10; 1 Peter 3:15*
11. We believe that human life is sacred from conception to its natural end; and that we must have concern for the physical and spiritual needs of our fellowmen. *Psalms 139:13; Isaiah 49:1; Jeremiah 1:5; Matthew 22:37-39; Romans 12:20-21; Galatians 6:10*

I have read and fully agree with, and adhere to, the above statement of faith and its associated biblical principles.

Husband: \_\_\_\_\_ Wife: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Faith Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions separately.  
**(There should be one full set of answers for each of you.)**

1. HOW HAS THE LORD MADE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR LIFE?

2. WHO IS JESUS CHRIST TO YOU?

3. TELL US THE STORY OF YOUR FAITH JOURNEY (PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR SALVATION EXPERIENCE)

4. WHAT ROLE DOES THE BIBLE HAVE IN YOUR LIFE?

5. WHAT ROLE DOES PRAYER HAVE IN YOUR LIFE?

6. HOW DO YOU SEEK THE LORD IN DECISION MAKING?

7. WHAT ROLE DOES THE CHURCH AND YOUR CHURCH FAMILY HAVE IN YOUR LIFE?



8. DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP AND DAILY WALK WITH GOD.

9. WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY REGARDING THE SPIRITUAL TRAINING OF YOUR CHILDREN?

10. ZOE'S HOUSE ADOPTION AGENCY WAS FOUNDED ON TRADITIONAL BIBLICAL CONCEPTS OF SEXUALITY AND MARRIAGE, BELIEVING THAT GOD DESIGNED MARRIAGE EXCLUSIVELY AS THE UNION BETWEEN ONE GENETIC MALE AND ONE GENETIC FEMALE. DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS VIEW? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

11. WILL YOU RAISE A CHILD WITH THE IDENTITY OF THE BABY'S GENDER AT BIRTH?

PLEASE SIGN AND DATE YOUR FAITH QUESTIONNAIRE BEFORE SENDING TO OUR AGENCY.  
FAITH QUESTIONNAIRE WILL NEED TO BE RESUBMITTED IF ALL OF THE REQUESTED GUIDELINES ARE NOT FOLLOWED.

Printed Name:

Date:

Signature:



# PASTORAL REFERENCE FORM

(Must be completed by a current pastor)

To be filled out by the family:	
Name of Prospective Adoptive Family:	Name of Church:
Pastor's Name:	Church Address:
Pastor's Email Address:	Pastor's Phone Number:
To be completed by the Pastor and returned directly to Zoe's House:	
Dear Pastor,	
Thank you for taking the time to provide a reference for the prospective adoptive applicant(s) listed below. Please answer the questions openly and honestly. Your feedback will be used in the consideration of their desire to begin the process of adopting a child.	
Please return this reference in one of the following ways: Giving to the adoptive applicants in a sealed envelope, mail to Zoe's House Adoption Agency - 13200 Metcalf Ave, STE 100, Overland Park, Kansas 66213, email us at <a href="mailto:info@zoeshouseadoptions.com">info@zoeshouseadoptions.com</a> , or fax to 913-802-2582.	
How long have you known the family?	
How would you describe this family?	
Please describe the family's church involvement:	
Please describe the family's spiritual life and witness for Christ and the evidences you see in the family's life that demonstrate their commitment to follow Christ:	
Do you believe this family would rear children in a Christian home and environment? (please explain)	



# PASTORAL REFERENCE FORM

(Must be completed by a current pastor)

Do you have any concerns about their marriage, family, parenting, or ability to be adoptive parents? (please explain)

Please add any additional comments or concerns:

This form was completed to the best of my ability, and I agree that everything in it is true:

Signature:

Printed Name:

Title:

Date:



# Adoption Services Overview

Zoe's House Adoption Agency offers a wide range of services to birth parents and adoptive parents. We strive to provide a high level of support and adoption education, so please contact us, and we will be happy to review these services with you in detail. We look forward to helping you along your adoption journey.

## WHO WE ARE

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Zoe's House Adoption Agency, licensed in Kansas and Missouri, exists to give expectant mothers the best care available as they make a plan for their babies and to help adoptive parents be as prepared as possible to bring a new child into their home. Zoe's House has seen couples from across the U.S. struggle to find reputable adoption agencies that treat both themselves and the expectant/birth family with a high level of support, services, and compassion.

Zoe's House was founded on the principle that finances should not be the barrier to adoption. With that in mind, we work hard to keep our fees as low as possible, balancing this with the goal of offering our expectant mothers excellent care. If adoption were only about paperwork, keeping it inexpensive would be easier, but it's about people and messy situations. It's about the middle of the night phone calls and counseling sessions. Doing this well gives our adoptive families the ability to assure their child that their birth mom was served with dignity and the love of Christ.

To keep costs manageable, generous donors subsidize the fee for each adoption. Our donors include long-time pro-life supporters who believe in the value of adoption, former Zoe's House adoptive families who choose to give back, and people we've never met from across the nation. The fact that other people contribute to the adoption expenses of people they will never know is remarkable. With the current placement fee, Zoe's House staff works to raise an additional \$13,000 - \$23,000 to subsidize each adoption. It takes significant work to do so. It would be easier to simply raise fees to the point where it covers expenses, but we know that may prohibit many wonderful families from adopting.

Because generosity is such a key part of how Zoe's House serves adoptive families, each adoptive family will write a note of thanks at the time of their placement, to be shared with the donors who helped underwrite their adoption. Our Zoe's House partners are honored to be a part of the storyline of life, and we are so grateful for each one.

### Table of Contents:

- Eligibility Requirements & Adoption Orientation
- Adoption Services
- Adoption Process
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Other Considerations

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

# ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS & ADOPTION ORIENTATION

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## Eligibility Requirements for Adoptive Parents

Prospective Adoptive Applicants must meet the following guidelines to adopt through Zoe's House Adoption Agency:

- Must be 21 years of age or older.
- Couples are married for at least one year.
- Must be financially able to provide support for their family.
- Must exhibit a stable marriage and family life.
- Must be in good physical and mental health.
- Must exhibit solid and safe parenting practices.
- Must be able to provide a safe and secure home environment.
- Must provide a signed statement of faith.
- Must be a fully devoted follower of Jesus.
- Must support traditional Biblical concepts of sexuality and marriage.
- Must exhibit a valid motivation to adopt and realistic adoption expectations.
- Must be willing and able to provide all documentation and information truthfully.
- Must provide a Pastoral Reference from a pastor who knows the family and their commitment to (1) the Lord and (2) the spiritual disciplines.
- Must be open to a conversation about adopting children of all ethnicities.
- Must be able to provide solid character references and employment history.
- Must reside in the United States.
- Must be a high school graduate or have a GED equivalency.

## Prospective Adoptive Family Orientation

Prior to acceptance of an official application or fees outside of the pre-application payment, Zoe's House Adoption Agency will provide orientation to the prospective adoptive family through the Pre-Application packet and an orientation meeting. This packet will assist them in making an informed decision and includes the following information for prospective adoptive families:

- Zoe's House Adoption Agency Programs and Home Study Services.
- Children available for adoption.
- Eligibility requirements and the realities of a timeframe for adoption.
- Fee schedules and refund policy.
- Adoption risk issues (covered in the Client Agreement).
- Description of adoption policies and procedures, including our grievance procedure.

# ADOPTION SERVICES

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## Full-Service Adoption

The Full-Service Adoption Program includes the following services for the purposes of a domestic adoption:

- Work to match you with an expectant family.
- Provide case management and coordination, including:
  - Counseling, support, and education for the adoptive family.
  - Obtaining and reviewing proof of pregnancy, social/medical background information, and medical records of the expectant/birth family and child.
  - Notifying the hospital regarding the adoption plan.
- Provide adoption education and support throughout the process.
- Provide information on creating your family profile.
- Review of home study (if not conducted by Zoe's House Adoption Agency).
- Review birthmother information, including medical and social history, with the adoptive family.
- Ensure the adoptive family and the expectant/birth family are ready to proceed with an adoption plan.
- Schedule contact between adoptive and birth families (calls, visits, etc).
- Guide the family in preparing documentation required by the government, Zoe's House Adoption Agency, and the court system.
- Supervise placement of child and submit required reports to appropriate offices/attorneys.
- Provide a list of local attorneys for the family to consider.
- Assist families with selecting an attorney to finalize adoption in their home state (if not finalizing in Missouri or Kansas).
- Provide the court, attorney, and other agencies with the required documents to complete the adoption.
- Refer to training, resources, and support groups as well as referrals to local ministries and churches based on need; and
- Coordination of ongoing contact with birth family as agreed upon (letters/pictures).

This program is typically designed for newborn infant adoptions. Zoe's House Adoption Agency does not provide legal services for the adoption; therefore, the adoptive family will need to hire an attorney to provide these necessary services. Services provided for an additional fee include:

- Home studies and post-placement reports.
- Court appearances.
- Interstate Compact requirements and paperwork, if needed.

## Services typically provided to the Expectant/Birth Mother & Father

- Marketing research and advertising for expectant/birth family.
- Provide adoption information and assist with intake paperwork.
- Case management and assessment of expectant/birth family.
- Counseling the expectant/birth family and discussing adoption and other options such as parenting or relative placement.
- Collection of expectant/birth family information such as proof of pregnancy and social/medical history.
- Referrals to appropriate community resources when needed for additional support.

- Discussion of various options and types of adoption (such as open/closed/semi-private).
- Assistance in selecting adoptive family through presenting family profile book.
- Assistance with Medicaid applications and collection of copies of medical records, as applicable.
- Coordination of contact, including possible meetings and conference calls between adoptive and birth families.
- Assistance in achieving goals and dreams such as higher education, GED, employment training, etc.
- Coordination of transportation (if needed) for expectant/birth family for necessary appointments and meetings such as doctor's visits, counseling, etc.
- Communication with doctor's office and hospital regarding the adoption plan.
- Overall support and guidance throughout the entire adoption process.

## Another Way Home Program

This program works to connect children in the foster care system who are legally free for adoption and longing for a family to call their own with loving forever families. The children available are generally age 8+, or a member of a sibling group. In many cases, the children have moderate to high behavioral and/or medical needs due to the trauma and challenges they have faced in their lives. The initial goal for all children who enter foster care is reunification with their biological family. Because of this, infants and toddlers are rarely available for adoption unless they are part of a sibling group that includes older children. If you are interested in this program, please visit our website at: <http://zoeshouseadoptions.com/anotherwayhome/>

## Home Study Only

Our professional staff will provide domestic home study and post-placement services that are compliant with the laws in your state and guidelines provided by your adoption agency. This service includes home visits, written reports, and three (3) originals of each written report, along with an electronic PDF copy of the report. Also included is an adoption education and guidance during the home study and post-placement interview process.

## Interstate Adoptions

Adoptions that take place in two different states (the birth mother lives in one state while the adopting parents live in another) require additional procedures. The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) affects all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the US Virgin Islands. CPC ensures that the laws of both states are observed in an adoption, establishes that the movement of children across state lines is legal, and maintains that the child is protected. Proof of Compliance with the ICPC is required at the finalization of the adoption. If the acting agency has failed to comply with the ICPC requirements, they may suffer major consequences, including the loss of their license. Zoe's House Adoption Agency will fulfill the requirements of receiving and sending state and may assist in preparing and submitting client's ICPC (Interstate Compact) paperwork for the adoptive placement.

## Completion of Court Reports

The Social Worker will complete court reports as required by the court, where your adoption will be finalized. A copy of the reports will be filed with the appropriate entities, and Zoe's House Adoption Agency will retain copies of the state birth verification and the court report in the adoption record.



# ADOPTION PROCESS

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Below are the steps in the adoption process and a description of our services and policies. Please refer to the Fee Schedule for details on fees associated with each step in the process and when those fees are due.

## Step 1: Pre-Application Part 1

This is the first step to help our agency begin to know the prospective adoptive family and determine if they meet the adoption requirements through Zoe's House Adoption Agency. To submit the pre-application, all documents listed on the cover letter must be returned to our agency. The pre-application will be reviewed, and Zoe's House will notify the prospective adoptive family in writing whether they are pre-approved to continue to the next step within 30 days of receiving the pre-application.

Receipt of the pre-application does not guarantee the prospective adoptive family will be able to move forward in the adoption process with Zoe's House. Pre-approval is valid for six months from the approval date, after which the family will need to reapply to continue the process. Additionally, pre-approval does not make the family eligible to be presented to Expectant Families, only to move to the next step of the process.

If the family has not been pre-approved or denied, their Pre-Application Part 1 will remain on file with Zoe's House for one (1) year from the date received. Zoe's House will look to those families first to fill open slots in our pool of eligible to be matched families. If the family has not been invited to move to the next step and has not received a placement in that year, they may contact Zoe's House to update their information and keep their Pre-Application Part 1 on file for an additional year.

## Step 2: Pre-Application Part 2 & Orientation

Once the family receives their pre-approval, they will complete and return the second half of the Pre-Application documents (sent with the pre-approval) and pay the Pre-Application fee. Upon receipt of those documents and fee, the orientation will be scheduled with a social worker and held over Zoom. During the orientation, Zoe's House will share about our agency and the process and allow the prospective adoptive family to ask questions.

## Step 3: Application

The next application is the collection of documents required by state and federal regulations. The social worker also uses these documents to assist in preparation of the adoptive family's home study. Zoe's House Adoption Agency will supply applicants with forms and instructions on obtaining required criminal and background records checks. Families applying to Zoe's House Adoption Agency who already have a current approved home study will provide a shortened collection of documents during this process. Note: If some documents provided to Zoe's House Adoption Agency are expired, new copies will be required. We will review the application and notify prospective adoptive families of approval /disapproval to begin the next stage within 30 days.

## Step 4: Home Study

Zoe's House Adoption Agency provides domestic home study services to prospective adoptive families residing in Kansas and Missouri. The home study evaluates the prospective adoptive family required by state and federal regulations, as well as a time to help educate the family on the adoption process and requirements.

A social worker makes at least three visits with the prospective adoptive family on separate dates with at least one visit occurring in the home. The applicants and all household members will be interviewed together and separately. The social worker will schedule the first interview within 30 days of the receipt of all items.

- Home Study Updates: In certain instances, a home study may be updated instead of completing an entirely new home study. The update must include at least one (1) in-home visit, updated employment status, updated medical reports, changes in family composition, and changes in the type of children requested. Home study updates can also occur when:
  - A family has been approved but not received placement within one (1) year from the date of approval.
  - A family is applying to adopt again after an initial adoptive placement was disrupted.
  - A family has an up-to-date home study from another state. (This requires at least one (1) home visit with all household members present and will include an evaluation of the home.)
- Subsequent Home Studies: A subsequent home study can be conducted when a family is applying to adopt again after an initial successful placement has been made. The original home study should be included for information that has not changed since that study but also must include the following: at least one (1) home visit since the last placement, updated employment status, medical reports, changes in family composition, changes in type of children desired, evaluation of the parents' adjustments to parenthood, and a re-evaluation of parenting skills, knowledge, and techniques.

After completing the home study visits, the social worker will prepare a written assessment of the prospective adoptive home including a determination as to whether the couple meets the eligibility requirements for their state of residence and Zoe's House Adoption Agency. The home study helps to ensure a safe, secure, and loving environment for the adopted child. The narrative will meet the requirements set by the applicants' state of residence.

- Approval: A decision to approve an adoptive family shall be made within 60 days of the last contact with the applicant, or Zoe's House Adoption Agency will supply documentation in the record and to the family to explain the delay. Applicants will be notified in writing within ten (10) working days following the agency's decision to approve.
- Disapproval: If a prospective adoptive family cannot adequately prove that they can provide a safe, loving, and financially secure environment or if they have been untruthful in any of their interviews, applications, or forms, they will not be approved. A written statement regarding the disapproval will be placed in the applicant's permanent file, and the applicants will be notified in writing within ten (10) working days following the agency's decision to disapprove them as an adoptive family.

The written assessment is placed in the adoptive parents' file, and an original signed copy will be provided to the family.

## Step 5: Family Profile

The adoptive family will be able to prepare their family profile during the application and home study process. Preparing your Adoptive Family Profile can be a daunting task. Even with previous design experience, choosing what to include or not include, how to word things, and the best way to share who you are, your heart, and your hopes with expectant parents is a lot to navigate. When an expectant family receives adoptive family profiles, that is the moment for your unique family to shine. The words, pictures, and design you choose are key to helping expectant parents connect with your family. For this reason, Zoe's House requires adoptive

families to choose from one of the professional profile services we have vetted to ensure that they will: Use appropriate adoption language, Honor the expectant parents in both the text and design, Provide professional design and high-quality books; Ensure the book is a positive mix of text, candid and professional photos, and decoration; and reflects your family well.

## Step 6: Adoption Review Committee Review

Upon completion of the steps above and receipt of a favorable home study, the prospective adoptive family's case will be submitted to the Zoe's House Adoption Review Committee. The committee will review the family's information in consideration of the expectant families being served, needs of the agency, and available spaces on the Active/Eligible to be Matched list. Zoe's House will notify the prospective adoptive family whether they are approved as an Active/Eligible to be Matched family within 4-6 weeks of being submitted to the Adoption Review Committee. If they are approved, they will be placed on the Active/Eligible to be Matched list and may be contacted at any time thereafter to consider possible situations.

A family is not considered Active/Eligible to be matched  
until they have completed all 6 steps above.

## Step 7: Pre-Match

Once the family is active, their profile will be shared with expectant parents that match that family's adoption preferences noted on the application, as well as the expectant family's preferences for an adoptive family. Zoe's House will present between 3-6 family profiles at a time to the expectant parents and will notify the adoptive family before presenting their profile. At that time, we will provide as much non-identifying information as possible. If a family wishes to be presented, we will let them know as soon as the expectant family chooses an adoptive family. When an adoptive family is selected, a meeting will be set up between both families. If they agree that the match is a good fit, the adoptive family will move to the next step. If not, additional profiles are presented to the expectant family, and the adoptive family's profile will continue to be presented to upcoming expectant families. *Zoe's House Adoption Agency cannot guarantee if/when and how often a family profile will be presented.*

## Step 8: Match

Once the prospective adoptive family verbally accepts the match, Zoe's House Adoption Agency will prepare the paperwork for the family to officially accept the match and move forward with the adoption. At this time, Zoe's House Adoption Agency staff will discuss the adoption of the specific child(ren) and the estimated legal, expectant/birth mother, and medical expenses. The adoptive family will also receive non-identifying medical and social information on the expectant family and baby/child.

Once the paperwork and fees have been completed and paid, there is usually a period of waiting until birth or placement. The adoptive family should prepare for travel/the baby's arrival and read as much information about parenting and adoption as possible during the waiting period. During this time, Zoe's House Adoption Agency staff will remain in contact with the adoptive family and help assist with arrangements as needed.

## Step 9: Placement

The Adoptive Family will need to be present at birth or placement to receive the baby/child. The family will be required to complete paperwork with their social worker at our office or hospital at the time of placement. If the

family is receiving the child from a state outside their state of residence, they will need to remain in that state until ICPC paperwork has cleared, giving them permission to transport the baby/child to their home state. If Zoe's House will be completing post-placement visits, this approval must be communicated with Zoe's House.

## Step 10: Post-Placement & Finalization

All states require post-placement visits and reports to be conducted on the adoptive family after placement of the child. The adoptive family's home study social worker will make at least the minimum required home visits after placement of the child and prior to finalization. After placement, the social worker will contact the family to schedule the visits. The social worker will prepare post-placement reports based on these visits. Zoe's House Adoption Agency will submit the reports to the appropriate attorney, agency, and Interstate Compact as required. The adoptive family's attorney will advise the family on finalization. The process for finalization differs between states and sometimes varies depending on the county of residence. In Kansas, it can be possible to finalize the adoption in 30 to 60 days. In Missouri, finalization generally occurs six to eight months after placement. The adoptive family must return to the state and appear before the judge on the scheduled date. Finding the right adoption attorney is extremely important. We recommend attorneys who are members of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys (AAAA) ([www.adoptionattorneys.org](http://www.adoptionattorneys.org)).

# RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

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## Adoptive Parent Responsibilities

The adoptive family is responsible for the following:

- Fully disclose background information necessary to fully assess the adoptive family and meet state and federal guidelines. This includes information on prior criminal history, medical history, counseling, substance abuse, child maltreatment, etc.
- Fully disclose any major events in the family as long as the file is active with Zoe's House Adoption Agency (application through finalization.) This includes pregnancy/birth of a child, foster placement or potential placement, match or potential match, death of a family member, a household member moving in or out, etc.
- Provide documentation in a timely manner.
- Provide payment of fees and expenses in a timely manner.
- Understand the laws in the family's home state and the state in which the baby/child is born/from. All aspects of adoption, no matter what state or county you choose to adopt from, are regulated by state and federal laws. It is important to consult the adoptive family's local agency or adoption attorney regarding the laws governing your specific adoption.
- Agree to accept and complete post-placement supervision and reporting requirements required by state laws in the child's birth state and the adoptive family's state of residence.
  - Kansas – monthly in-person visits with the social worker and written reports with pictures provided by the adoptive family until finalization. Zoe's House Adoption Agency must also receive written reports from the child's pediatrician.
  - Missouri – For children 36 months of age and under, the worker must conduct quarterly home visits until the adoption is final and conduct monthly telephone contacts between home visits. Zoe's House Adoption Agency must also receive written reports from the child's pediatrician.

## Zoe's House Adoption Agency Responsibilities

Zoe's House Adoption Agency is responsible for the following:

- Provide professional and caring services to the adoptive family.
- Diligently manage the adoptive family's case and maintain communication with the adoptive family.
- Keep adoptive family files confidential except as required by law as specified on the *Release of Information* form(s) signed by the adoptive family.
- To not withhold or misrepresent any medical, social, or other pertinent information regarding the child or expectant mother except where prohibited by law.
- Report suspected abuse or neglect, whether it be upon a child or an elderly person, as required by state and federal laws.
- Grievance Procedures - Address all concerns, disagreements, and grievances of prospective adoptive applicants and adoptive families. All grievances must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director of Zoe's House Adoption Agency. The Executive Director will be responsible for deciding whether to investigate the complaint and what action will be taken based on the evidence received. Any action taken by the agency will be documented in the agency's files and/or the applicant's file.
- Making a lifetime commitment to each child and adoptive family by providing ongoing post-adoption services and support. When a placement for adoption is in crisis during post-placement supervision, Zoe's House Adoption Agency will make every effort to connect the adoptive family to resources with the appropriate skills and professional expertise to assist the family in dealing with the problems that have arisen. Zoe's House Adoption Agency will act promptly and in accordance with any applicable legal requirements to remove the child when the placement may no longer be in the child's best interests or notify the appropriate government agency with the authority to take the action necessary to ensure the child's well-being and safety.
- Provide or arrange for care and locate a suitable alternative placement for the child if the adoptive family decides not to continue the adoption prior to finalization. (This is called disruption of an adoption.) Zoe's House Adoption Agency will maintain responsibility for the health and welfare of the child. Zoe's House Adoption Agency will also offer support to each adoptive family involved for at least six months after placement or relinquishment.

## OTHER CONSIDERATION

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### Fees & Estimated Expenses

See the Fee Schedule for a list of agency fees. Zoe's House Adoption Agency not only serves as a ministry to adoptive families but also to expectant mothers choosing to give life to their babies. Our mission is to provide holistic care to these women by caring for them emotionally, spiritually, and financially if needed. State laws vary regarding the amount of expectant/birth mother and childcare expenses an adoptive family may pay. However, most states are consistent in allowing basic expenses. All states have laws prohibiting anyone from offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting any money, consideration, or other things of value for the delivery or offer of delivery of a child to anyone else. Zoe's House Adoption Agency works with the expectant/birth mother to assist her in pursuing services and support available to her through various avenues such as Medicaid and other community services.

Reasonable expenses for the adoptive family may include:

It is impossible to estimate these expenses upfront because each situation is unique. At match with an expectant mother, her situation and any additional expenses will be discussed before any payments are made.

- Living Expenses (\$1,000-\$7,500) - Reasonable living expenses incurred by the expectant/birth mother during or as a result of the pregnancy. These may include food, shelter, utilities, transportation, or clothing. Zoe's House Adoption Agency pays these expenses directly to the provider as they occur or may provide gift cards. If the expectant/birth mother decides to parent her child, the expenses paid are considered a gift and cannot be legally recovered.
- Medical Expenses (\$0-\$10,000) - Payment is due when medical bills arrive. On occasion, the medical provider will bill Zoe's House Adoption Agency directly; these bills will be forwarded to the family for payment. Some medical bills may arrive after the entry of the final decree of adoption; however, the adoptive parents are responsible regardless of the date of billing. If the medical facility involved calls for payment, the family's contact information will be released for billing purposes. Possible expenses include:
  - Actual medical expenses for the expectant/birth mother relating to the pregnancy or birth. If she has Medicaid or private insurance, her pregnancy and delivery expenses are usually covered.
  - Actual medical expenses of the child. Baby's expenses may be covered by Medicaid or the adoptive parent's medical insurance. Zoe's House Adoption Agency is unable to require an expectant/birth mother to use her private insurance or Medicaid to cover the baby's expenses. The baby will be the adoptive family's financial responsibility from birth.
  - Any medical bills not covered by the expectant/birth mother's insurance, Medicaid, or the adoptive family's medical insurance will be an out-of-pocket expense.
- Legal Expenses (\$5,000-\$15,000 for an uncontested adoption) These are paid directly to the attorneys.
  - The adoptive family will retain an adoption attorney once matched with an expectant family.
  - The adoptive family is also responsible for the birth parent's attorney(s).
  - Legal expenses may include court costs, travel, and administrative fees related to the adoption.
- Paternity testing expenses (if needed) is the responsibility of the adoptive family.
- Other reasonable expenses such as counseling for the birth parent (if required by the situation).
- Temporary Foster Care for Baby (\$35/per day on average) – in some cases, a newborn may be released from the hospital before the court has awarded temporary custody to an adoptive family. The state requires a child to be in foster care during that interim period. Or the child may be placed in temporary custody directly by the birth family.

## Funds & Grants and Fundraising

Zoe's House encourages adoptive families to take an active role in raising funds for their adoption. There are many wonderful grant and fundraising programs and organizations that can be found with a simple online search. Most of them require the family to have completed their home study in order to apply. In a future packet, we have compiled a partial list to get you started, but there are many more! *Please note that Zoe's House is unable to accept funds and grants from other organizations on behalf of a family before the family is matched through our agency.* If your fundraiser occurs before you are matched and the organization sends the money directly to our agency, we will place the funds in our Family Grant Fund. If your family is matched through Zoe's House, the funds will be applied to the Placement Fee. If your family receives placement through another agency, we are unable to forward or refund the money, and those funds will be used to help another family adopt via the Family Grant Fund. If Zoe's House receives grant money on behalf of your family above and beyond the fees you owe to our agency, the excess will be placed in our Family Grant Fund. Due to IRS regulations, we are unable to forward the money to your family or other providers. Please share these policies with any company that may submit funds on your behalf to our agency.

### Families Wishing to Pause the Adoption Process

Families who choose to put their process on hold during the application or home study stage may do so for one (1) year without forfeiting any application fees. Home study fees already paid cannot be carried forward and will need to be re-submitted during the home study process if the family chooses to move forward. If the family is not able to move forward within that year, their file will be inactivated and all fees paid will be forfeited and non-refundable. Families should understand that it will be necessary to submit updated paperwork as well as update their background checks and medical records if they choose to resume the adoption process. Families should understand that Zoe’s House Adoption Agency cannot guarantee the family will be able to resume the process when they are ready due to the current needs of the agency and the space available.

### Adoption Reunion Registry and Subsidy

Parents will be informed of the Kansas adoption reunion process and registry at the time of match. Parents may be eligible for adoption subsidy assistance when adopting a special needs child. Information on subsidy can be found at:

- Kansas – [dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/pages/Adoption-Assistance.aspx](http://dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/pages/Adoption-Assistance.aspx)
- Missouri – [dss.mo.gov/cd/adoption/Missouri-adoption-subsidy-programs.htm](http://dss.mo.gov/cd/adoption/Missouri-adoption-subsidy-programs.htm)

### Referral to Resources

When Zoe’s House Adoption Agency is unable to provide necessary services, clients will be referred to medical, legal, psychiatric, psychological, or other professional services. Clients will not be required to utilize these referrals and/or services. Zoe’s House Adoption Agency reserves the right to request a second opinion from an independent source.

### Risks Inherent in Adoption

Zoe’s House Adoption Agency has no control over the wait for a match with an expectant/birth mother, and we cannot guarantee the placement of a child with the adoptive parents. Periodically paperwork requirements may change, out of our control, and the adoptive family may be required to provide additional paperwork to continue the process.

We/I have read the preceding Adoptive Service Overview and understand the services offered by Zoe’s House Adoption Agency. We are applying to adopt through Zoe’s House Adoption Agency.

Husband: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Wife: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_