

# THAILAND

## ADOPTION INFORMATION GUIDE



**Department for Community Development**  
Government of Western Australia

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This guide focuses on the process of adopting a child from Thailand. It gives an overview of the various steps you will need to go through and outlines documentation requirements.

This guide does not prepare you for parenting an adopted child. It does not discuss issues like attachment, cultural continuity and open adoption.

Applicants are encouraged to familiarise themselves with these adoption issues by reading adoption literature and contacting adoption services listed in this guide for further information.

**All information contained in this guide is prepared and published in good faith and is subject to change.**

All information regarding adoption procedures, travel visa etc should be viewed as a **guide** and is subject to change.

Please feel free to inform the program manager of any ideas, changes, new information or correction that may assist in making this guide as concise and more informative for the community.

**Produced by**

**Adoption Service, Department for Community Development**

**November 2006**

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## GLOSSARY

**AAC** - Adoption Applications Committee – a board of people with expertise in the area of adoption which meets once a month. The AAC considers applicant's suitability to adopt. The Adoption Assessment Report is submitted to the AAC and is used to make a decision about an applicant's suitability.

**(The) Adoption Act or The Act** – The Western Australian Adoption Act, 1994 (WA legislation)

**Allocation** – Child offered to Prospective Adoptive Parents for the purpose of adoption prior to placement.

**ARCS** – Adoption Research and Counselling Service is a non-government adoption organisation. Adoption Service is the only approved organisation in WA authorised to arrange adoptions both overseas and locally.

**AS** – Adoption Service. Adoption Service is the only approved organisation in WA authorised to arrange adoptions both overseas and locally.

**Assessment** – all adoption applicants need to be assessed by AS prior to being approved to adopt a child either locally or from overseas.

**Adoption Assessment Report** – A report, which the assessor has written based on client interviews, referee reports, medical and police checks etc. This report is submitted to the AAC.

**ASFC** – Adoption Support for Families and Children is a non-government adoption organisation. Adoption Service is the only approved organisation in WA authorised to arrange adoptions both overseas and locally.

**Authentication** – Documents to be officially sealed and bound by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia, prior to sending overseas.

**DCD** – Department for Community Development

**CEO** – Chief Executive Officer of Department for Community Development

**DIMA** – Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Affairs, Australia.

**DSPW** – Department of Social Development and Welfare. The Thai Authority for intercountry adoption.

**FCS 32** - Financial Statement Form – to be filled in by prospective adoptive parents for the adoption assessment report and homestudy, assessment updates and Hon Judge report.

**Form 40CH** – Immigration Sponsorship of your adopted child. You need to lodge this with DIMA together with Form 47CH in order to obtain your adopted child's visa clearance.

**Form 47CH** – Application for Migration to Australia. You need to lodge this DIMA together with Form 40CH in order to obtain your adopted child's visa clearance.

**Hague Convention** – Hague Convention for Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. This is a convention to prevent the trafficking and sale of children by putting in place an agreement of minimum standards for intercountry adoption. Australia signed the Convention on 25 August 1998 and it was later ratified on 1 December 1998.

**Hague country** – Those countries that have signed and ratified the Hague Convention.

**HAS** – Health Assessment Service of DIMA – which approves or rejects the Child's Medicals for immigration purposes. This will determine if the Child is cleared for entry into Australia or not.

**Homestudy** – A package of documents that provides an overview of the applicants' circumstances. It is used to be able to match a child according to their needs. The package includes your assessment report.

**Intercountry Adoption** – Adoption of children from overseas countries.

**Notarisation** – Documents to be stamped and signed by a recognised Notary Public (solicitor) in Australia.

**Notary Public** – also commonly called Public Notary, is usually a practitioner/solicitor appointed by the Full Court as a practising public notary in WA, Australia.

**PAP** – Prospective Adoptive Parent

**Placement** – Child is officially placed into the care of the Prospective Adoptive Parents.

**Program Manager** – The appointed Social Worker from Adoption Service who liaises with the particular overseas country on intercountry adoptions; who provides support to applicants with that country and who supervises the placements of adopted children from that country.

**VAC** – Visa Application Charge. This is the fee that you will need to pay at the Department of Multicultural, Immigration and Indigenous Affairs. This is currently \$1340 and it is non-refundable.

## INTRODUCTION

This guide is written to help you understand the processes, which occur from the time you are considering adopting a child through to the completion of the adoption process.

Your Program Manager at Adoption Service will support you through the process and answer any questions that may arise along the way. Adoption Service is immediately advised of any changes to the intercountry adoption process and will advise you.

Adoption is a long and detailed process.

There are basically **six** stages for an intercountry adoption:

- 1. Enquiry**
- 2. Education program**
- 3. Application, Assessment and Approval**
- 4. Waiting and matching**
- 5. Placement and supervision**
- 6. Application for Adoption Order**

Please refer to the 'Adoption Procedure Checklist' for the details associated with each each.

This guide will explain these stages and give you rough time lines for each stage. Also, there are some pages at the back of the guide which have been left blank for your own notes. You may find it helpful to highlight or put post-it notes on important pages.

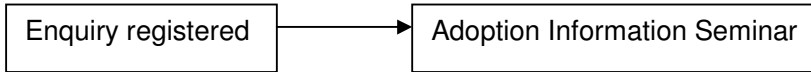
While every effort is being made to ensure information is as thorough and as accurate as possible at the time of publication, please be aware that ere are frequent changes in various aspects of the process and that updates will be made from time to time.

The program manager would like your feedback, especially any additional information, corrections and constructive suggestions that can be included in a future edition in order to best support the applicants who follow you in their intercountry adoption.

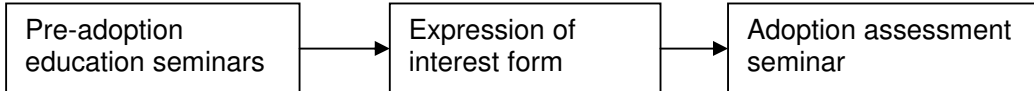
## FLOWCHART

### PROCEDURE FOR INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

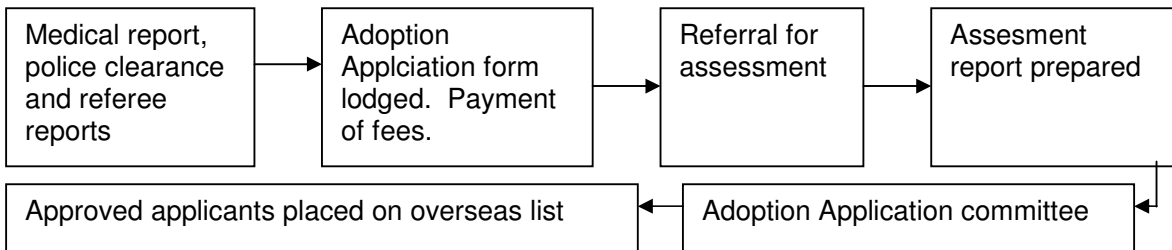
#### Stage 1: Enquiry



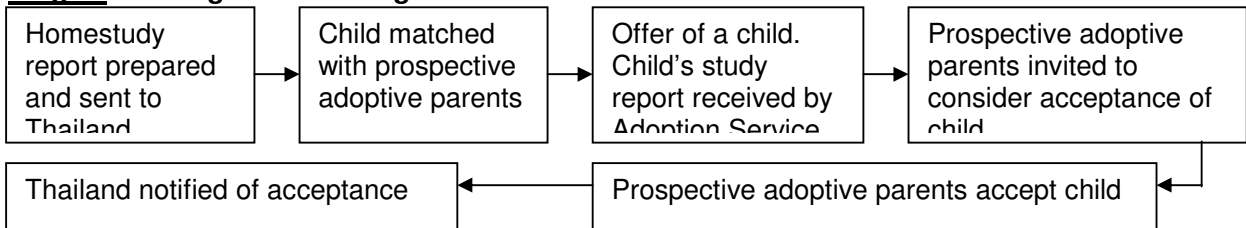
#### Stage 2: Education Program



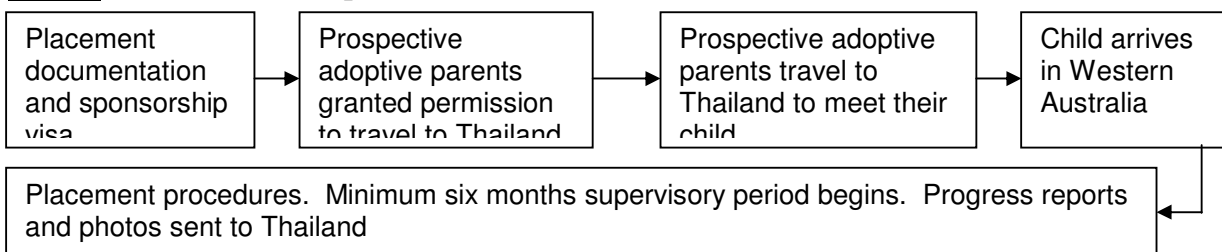
#### Stage 3: Application, Assessment and Approval



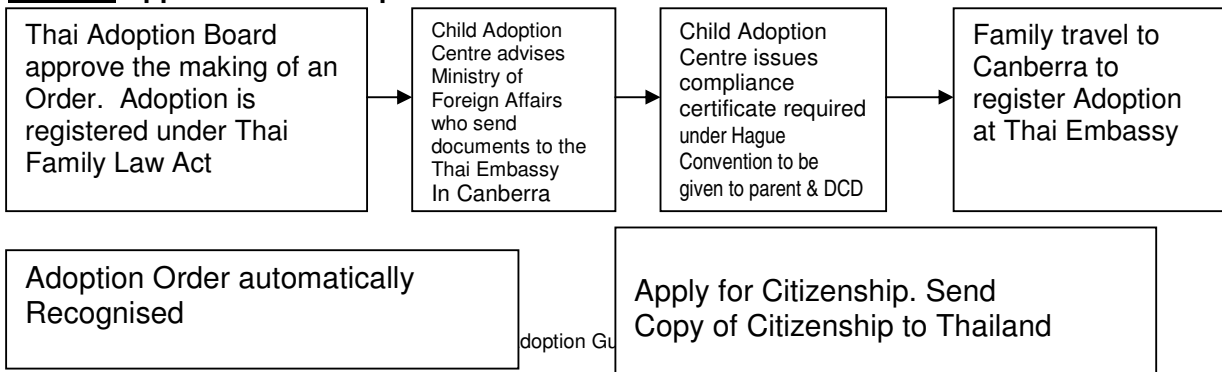
#### Stage 4: Waiting and Matching



#### Stage 5: Placement and supervision



#### Stage 6: Application for Adoption Order





**Map**





Intercountry adoption is a very sensitive and complex area of adoption. It involves all the issues relating to domestic adoptions as well as a range of other issues. Moreover, it involves Australian immigration law and policy; the laws and policies of the overseas countries; and obligations under international conventions.

Because the children are being placed internationally, and almost always interracially, issues relating to cultural heritage arise. Also, some children have "special needs" because they are older and/or have disabilities. Many of the children, including babies, are likely to be physically and/or emotionally vulnerable because of early physical and/or emotional deprivation.

Intercountry adoption has frequently been associated with intense controversy. At one end of the spectrum, there is the view that it is a form of exploitation of Third World countries by First World countries and should be discontinued. At the other end of the spectrum, there is the view that intercountry adoption is a humanitarian act, towards both individual children and the sending countries, and thus is a form of overseas aid; it should be encouraged to develop and expand. There are numerous intermediate positions.

## HISTORY OF INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

The concept of intercountry adoption has its origins in the aftermath of the two World Wars, but particularly after World War II, when the disruption of families in war-torn countries resulted in large numbers of abandoned and orphaned children. Children from Germany, Greece and the Baltic States were sent by religious organisations for adoption in other European countries and in the USA. From 1953 large numbers of orphaned or abandoned children from the Thailandn war were adopted overseas. In Australia, however, intercountry adoption is a relatively recent practice: prior to 1975 there were few intercountry adoptions. It only became a recognised avenue of adoption following the airlift in 1975 of Vietnamese war orphans to Western nations: the 292 children who came to Australia were adopted by Australian families.

Since then, adoption of children from Asia and Latin America has become well established in Australia, but for reasons which have diversified from this early reaction to a specific crisis.

Intercountry adoption has endured as a response to the needs of children orphaned, abandoned or relinquished because of military conflict, poverty or stigmas attaching to illegitimacy, disablement or mixed race.

But another momentum has, since the 1970s, overtaken the original impetus for intercountry adoption. Economic, demographic, cultural and political changes in Australia in the last twenty years have resulted in fewer unwanted births, less pressure to relinquish ex-nuptial children for adoption and later discovery of infertility due to couples delaying starting a family. The two-fold effect of these factors is a marked decrease in the availability of Australian-born children for adoption and many couples finding themselves too old to adopt locally born babies. As a result, increasing numbers have turned to intercountry adoption to begin or extend their families.

It can be seen, then, that intercountry adoption is a shifting, evolving phenomenon, responding to both domestic and international forces.

## HISTORY OF THAI PROGRAM

In July 1977 the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand, as part of a continuing effort to protect against the exploitation of children, approved the establishment of the Child Adoption Centre under the Department of Public Welfare of the Ministry of the Interior for approval to take the child out of the Kingdom for adoption.

The Child Adoption Centre is given the responsibility for investigating applications for adoption, including all intercountry adoptions, for matching children with prospective parents and for submitting all cases to the Child Adoption Board for approval.

Qualified social workers on the staff of the Adoption Centre examine the suitability and eligibility of prospective parents. They review and document the backgrounds of all children put up for adoption, including the situation of their natural parents and their individual histories in the child care institutions.

In the case of a parent who wishes to relinquish, the parent is provided with counselling and given the chance to consider alternatives. If, after counselling, the final decision is to relinquish then the same process is followed through the court as for an abandoned child. The Court clearance process usually takes several months. No child is released for adoption until the child is legally freed for adoption by the Court.

Children who have no parents or legal guardians or who have been abandoned and committed to the care of the Department of Public Welfare of Thailand may be adopted, providing all efforts have been made to trace the biological parents, for instance advertising the child in the press for a month to see if anyone claims the child. If the Court is satisfied with the findings, an order of abandonment is issued in which all rights of the biological parents are terminated and a legal guardian, (the Department of Public Welfare) is appointed.

Arrangements for the adoption of children are made possible in order to provide permanent homes and families for these children and to afford them opportunities for educational, social and emotional development in a family setting that would otherwise not be available to them.

The Director of the Child Adoption Centre is the Chairperson of the Matching Board which decides which family is most suitable for the child which is waiting to be adopted. Once the match is made the application is put before the Executive Committee of the Child Adoption Board for approval. In addition, the application goes to the Minister of Interior for approval. The overseas country is then advised that they have made an allocation of a Thai child to "X" family and include details of the child's background and a photograph.

Approximately 3 - 4 months after acceptance of the child, the Child Adoption Centre advises that the child is ready to travel. The prospective adoptive family is then able to travel to Thailand and met with the Child Adoption Board before finally taking the child into their family. The placement of the child is then supervised for a period of not less than six months before an Adoption Order can be made. The Thai Adoption Board will then recommend that the formal adoption be granted. At that stage the adoptive parents are required to regist the adoption under the laws of the Kingdom of Thailand at an Embassy or at any district office in Thailand.

In 1978 discussions with the Department of Public Welfare, Adoption Centre, regarding the Adoption of Thai children by Australian families was initiated by the Holt Foundation, a private adoption agency based in Thailand, who also had other family and children support interests in Thailand. It was these negotiations and agreements and consequent written approval of the Thai Department of Public Welfare which facilitated the only way to legally adopt a child from Thailand.

The Department of Public Welfare would only approve placement of a Thai child where prospective adoptive parents had been approved through the Australian government welfare departments, with agreements by those departments, to supervise the placement of a child for a period not less than six months.

In September 1978, an Australian delegation met members of the Thai Department of Public Welfare in Bangkok, Thailand. Whilst there they visited two orphanages for children and a home for Youth. Concerns were expressed at that time, by the Deputy Director-General of the Department of Public Welfare, about the operations of private organisations and individuals in Thailand.

Thailand introduced the Child Adoption Act in Parliament on 22 April 1979 and updated this Act in 1980, 1985, 17 April 1986. Guidelines 1982.

In October 2000, Mr Elawat Chandraprasert, Director General, Department of Public Welfare was promoted to the Head of the Thai Public Service.

Khun Chalutip has been appointed as the Director of Child Adoption Center in 2004.

In October 2000 new Adoption Regulations came into force. The new regulations combine 8 previous sets of regulations. The Regulations are still being officially translated into English and will be sent to the Australian States and Territories with new guidelines. A new Application form has now been issued.

The Thai Department of Public Welfare placed Western Australia's first Thai child, a little girl, in September 1991 with prospective adoptive parents.

Thailand has ratified the Hague Convention.

## AGREEMENT WITH AUSTRALIA

Australia had a Bilateral Agreement (non-prescribed overseas jurisdiction) with Thailand until they ratified the Hague Convention. An adopted child is allowed to leave his/her country of birth (in this instance, Thailand) for the purposes of adoption in another country. On Entry into Australia, the child automatically comes under the Guardianship of the Chief Executive Officer of Department of Community Development (Section 19 of the Western Australian Adoption Act 1994), and the Commonwealth Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1946 (as delegated).

The Chief Executive Officer of Department for Community Development will remain the child's legal guardian until the adoption is finalised.

Thailand requires progress reports and photos of the child for the first six months from the date of placement. At the time of applying to adopt a Thai child, the prospective adoptive parents are asked to sign an Undertaking to register the Adoption at the Royal Thai Consulate in Canberra, and this needs to be undertaken once the Adoption been finalised by Thailand and the Department of Public Welfare in Thailand advises that the registration needs to be undertaken within a period of six months.

Like with all international adoptions, all prospective adoptive parents have to meet the requirements set by both the overseas country, as well as the criteria set in the *Western Australian Adoption Act 1994*, before the child can be allocated to them.

Please be aware that the adoption of your Thai Child is formalised in Thailand.

## CHAPTER ONE

### CRITERIA

#### WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S CRITERIA FOR ADOPTION

Applicants interested in adopting a child from an overseas country, in first instance must meet all the requirements of the Western Australian Adoption Act 1994. Adoption of a child from an overseas country can only be arranged by Department for Community Development, Adoption Service.

##### 1. The Adoption Act 1994 – criteria for adoption applicants.

- be 18 or more years of age;
- be a resident or domiciled in Western Australia;
- be single, married or in a defacto relationship; couples must apply jointly;
- if applying jointly, provide evidence to show that you have been continuously in a relationship (married, or defacto or a combination of both) for at least three years, (and cannot be married or in a defacto relationship to any other person);
- if applying as a single applicant, must be an Australian citizen; if applying jointly, both applicants are Australian citizens, or one of the applicants is an Australian citizen and the other is a citizen of a country which gives the same rights to adopted persons as non-adopted persons in relation to entry into, residence, education and medical care in that country. *[Section 38 & Section 39]*

##### 2. To be considered 'suitable to adopt' each applicant must show that he / she:

- is physically and mentally able to care for and support a child until the child attains 18 years of age;
- is of good repute;
- if applying jointly, has a stable marriage or defacto relationship with the other applicant;
- shows a desire and ability to provide a suitable family environment for the child;
- has not been found guilty:-
  - (1) in the 5 years before the date of assessment, of an offence punishable at the time of the finding by imprisonment,
  - (2) at any time, of an offence punishable at the time of the finding by life imprisonment, strict security life imprisonment or life imprisonment for 20 years or more, or
  - (3) at any time, of an offence involving an assault or sexual offence against a child (committed when the applicant was 18 or more years of age). *[Section 40]*

The Adoption Applications Committee will have regard to the assessment report and any other relevant information in determining whether or not applicants are suitable for adoptive parenthood. *[Section 13]*

##### 3. When a child is considered for placement, the prospective adoptive parent:

- be approved as a suitable adoptive applicant;
- meet, as far as is practicable, the wishes of the birth parents

- in the case of a first adoption, the younger applicant to be no more than 45 years older than the child to be placed and the older applicant to be no more than 50 years older than the age of the child;
- in the case of a second or subsequent adoption, the younger applicant to be no more than 50 years older than the child to be placed and the older applicant to be no more than 55 years older than the age of the child;
- if a single person, be no more than 45 years older than the age of the first child to be placed and no more older than 50 years older in age to that of the second or subsequent child;
- Continue to be in a stable marriage or defacto relationship;
- meet if relevant, the child's wishes;
- recognises the value of, and need for, cultural and ethnic continuity for the child;
- shows a desire and ability to continue the child's established cultural, ethnic, religious or educational arrangements;
- if female, not be pregnant at the time of placement (evidence required);
- not be undertaking treatment for fertility (evidence required);
- be matched with a child that is consistent with the recommendation of the AAC;
- be matched with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) child in accordance with the ATSI placement for adoption principle in Schedule 2A, if this is consistent with the parent's wishes;
- have finalised the adoption of any other adopted child in the family;
- where there are other children in the adoptive home then:-
  - (1) the adoptee is to be the youngest in the adoptive family,
  - (2) the youngest child in the family must be 12 or more months older than the adoptee,
  - (3) each of the children have been in the family for at least 2 years.
- consider to also accommodate a sibling of an adopted child, who subsequently becomes available for adoption. *[Section 52 and Regulation 41]*

Please note that the age differential is different for second and subsequent adoptions.

This summary is a guide. The *Adoption Act 1994* and *Adoption Regulations 1995* contain all the criteria. If you have any questions about the three stages please contact Adoption Service, 9222 2555.

## THAILAND'S CRITERIA FOR ADOPTION

Applicants must meet the requirements of the *Western Australian Adoption Act* and in addition the requirements of the Thai criteria to be eligible to adopt a child from Thailand.

<p>Martital Status</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants must be legally married.</li> <li>• Defacto couples are not accepted.</li> <li>• Thai laws permit single females to adopt, although preference is given to married couples. Single females will only be considered for special needs children. It is therefore, conceivable that a child may not be matched with a single applicant or it may take several years.</li> <li>• The Child Adoption Board will not consider applications by single males.</li> </ul>
<p>Age</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum age is 25 years old.</li> <li>• Applicants to be no older than 40 years for a child younger than 12 months.</li> <li>• Applicants 40 -45 years will likely be matched to a child 1-4 years.</li> <li>• Applicants 45 years and older will likely be matched a child over 4 years</li> <li>• Applicants over 50 years will be matched with a child 7-8 years</li> <li>• Preference is for younger couples</li> </ul>
<p>Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants must be in good health.</li> </ul>
<p>Families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority given to childless couples.</li> <li>• Second adoptions from Thailand will take longer</li> <li>• If a couple have two natural or adopted children, they may have to wait longer as priority is given to families who are childless.</li> <li>• Families with more than two children will be considered on a case by case basis</li> <li>• Any child in the family who is age 12 years or more must agree with the placement of a child in their family.</li> </ul>
<p>Religion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants of Jehovah Witness faith are not accepted by Thai Authorities unless they are prepared to accept a blood transfusion.</li> </ul>
<p>Type of child</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children vary in age from 9 months up to 12 years.</li> <li>• Applicants preferring girls can expect to wait longer.</li> </ul>
<p>Allocation Time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latest indication is approximately a year to 18 months from the time</li> </ul>

	your file is sent to Thailand (May be longer if you wish a female child)
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**CHILDREN REQUIRING AN ADOPTIVE PLACEMENT**

The children requiring placement are:

- Healthy children
- Special needs children with significant disabilities.

There is an active special needs program for older children and experienced families are often sought for these children.

Special needs includes minor but correctable conditions, HIV negative children, developmental delay or children over the age of 4 years. Applicants can be considered for normal and special needs children simultaneously. Children with disabilities are managed by a separate division of Department of Welfare and are generally not placed in Australia.

Children may be abandoned or a birth parent may give consent to a child's adoption. The children are usually living in orphanages / institutions / group homes.

As with most abandoned cases, the relevant Thai authorities will do their utmost to trace the birth parents and relatives of the child prior to releasing an order for the child to be legally allowed to be adopted. As Adoptive Parents of an *abandoned child*, you will have very little information on the Child's background. Hence, it is important that you retain as much information for your Child when he/she starts enquiring about his/her background. This will include the Child Study Report, information on the orphanage, the child's main caregiver from the orphanage, and any information obtained from the orphanage.

There is currently a quota of four files per year to be sent to Thailand, but this may vary in future. Waiting times are comparatively lengthy, with the median time being 23 months for homestudy to allocation.

**CHAPTER TWO**  
**APPLICATION PROCESS**

**SUMMARY OF STAGES, DOCUMENTS AND COST**

**1. Enquiry**

Please refer to the 'Adoption Procedure Checklist'.

**2. Education program**

Please refer to the 'Adoption Procedure Checklist'.

**3. Application, Assessment and Approval**

Please refer to the 'Adoption Procedure Checklist'.

**4. Waiting and Matching**

	<b>Process</b>	<b>Cost</b> Subject to change
Information Officer	Once you have been approved, the Information Officer will send you a letter outlining the homestudy requirements of Thailand	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	Once you have completed all the forms and collated the information, please contact the Information Officer to arrange a time to submit your paperwork	Nil
Information officer	All the information is collated as per Thailand's requirements (including assessment report, police clearance etc). The information officer will arrange for some of the necessary documents to be notarised by Tim Cocks who does not charge adoption clients for this service.	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	You will need to get some documents certified by the Royal Thai Consulate General in Perth. This will take one working day to complete. Once this is completed, please forward the documents to Adoption Service	Nil
Information Officer	The information officer will compile the documents together and forward this to the Royal Thai Embassy for authentication.	nil
Information Officer	Once this has been completed, the homestudy	\$40

	documents will go the the Department of Foreign Affiars and Trade (DFAT) for Authentication	
Information Officer	Once the documents have been returned to Adoption Service, the information officer will send the homestudy to Thailand by courier	Courier fees varies.
Program manager	Follows progress of the case with DSDW.	Nil
Program manager	When an allocation is made, the program manager will conduct a Departmental case review of the allocated child. This is to ensure that prospective adoptive parents are eligible to adopt by checking that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Couples are within age critiera</li> <li>• Able to meet the needs and care of the allocated child</li> <li>• Medical, Police and Adoption Assessment are all current and up to date (all need to be updated every two years)</li> </ul>	Nil
Team Leader	Endorses recommendation of program manager to accept the allocation of the child	Nil
Adoptions Manager	Manager approves the allocation of the child	Nil
Program manager	Prospective adoptive parents are notified of the allocation and an interview is arranged to peruse the details of child. A photo of the child is usually given to the prospective adoptive parents	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	Couples discuss the child offered and complete acceptance documetation and immigration procedure if they wish to proceed with acceptance. Program manager couriers acceptance papers and immigration forms to Thailand.	Adoption Fee = AUD\$1000 DIMIA sponsorship fee = AUD\$1340 Courier costs varies.

## 5. Placement and Supervision

	Process	Cost Subject to change
DSDW	DSDW will take the child to a panel doctor to complete medical clearance needed for immigration purposes. Once the medicals have been completed, this is returned to the Australian Embassy in Bangkok and then faxed to HAS for medical clearance	Nil
HAS	To clear immigration medicals. Medicals will be faxed back to the Australian Embassy in Bangkok and then to DSPW.	Nil
Program manager	Contact HAS and obtains a copy of the cleared medical. Program manager will forward this information to prospective adoptive parents	Nil
DSDW	Will obtain passport and organise for the visa to be in the passport once the Australian Embassy has approved the immigration visa. Once this is all in place, DSDW will notify Adoption Service that the prospective adoptive parents can travel.	Nil

Program manager	Contact applicants to notify them that they are able to travel	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	To arrange travel dates in consultation with program manager and after booking flights, provide a copy of flight details to program manager to forward to Thailand.	2 x adult return airfares 1 x child one way airfares.
Program manager	To fax a copy of travel itinerary to DSDW .	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	To sign undertaking and provide results of pregnancy test (blood test) one week before travel. To sign placement conditions forms	Doctors fee
Program manager	To prepare travel papers for prospective adoptive parents	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	Travel to Thailand (approx 2 weeks).	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents and child	Thai Adoption Board Meeting	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents and child	Return to Western Australia	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents and child	Visit program manager within 72 hours after return. Child's passport is given to program manager and program manager will supply you with certified copies of passport and other documents necessary for the 6 months of supervision. Prospective adoptive parents and program manager arranges a time for the first placement supervision visit in the home.	Nil

## 6. Adoption

	<b>Process</b>	<b>Cost</b> Subject to change
Prospective adoptive parents	After 6 visits, your program manager will ensure all reports and photos have been sent to Thailand.	
Adoptive parents	Adoption Order automatically recognised by Australian Commonwealth or State and Territory Adoption Laws. Applies for child's Certificate of Australian Citizenship. Supplies copy to program manager. Sends certified copy of Australian Citizenship to DSDW.	Nil
Adoptive parents and child	Visit to Thai Embassy for registration	Airfares and accommodation
Thailand	Issues certificate of compliance that Adoption has been granted	
Program manager	Close case	Nil

## **SUMMARY OF COSTS**

(Approximate costs. Subject to change)

Education seminars	\$470
Police clearance	\$60
Medical	varies
Application	\$750 per couple
Assessment	\$986
Courier of homestudy	approx \$120
Adoption fee for Thailand	AUD \$1000
Immigration fee	AUD\$1340
Courier of acceptance documents	approx \$120
Air fares (2 x adults return, 1 x child one way)	approx \$3,000
Accommodation	approx\$1,500
Travel expenses	approx \$1,000
Medical report (female applicant not pregnant)	Varies
Child's passport	1,500 baht
Orphanage donation	\$400 - \$500
Adoption Order fee (only if applied for by solicitor)	approx \$800
<b>Total</b>	<b>approx \$11,000</b>

## CHAPTER THREE

### HOMESTUDY

Adoption Service will help you prepare your homestudy **after** the Adoption Application Committee (AAC) has approved you as suitable to be adoptive parents. After you have been approved, you will receive a congratulatory letter informing you of what needs to be included as part of your homestudy. Please feel free to ask your program manager if you have any questions or queries. E-mail is an efficient way of communicating with your Program Manager.

#### **ALLOCATION AND PLACEMENT CONDITIONS FOR INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION APPLICANTS**

Adoption Service asks all prospective adoptive parents to sign an agreement that all contact with the overseas authority will be made by Adoption Services only, on your behalf. It is also an agreement stating that you will be responsible for all financial costs associated with your adopted child (including courier costs of documents) and that you will not travel before approval from Adoption Service.

The purpose of the undertaking is to make sure that the adoption process runs smoothly and that the Western Australian intercountry adoption process complies with international agreements and conventions.

Adoption Service will give the undertaking to you. Please sign this and return it as soon as possible. Your program manager will make all enquires to the overseas country on your behalf. Your program manager will remain in regular contact with you but please feel free to contact your program manager if you have any questions or queries.

#### **HOMESTUDY DOCUMENTS REQUIRED**

(Please photocopy all documents for your records)

To complete the Thailand homestudy, you are required to supply Adoption Service with the following documents.

- Certified Copy of Marriage Certificate
- Employee letters for each applicant certifying income and occupation.  
Self employed must provide an accountants letter verifying income for the previous year.
- Certificate of Assets (Statutory declaration - form 99 ) – This form will be provided to you by Adoption Service

- ❑ Certificate re: financial status (Statutory declaration - form 99) – This form will be provided to you by Adoption Service.
- ❑ Photographs (4 x individual size 4.5 x 6 cm)
- ❑ Well presented album of photographs of home area (4 x home - 1 x front and 1x rear and 2 x inside)
- ❑ If there are any children in the family, photographs of the child/ren. This may be of any size. Achieving this by inclusion of a family portrait in the home album is acceptable.
- ❑ If the applicants have already adopted a child from Thailand, a copy of the registration of the finalised earlier adoption(s) with the Thai Embassy. (This is the registration document in Thai and English, provided by the Embassy at the time of registration).
- ❑ Thailand Application Form for child adoption – this will be given to following AAC approval
- ❑ Medical certificates (GP letters) for each applicant including certification of physical health and mental stability, as well as indication of infertility (if applicable)
- ❑ Extract of the applicants’s divorce detailing any custody arrangements.
- ❑ Undertaking to register the Adoption with Royal Thai Embassy – This will be provided to you by Adoption Service. Adoptive parents must be prepared to travel to the Royal Thai Embassy in Canberra following the adoption of a Thai child in Western Australia. This is to register the adoption of their child with the Royal Thai Embassy. This also ensures that the child can retain his/her Thai nationality. Children are allocated to Australian couples on this understanding.
- ❑ A letter stating why you both wish to adopt a Thai child.
- ❑ Copy of Australian citizenship
- ❑ Copies of both passports.
- ❑ Fee:

1. \$40 for Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

The originals (or copies of ie marriage, passport, citizenship etc) of the above documents will need to be certified by the Thai Consulate at:

4<sup>th</sup> Floor, The Victoria, 14 Victoria Ave, Perth  
The Consulate is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9am to 12 noon.

You can use a cover page which is provided to you by Adoption Service and therefore only requires one stamp and signature. The documentation will need to be left with the Consulate and collected on the following working day.

Note: Although your homestudy has been accepted by the Thailand Authorities, neither Thailand nor Adoption Services is able to guarantee that a child will be placed with you.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **OFFER OF A CHILD**

Once your homestudy is couriered to Thailand, DSDW will match a child to you on the basis of the homestudy documents. Matching is done on the basis of the best interest of the prospective adoptive child and the birth parents's wishes where possible.

Thailand is committed to reducing the numbers of children placed overseas for adoption.

Thailand has recently implemented a quota system for each country, there are many more foreign applicants intrested in adopting a child from Thailand then the Thai Government are willing to place for intercountry adoption. Therefore, the waiting item for Thailand may increase due to the decrease in number of children being placed for adoption.

#### **CHILD STUDY REPORT**

Once prospective adoptive parents are identified by Thailand, a child study report will be forwarded to Adoption Service. The report will have basic information on the child including name, date of birth, nature of relinquishment, medical status, background information on parents and social history. A photo or two is usually included in the report.

#### **CASE REVIEW AND OFFER OF CHILD**

Once the department receives the child study report, Adoption Service will then prepare a case review which the team leader and manager endorse. The case report sets out the formal allocation process. This is in line wih the placement criteria of the WA Adoption Act 1994.

Once the case review has been endorsed, you will receive a phone call from Adoption Service congratulating you on the offer of a child. You will be invited into the office to receive the child's information and see the photos of your child. You will also be given some letters which will outline the acceptance and immigration process.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### IMMIGRATION & ACCEPTANCE

#### IMMIGRATION

Please note the overall process of your child's entry to Australia will be referred to as the "immigration process" and the legal documentation to be granted is the "adoption visa". The Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) undertakes the role of assessing and deciding applications for visas in accordance with the requirements of the Migration Regulations. DIMA refers to the migration of a child to Australia as "sponsorship".

Please refer to the DIMA website for updated information on this process. See fact sheet 36 ([www.immi.gov.au/migration/family/children/adoption.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/migration/family/children/adoption.htm))

#### NON-ACCEPTANCE / ACCEPTANCE

It is important that you inform the program manager as soon as possible if you choose not to accept the child allocated to you. You will not be discriminated in regards to an offer of another child but at the same time you would need to be able to justify the decision eg if the child's family had a history of mental illness and you feel that should the child develop a mental illness it would interfere with the bonding process between yourselves and the child. Not like 'the look' of a particular child is not an adequate reason for non-acceptance.

To formally accept, you will need to provide the following documents to the program manager.

- ❑ Fee – Commonwealth Bank Cheque made payable to **Child Adoption Centre, Department of Social Development and Welfare, Bangkok, Thailand** and drawn to the Krug-Thai Bank Ltd, 35 Sukhumvit Road, Bangkok, Thailand for the sum of AUD\$1000. This payment covers day to day expenses incurred by the agency in relation to your child and required medical expenses for your child's immigration visa.
- ❑ Letter of acceptance to Department of Social Development and Welfare (provided by prospective adoptive parents). Please include your intention of cultural continuity for the child and maintaining contact with Thailand.
- ❑ Letter of acceptance (addressed to Adoption Service)
- ❑ Undertaking regarding the payment to be made to Department of Social Development and Welfare
- ❑ A current financial statement including statements of income and assets.

- ❑ Welcome album for the child with simple photos of your family so that the child may familiarise with the family before you arrive to collect him or her. This is to be sent directly to the orphanage.

## **THAI CHECKLIST**

**Once all the documents are gathered, please make an appointment with Adoption Service to go through the documents prior to couriering them off.**

- ❑ Typed letter of acceptance addressed to Department for Community Development
- ❑ Letter of acceptance addressed to Department of Social Development and Welfare
- ❑ Financial Statement – Statutory declaration
- ❑ Welcome album for the child
- ❑ Fee of AUD\$1000 for Thailand

**All the above need to be given to Adoption Service and will be couriered to DSDW on your behalf.**

- ❑ Form 40CH ( certified payslip, tax assessment or letter from employer)
- ❑ Form 47CH
- ❑ \*Certified copy of child home study or medical report (in lieu of child's birth certificate)
- ❑ \*Certified copy as proof of employment
- ❑ \*Certified copy of information pages from passport (if you do not have a current passport, you will need a certified copy of your birth certificate)
- ❑ \*Certified copy of marriage certificate
- ❑ Authorising letter from Adoption Service addressed to the Australian Embassy in Bangkok
- ❑ Original receipt of your visa application charge (AUD\$1340)
- ❑ Two passport photos of the child need to be provided

**All the above need to be given to Adoption Service to be couriered to the Australian Embassy in Bangkok**

\* = Justice of the Peace

## **CHILD'S PASSPORT AND ADOPTION VISA**

Your child's Thai passport will be organised by Thailand and he or she will travel to Australia on this passport. Your child's passport will cost approximately 1,500 Bahts (approx \$53) and will be paid to the Thai Authorities at the time of travelling to Thailand to collect your child. This is paid at the first meeting with the Child Adoption Agency.

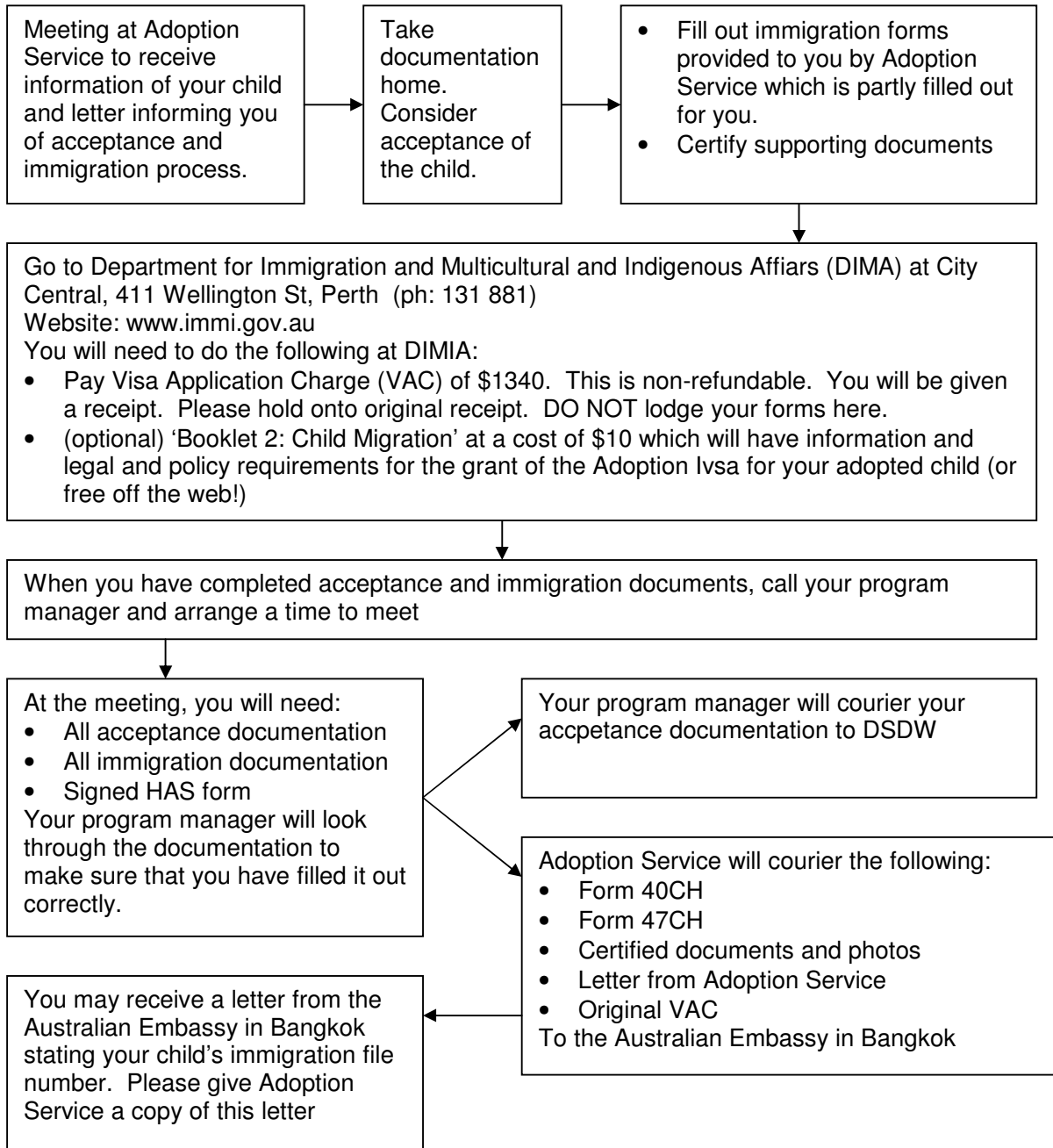
A visa label will be affixed to the child's passport as evidence of the child's visa clearance for entry to Australia.

When this has been sorted out, you will be notified by Adoption Service regarding when the child is ready to travel.

It is extremely important that you do not travel prior to approval being given by the department. The necessary paperwork (medical clearance and other documents from the overseas country) needs to be completed. Please be assured that your program manager will keep in regular contact with the overseas country and there is a good working relationship between Adoption Service and the overseas organisation.

The visa permits the child to travel to and enter Australia for a period of 5 years from the date of grant.

## FLOWCHART



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **PROCESS PRIOR TO TRAVEL**

The time frame from the offer of your child to the travelling to pick up your child in Thailand can range from between 2 to 5 months.

#### **TRAVEL ARRANGMENTS**

It is a requirement that both prospective adoptive parents travel to Thailand for their first adoption. You are required to meet with the Child Adoption Centre where they will meet you and your child. The interview with the Child Adoption Board occurs after you have the child in your care. Before you finalise any travel arrangements, it is important to make sure that you are in Thailand for one of the Child Adoption Centre meetings. These meetings are not available any time and you need to make sure that your travel arrangements coincide with the meeting dates.

It is important that you have some toys, food and drink for the child while you wait to be interviewed, this will help to keep the child settled. If the child is an older child, or shows signs of trauma at your first meeting, please do not accept the child at once, ask to see the child in his/her own setting for a couple of days, so that the child gets to know you before you take full responsibility for him/her. Often the child will not go to one or the other prospective adoptive parents, don't worry about this, the child will soon learn to get to know you over a period of time.

The prospective adoptive parents should expect to stay on in Thailand for about two weeks for this purpose. Prospective adoptive parents are responsible for the expenses to be incurred by travelling to Thailand and of the child to be adopted such as the passport fee, travelling tax and air fares.

#### **ACCOMMODATION**

You will need to find your own accommodation in Thailand. You may wish to book this through your travel agent or you may wish to browse the internet for any special offers during your intended time of stay in Thailand.

#### **TRAVEL VISA FOR APPLICANTS**

You do not need a visa to travel to Thailand. When you book your flights, please check again with your travel agent as policies may change.

#### **PLACEMENT CONDITIONS FOR OVERSEAS ADOPTIONS**

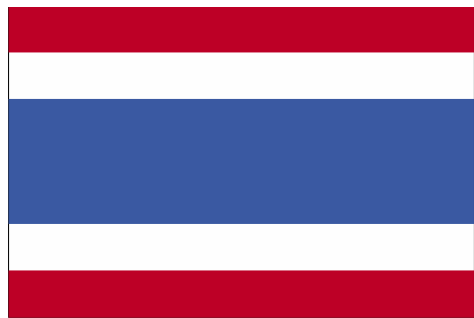
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The 'Placement Conditions for Overseas Adoption' list several conditions before the placement of your child is possible. The female applicant will need to have a blood test stating that she is not pregnant at the time of placement OR a written confirmation from your GP stating that you have had a hysterectomy etc.

**CHAPTER SEVEN**  
**KINGDOM OF THAILAND**

**FACTS IN BRIEF**

Area: 517,000 sq km  
 Population: 62 million  
 Government: Constitutional monarchy  
 Capital: Bangkok  
 Currency: 1 Baht = 100 satang

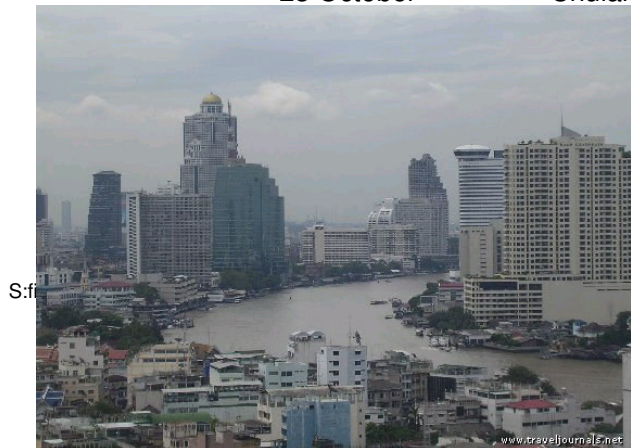


Climate: Monsoonal. In Bangkok, the temperatures range from 20 degrees to 35 degrees all year round with the wet season from May to October.

Religion: 95% are Theravada Buddhists  
 About 4% Muslim  
 Approx 0.5% believe in Christianity  
 0.5% are Confucianists, Taoists, Mahayana Buddhists and Hindus.

Language: Thai

Public holidays:	1 January	New Years Day
	6 April	Chakri Day
	5 May	Coronation Day
	*May	Visakha Puja (falls on the 15 <sup>th</sup> day of the waxing moon in the 6 <sup>th</sup> lunar month)
	*Mid-late July	Khao Phansa
	12 August	Queen's Birthday
	23 October	Chulalongkorn Day
		Birth Day
		Constitution Day



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## **CULTURAL INFORMATION FOR WHEN TRAVELLING TO THAILAND**

*Reprinted from 1995 Report of Intercountry Adoption. Written by Latin American Parent Association. Modified for Australia.*

Please feel free to talk to your program manager and with your Thailand Adoption Support group, who will be able to provide you with information from having travelled recently to Thailand to collect their child, because they will have the most up-to-date information on customs and other practical matters.

### DO.....

- read up on your host country before you travel (check with your local library for reference and travel books)
- be patient with the process and be courteous at all times
- be considerate and aware that you are a guest in a different culture
- remember that you are a visitor and a guest in their country and behave accordingly
- if possible, stay with locals who have been recommended and who may know the adoption procedures
- listen to the advice of your guide or host
- show an interest in the host country's customs and culture and try to adapt to those customs or at least respect them
- go sightseeing if possible (and take plenty of photographs but be aware that locals may not want their photo taken so ask first)
- Bring small gifts (chocolates, lollies, soaps, etc.) for guides, administrators. etc,
- Dress your child nicely when meeting social workers or other special persons involved with your adoption
- be flexible about your length of stay
- remember, when there is a setback, that with patience and persistence, it will pass and you will go home with your child
- make apologies for mistakes you may make
- learn some of the language before you travel and use it: your efforts will be appreciated
- try to learn more of the language while you are there
- remember that others will adopt through your source after you. Try to leave the country with a favourable impression so as not to make things more difficult for those following you

- humour is the best way to deal with minor irritations, delays and changes rather than being angry, assertive or aggressive
- dress and behave in a way that is culturally sensitive
- be aware of the limitations on resources - turn off lights, conserve water, etc.
- get out and meet the people.

#### DO NOT.....

- be impatient, time has different importance in other countries and people are usually not in a hurry so you need to slow down
- be inconsiderate, loud, noisy, or argumentative
- overdo on alcohol
- put yourself on a time schedule and/or deadlines that your host either cannot meet or will have no inclination to try to meet
- try to "buy" your way to faster service
- seek or expect to find your culture in the foreign country
- form a clique with others from your country and shut out others
- be afraid to socialise with your host
- make demands and expect everyone to cater to you
- indulge in political conversation with people in your hostcountry (unless you know them very well, maybe not even then)
- expect a foreign bureaucracy to work any more efficiently or swiftly than one of ours
- complain about or criticise different customs and attitudes found in the host country
- take a colonialist attitude
- complain about or criticise political events or social conditions in the host country
- argue if you are told return tomorrow by the orphanage or passport office, etc.
- be afraid to ask questions, but phrase them carefully
- expect sterile conditions, but remember your child made it this far and will survive even if conditions are not up to your standards of cleanliness or newness
- take offence if you are treated rudely or brusquely: the best way to handle such situations here or there is to rise above them, stay calm, and not respond in kind
- draw cultural inferences from the behaviour of individuals

- over barter - the 20 cents you are saving may be someone's meal.

### **USEFUL TIPS FROM ADOPTIVE PARENTS**

Travelling to Thailand can be daunting to even the seasoned traveller especially as you are meeting your child for the first time and actually may become a parent for the first time too. Most people who have returned from Thailand with good memories, positive stories seem to have left Australia with an accurate idea of what to expect in Thailand and realistic expectations of the amount (or lack of) travelling they can do with babies or toddlers. Your experience of Thailand will, most likely, be the main source of information about Thailand for your child in his/her early years. It may be helpful to consider that travelling with toddlers and babies is not always easy or enjoyable.

Some consideration of the following points may ensure you have a successful trip

- Reading and informing yourself about Thailand - there is plenty of information on the Internet if you have access to it. You may find hygiene facilities at the least inconvenient and outside the hotels have to use squat toilets.
- It is necessary to access information about where you wish to travel, taking safety into account. Prior knowledge of where you may wish to travel and possible modes of transport may prove helpful -especially during a short stay.
- Knowledge of cultural nuances may be helpful when seeking assistance from the Thai people.
- Realistic expectations of what you can see in a short time coupled with the fact you will be trying to establish a relationship with your child should ensure you are not dissatisfied. Remember the main reason for most prospective adoptive parents travelling to Thailand is to meet and return home with their child after seeing some of their child's birth country.
- When you arrive in Thailand you will be physically tired from last minute preparations for the trip and mentally and emotional "wired" as you will be about to meet and begin bonding with the child/ren you have had in your heart for so long.
- Your child/ren may be used to other carers and to one or more day-time sleeps. Long trips entailing lots of travel and co-ordinating may not leave you with fond memories if you are exhausted and/or you are travelling with one or more over tired babies or toddlers. In other words don't try to get value for your money at the expense of sleep time. Remember you still have to return on an international flight and perhaps face days of well-wishers on your return.
- Be prepared to adjust your plans from day to day. If you are run down through lack of sleep from preparing for the trip or the trip itself you are more likely to fall ill. Be kind to yourself and don't push yourself to fill every minute.
- Some travellers do become ill with minor but unwelcome and often restrictive complaints. Sickness may result from your selection of food or from drinking local water. Your child could have a "bug" that does not affect them but does not like you - and visa versa.
- Maps are available at the Thai airport and the Thai Tourist Commission at 202 Ratchadaphisek Road, Huai Khwang, Bangkok (Tel. 66-2- 694-1222) or 4

Ratchadamnoen Nok Avenue, Bangkok. (Telephone 66-2 282-9774). Address of the Australian Embassy in Thailand is: 37 South Southorn Road, BANGKOK,10120, Thailand.

- The hotel where you arrange to stay, may have some maps.
- Make yourself and your specific needs for the flight known to the Airline and flight attendant before take-off.
- Try to remember that you are guests in the country which is your hosts' home so it is important to be as considerate and aware as you would like your guests to be in your own home / country!!
- Relax and enjoy your stay as you will be home soon and your memories will be the images you share with your child and will colour their perceptions of themselves as well as their birth country.
- Australia is a lucky country so it is best to not go expecting things like accommodation, fostercare, transport, service etc. to be comparable to Australia even for a comparable price.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **ARRIVAL IN THAILAND**

#### **MEETING YOUR CHILD**

Your social worker in Thailand will arrange for you to visit the child's orphanage and for you to meet your child. If the child has bonded well to you, then you will have the opportunity to take the child with you to your hotel. The child is then placed in your pre-adoptive care by the Thai authorities. After the interview with the Child Adoption Centre, then you are free to take the child to Western Australia to begin the pre-adoptive procedures.

#### **ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS**

You will also make two additional payments whilst in Thailand. They are as follows:

1. A charge of 1,500 baht for the child's passport. This is paid to the Child Adoption Centre at the time of collecting the child.
2. A voluntary cash donation to the Children's home of \$400 - \$500 paid in Bahts at the time of collecting the child is appreciated. This donation allows the children's home to provide extra programs like taking the children to the seaside etc.

#### **CHILD ADOPTION CENTRE INTERVIEW**

At this meeting, the Child Adoption Centre will ask you a few questions. The social worker from the Child Adoption Centre will accompany you. At this meeting, you will sign an undertaking in conjunction with DSDW. This signifies the formal approval of the placement.

At the interview you will be given photos of the child and a document to take to the Australian Embassy in Thailand to get a Visa for your child. The Australian Embassy is open between 8 am to 12 noon each working day. (One adoptive parent can see to this). Keep your documents relating to your child with you at all times.

For your interview with the Child Adoption Centre, women must wear a dress or skirt and blouse with short sleeves. Men must wear a shirt, tie, long trousers with closed in shoes. No shorts, no bare sleeves, no thongs please. In preparation for the meeting provide soft drinks, snacks and sweets and toys for child while waiting to be seen.

## **USEFUL CONTACT**

Should you have any problems whilst overseas, you may contact us on:

Adoption Service – 0011 618 9222 2555 during business hours

Crisis Care – 0011 618 0223 1111

Please note that Bangkok is approximately 1 hour ahead of Perth local time.

Australian Embassy  
37 Thanon Sathon Tai  
Bangkok 10120  
Thailand

Ph: 662 287 2680

Fax: 66 22 13 1177

Email: [dima-bangkok@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dima-bangkok@dfat.gov.au)

Client Counter Hours 0800-1200 Monday - Friday

Client Telephone Hours 0800-1630 Monday - Friday (Permanent entry)  
1430-1630 Monday - Friday (Temporary entry)

## CHAPTER NINE

### RETURN TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA

#### LEGAL GUARDIAN

Your child's adoption has not been finalised yet. The CEO of the Department will be your child's legal guardian until the adoption is finalised.

As the CEO is the child's legal guardian until the Adoption is granted, important decisions must be made in consultation with the program manager. Parents should consult with the program manager about 6 weeks before making any major or important decisions for the child. Important decisions include consent to travel out of WA or overseas, baptism, anaesthesia and other medical/dental treatment. Your program manager will seek approval to the CEO via a written submission

#### MEETING WITH PROGRAM MANGAER

When you have finally arrived in Perth, please contact your program manager within three days of your arrival to arrange a meeting at Adoption Service. At this meeting, the program manager will keep the child's passport and provide you with certified copies of this instead. The child's passport will be returned to you once the Adoption Order has been granted.

In turn, Adoption Service will provide you with the following documents and information:

- Letter for Centrelink – for Family Allowance and Parenting Payment from date of return to Western Australia. Obtain your forms from your nearest Centrelink office and lodge them immediately.
- Letter for Medicare – please register your child with Medicare. If you are a member of a private mediate benefit fund, your child should also be added to your membership.
- Letter to Adoptive Parents re: State Child Development Centre (SCDC) – Liaise with SCDC, West Perth for an appropriate paediatric service or a full health check and developmental assessment.
- You will need to take your child to an Infant/Child Health Clinic (where appropriate) at your local community and ensure that the clinic book is kept up to date.
- Child's Australian Citizenship – a copy is to be provided to the Department for forwarding to the overseas country. You are urged to apply for your child's citizenship (evidence) as soon as possible after your child has been granted the adoption. Form 119 – Evidence of Australian Citizenship, will be given to you .
- Child's Australian Passport – you can apply for the passport after you have received citizenship for your child.

#### POST PLACEMENT VISITS

Adoption Service will help and support you and your child adjust during the first six months of your placement. A social worker will conduct a monthly home visit to ensure that everything is going along nicely. This is in line with the Adoption Act 1994, section 139. A short progress report will be written up after each supervision of placement.

As with all parents, it will be expected that a new child will bring added pressures and many questions. It is not a poor reflection on parents to have concerns and questions and the

program manager will appreciate the opportunity to provide assistance and referral options if required.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

The *Adoption Information Act (WA)* gives all adoptees over 18 and their birth parents a statutory right to information about a party separated from them by adoption. The Act applies to overseas adoptees and their birth parents, as well as local adoptees.

The fight for access to adoption information has existed as long as adoptees have been denied information about their origins. However, it was not until the early 1970's that adoptees' need for information was documented in welfare studies and personal histories. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s adoptees continued to speak out about the importance of adoption information for medical and personal history. Organisations such as Jigsaw helped adoptees trace family and continued to put pressure on governments to open up records.

Birth parents' need for information did not come to public attention until the 1980s with the publication of a number of books and studies on birth mothers' experiences of adoption. While individual birth mothers may have requested information in the past, many did not come forward for fear of disturbing the life of their relinquished child and because they believed they had no right to information, having been told that adoption was secret and final.

## **CHILD'S NEW NAME**

Your child will have the same surname as you. You are required, under law, to retain the first name of the child as their first name. It is at your discretion to choose a middle name for your child.

Choosing a name for your child is very personal, with parents' feelings, tradition and grandparents affecting that choice. When naming an adopted child the same influences exist together with the issues of culture, biological parents' ideas, and the age of the child. At times our personal desires may need to take second place to the child's needs or desires to retain or choose a name tied to his/her self-image and self-esteem.

Choosing a first name or middle name from your child's country, or maintaining the name given them by the orphanage, organisation or birth family, affirms your child's cultural and national heritage as an important part of him/her. It demonstrates to your child and to the world that his/her original cultural identity is a source of pride. It is an open acknowledgement of a positive kind of difference that will always be part of your child. It may be especially important as your child grows older, but having an Australian name as well may be just as important. Your child can then have the best of both worlds.

There are those who feel strongly that the name given the child in the birth country should be retained as the first name. Others point out that there will be times when your child will want to have a simple familiar name to feel more like the other kids at school and for ease of pronunciation.

A birth country name combined with an Australian name gives the child the opportunity to affirm either sides of his or her cultural identity, depending on the child's mood and stage of development.

Many adoption workers and psychologists feel that if your child is age two or older, it is vitally important to call him/her by the name he/she is already accustomed to.

Although you may find that your child has a difficult name to pronounce it is important to check the actual pronunciation.

It is also very important to understand that a child's name is often much linked to their culture, time or place of birth, or a special relative. It is also important to note that all names have a meaning.)

For a list of names and its meaning, you can do your own research via the library or browse on the Internet for a list of names from all cultures and its meaning.

### **RELEASE OF GUARDIANSHIP**

The child is released from the guardianship of the CEO when the Adoption Order is granted and the child becomes the legal responsibility of the adoptive parents.

### **REGISTRATION OF CHILD AT ROYAL THAILAND EMBASSY IN CANBERRA**

Adoptive parents must be prepared to travel to the Royal Thai Embassy in Canberra following the adoption of a Thai child. This is to register the adoption of their child with the Royal Thai Embassy. This also ensures that the child can retain his/her Thai nationality. Couples sign this Undertaking at the time of the homestudy being sent to Thailand. Children are allocated to Australian couples on this understanding.

### **CHILD'S AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP AND PASSPORT**

You are urged to apply for your child's citizenship as soon as possible after the Adoption Order is granted.

Once you have organised your child's evidence of Australian Citizenship Certificate, please provide Adoption Service with a certified copy of the citizenship to Thailand.

You can apply for your child's Australian passport once you have obtained the evidence of Australian Citizenship. You will need to show your child's original passport for verification when lodging for the new passport.

You will need to complete the Australian Passport Form (obtained from Australia Post or Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade)

### **CASE CLOSED**

Once the department receives the Certificate of Compliance and Certificate of Australian Citizenship, the Department will forward this to Thailand. Your case will then be officially closed.

### **KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE OVERSEAS COUNTRY**

It is the responsibility of the adoptive parents to send regular reports and photos to Thailand once the Adoption has occurred.

## APPENDIX

### PROGRAM MANAGER

It's the Department's Program Manager's responsibility to:

1. provide support to prospective adoptive parents during your adoption journey to make the process as smooth as possible.
2. help prospective adoptive parents prepare the homestudy and acceptance documents.
3. keep in contact with Thailand regarding your application.
4. keep in contact with prospective adoptive parents and advise them of the progress of their application.
5. provide up to date information if any changes occur.
6. help prospective adoptive parents get ready for their child.
7. offer any further helpful information concerning prospective adoptive parents trip to Thailand.
8. provide support and supervise the placement of the child.
10. help prospective adoptive parents to get Citizenship for their adopted child.
11. help prospective adoptive parents with post adoption services.
12. inform prospective adoptive parents of adoption support groups and external services.

## APPENDIX

### USEFUL WEBSITES, BOOKS AND ARTICLES

- The Colour of Difference – Journeys in transracial Adoption. Edited by Sarah Armstrong and Petrina Slaytor.  
*Discusses issues around transracial adoption, themes arising through the first person accounts and statistics on the scale of transracial adoption.*
- <http://www.lonelyplanet.com>  
*The lonely planet guide website will give you some helpful travel information on Thailand. Alternatively, you can buy the book (which has heaps more information) at any bookshop.*
- <http://www.immi.gov.au>  
*Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs*
- [http://www.cyh.com/cyh/parentopics/usr\\_index0.stm?topic\\_id=280](http://www.cyh.com/cyh/parentopics/usr_index0.stm?topic_id=280)
- [http://www.cyh.com/cyh/parentopics/usr\\_index0.stm?topic\\_id=326](http://www.cyh.com/cyh/parentopics/usr_index0.stm?topic_id=326)  
*These websites are from Child and Youth Health. The first site specifically deals with adopted a child and the age and stages of development. There are lots of useful hints to parents. The second site is specific to intercountry adoptions. This site is also extremely useful during the settling-in stage. I highly recommend these sites to you.*
- <http://www.calib.com/naic/>  
*Although this is an American website, there are numerous interesting articles (especially if you go into prospective and adoptive parents and then into transracial and transcultural adoption). Just keep in mind that the procedures and laws are different! Enjoy!*
- <http://www.dfat.gov.au>  
*The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website*

There are several West Australian groups that have material posted on the web and these are listed below;

- Adoption Research and Counselling Service Inc.  
[www.adoptionwa.org.au](http://www.adoptionwa.org.au)
- Adoption Support for Families and Children Inc.  
[www.asfc.info/index.htm](http://www.asfc.info/index.htm)

## NOTES

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**Good luck and all the best!**