

## What are Post Order Support Services?

You may have heard about 'open adoption', a term which refers to adoption situations where there is some contact between the birth parents and the adopted child.

Even though identifying information about the birth family is not available until the adopted person is 18, adoptive families, birth families and the adopted child can still communicate, and even meet, when the child is under 18 - if everyone agrees.

Post Order Support Services (POSS) can assist with this communication. It also provides support and counselling to young people and their families whose adoptions, or permanent placements (eg. people residing on Enduring Parental Responsibility Orders), were arranged through the ACT Adoptions Unit.



# adoption information and post order support services



### More information?

Contact the Adoptions and Permanent Care Unit

phone: 6207 1335

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[www.dhcs.act.gov.au](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au)



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## What is the Adoption Information Service?

The Adoption Information Service is part of the ACT Adoptions and Permanent Care Unit. The Unit is part of the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support within the ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services.

It provides information, mediation and counselling services for those affected by adoption. This service began in response to the *Adoption Act 1993* and employs professionally qualified staff who recognise and understand the emotional complexity of adoption.

The Adoption Information Service is also responsible for the administration of applications for identifying information and vetoes.

No costs are associated with any services provided by the Adoption Information Service or Post Order Support Services

## The Adoption Act 1993

The *Adoption Act 1993* includes the following provisions for those affected by adoption:

- Access to identifying information for adopted people, adoptive parents, birth parents and birth relatives where the adopted person is over 18 years.
- The capacity to have identifying information released but to say no to future contact or communication (called a 'veto' on contact).
- Provision of a Reunion Information Register for those who wish to register their wishes to meet other parties to their adoptions.
- Provision of an Adoption Information Service.

## What is identifying information?

This will consist of general background information including names, ages, physical characteristics, education, occupation and relevant medical history from Adoptions Unit files. Original and amended birth certificates will also be available from the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages after the Adoptions Unit information has been supplied.

In most cases the information will not be current but date from the time of the adoption.

## If I am the subject of a veto can I still obtain information?

Yes, but before the information will be made available, you must attend a counselling session with a counsellor from the Adoption Information Service or equivalent in another state. You must also sign an undertaking that you will not make contact. If you do not abide by the undertaking you will be liable for court action.

## If the adopted person is under the age of 18 years can any information be released?

People who are eligible to apply for identifying information may also apply for non-identifying information if the adopted person is under the age of 18 years. Non-identifying information is similar to identifying information but excludes names, birth certificates and any information from which a person may be easily identified.

Adopted people under the age of 18 years who wish to apply for non-identifying information will need the permission of their adoptive parents. In some circumstances, identifying information may be released in relation to an adoption where the adoptee is under the age of 18 years, if the written agreement of the other parties has been obtained.

## What is the Reunion Information Register?

Adopted people, birth parents, adoptive parents, birth and adoptive relatives are able to place their names on this register if they would like to be united with each other. You may place your name on the Reunion Register without applying for information. Adopted people under the age of 18 years may register with parental permission.

