

PHILIPPINES

ADOPTION INFORMATION GUIDE



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

**ADOPTION SERVICE
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This guide focuses on the process of adopting a child from a country outside of Australia. 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.

Applicant(s) 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 corrections that may assist in making this guide concise and more informative for the community.

**ADOPTION SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT IS THE ONLY AGENCY IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA
PERMITTED TO ARRANGE ADOPTIONS**

Produced by

Adoption Service, Department for Community Development

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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 applicant(s) 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 and Multicultural Affairs, Australia.

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 DIMIA 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 applicant(s) 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.

ICAB – Intercountry Adoption Board, Philippines

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 applicant(s) 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 \$1305 and it is non-refundable.



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.

INTRODUCTION

KUMUSTA!

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 Philippines 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. Homestudy, waiting and matching**
- 5. Placement and supervision**
- 6. Application for Adoption Order**

These three stages are all discussed in detail at the Information Seminar

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

This guide will explain specific details of any changes to the standard process that relates to the Philippines adoption. It will also 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 there 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 applicant(s) who follow you in their adoption from the Philippines.

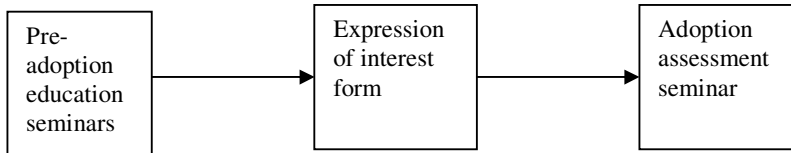
FLOWCHART

PROCEDURE FOR INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

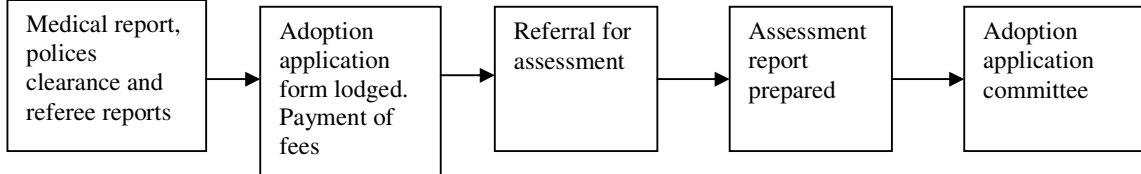
Stage 1: Enquiry



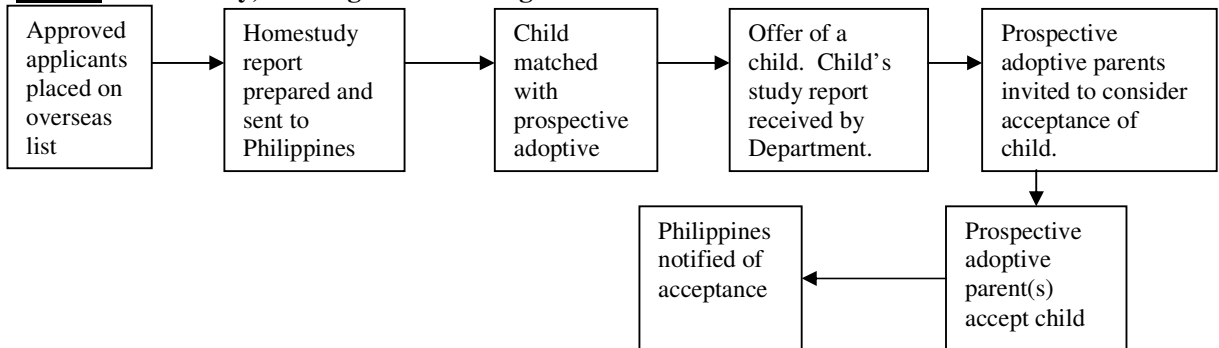
Stage 2: Education Program



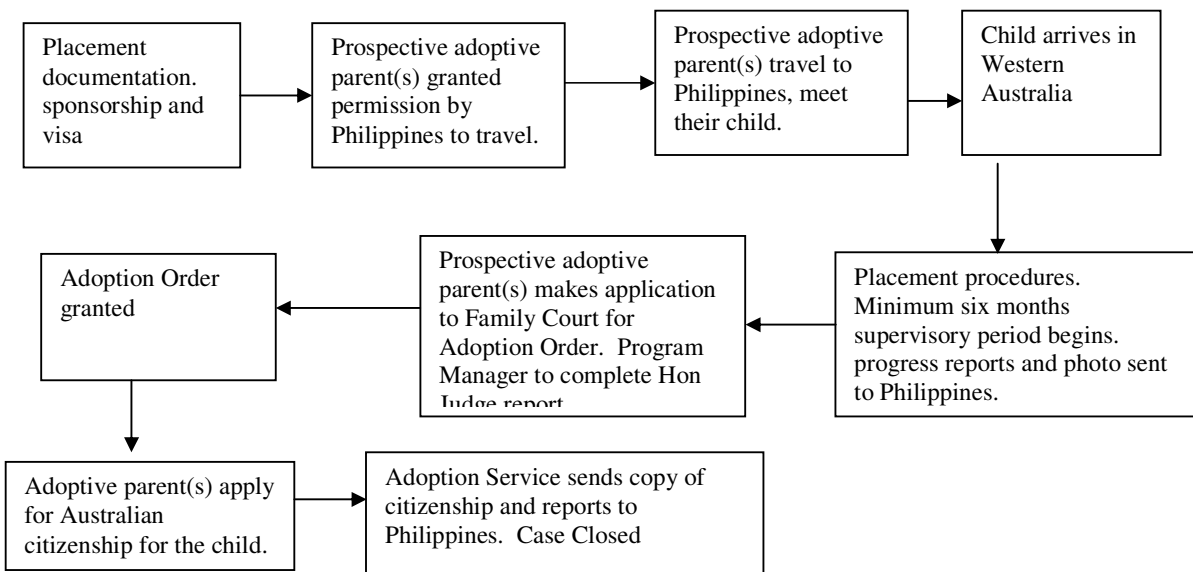
Stage 3: Application, Assessment and Approval



Stage 4: Homestudy, Waiting and Matching



Stage 5: Placement and supervision



PHILIPPINES PROGRAM

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 Korean 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.

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 applicant(s) 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 applicant(s) 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.

(For the latest Australian Statistics on Intercountry Adoption, log onto the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website to view the 2002/2003 Adoption Australia Report. <http://www.aihw.gov.au>)

HISTORY OF PHILIPPINES PROGRAM

Adoption Service works with the central authority on intercountry adoption in the Philippines, which is Intercountry Adoption Board (ICAB) based in Quezon City. ICAB is responsible for intercountry adoption in the Philippines, including the many islands. Orphanages scattered across the Philippines will send details of children available for adoption to ICAB where all the matching and legal work occurs.

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION BOARD (ICAB)

The mission for ICAB is to find permanent families abroad for Filipino children when there is absolutely no possibility that they can be adopted by families in the Philippines. ICAB aims to achieve this mission through:

- Formulation and development of policies, rules and regulations to ensure that protection of Filipino children adopted abroad.
- Development and implementation of intercountry adoption services, including post legal adoption
- Accreditation of foreign adoption agencies and child caring/placing agencies to participate in the programs
- Continuing partnership and networking with foreign adoption agencies and child caring/placing agencies and other related agencies or Authorities.

CHAPTER ONE

CRITERIA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S CRITERIA FOR ADOPTION

Applicant(s) 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 Philippines can only be arranged by Department for Community Development, Adoption Service.

1. The Adoption Act 1994 – criteria for adoption applicant(s)

- be 18 or more years of age;
- be a resident or domiciled in Western Australia;
- be single, married or in a defacto relationship; applicant(s) 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:-
 - (i) in the 5 years before the date of assessment, of an offence punishable at the time of the finding by imprisonment,
 - (ii) 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
 - (iii) 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 access to the assessment report and any other relevant information in determining whether or not applicant(s) are suitable for adoptive parenthood. *[Section 13]*

3. When a child is considered for placement, the prospective adoptive parent must;

- be approved as a suitable adoptive applicant(s);
- 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.

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.

CRITERIA FOR ADOPTION

Applicant(s) must meet the requirements of the *Adoption Act 1994* and in addition the requirements of the Philippines criteria to be eligible to adopt a child from the Philippines.

CRITERIA AS STIPULATED BY THE PHILIPPINES

Marital Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants must be married for a minimum of 3 years. • Applicants who have been married before, they must be currently married for a minimum of 5 years. • Either applicant divorced more than once are not accepted • Single applicants are able to apply but will be considered as a lower priority and will be considered for a child with special needs, older child (over 5) or sibling group.
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Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum age is 27 years old. • There should not be more than 47 years between the eldest adopting parent and the child. • Primary caregiver 43 years of age, and older will only be considered for a child above two years of age.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICAB states that priority is given to childless applicant(s). • All children in the family above the age of 10 years, must give consent to the adoption.
Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant(s) are required to demonstrate a commitment to Christian beliefs and values. • The Philippines is a Christian country and prospective adoptive applicant(s) should espouse spiritual/moral value systems, affiliations, attitudes and practices. • Jehovah's Witness will generally not be acceptance on 'blood transfusion' grounds although consideration may be given to wavering this if applicant(s) provide a statement that they would consent to a transfusion.
The child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single child. • Applicant(s) must be prepared to accept a child of either sex. • Applications will not be accepted from applicants who express a preference for a female child. • Child's age can vary, but are usually older than 9 months. • It is not common to have very young siblings/twins available • Sibling groups available – these children often have special care needs
Allocation time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently there has been a significant increase for allocation times. We are waiting to be updated around this time-frame 2 years to 3 years • Applicant(s) normally wait about 10 to 14 weeks after the offer of a child before being able to travel to pick up the child.

CHILDREN REQUIRING AN ADOPTIVE PLACEMENT

In the Philippines, birth mothers are not able to relinquish their children for adoption until the child is at least 6 months old. Following this, there are a number of processes undertaken to ensure that the child is in fact legally available for adoption. The children are therefore, at least 12 months, and more commonly, over 2 years before a placement may be sought for that child.

Due to the limited number of younger children available for inter-country adoption, the Philippines will not accept applicants who have a preference for a female child.

The Philippines are committed to finding a placement in the child's locality, then the broader country region and lastly, overseas.

Children placed for adoption may be relinquished, abandoned or orphaned. Some children requiring an adoptive placement present no significant health problems, while others present with mild medical conditions, institutionalised behaviour or poor social backgrounds. The quality of information received about the child is generally of a high standard.

Placement criteria may be more flexible for adoptive parents interested in adoption a child with special needs. Special needs include physical/intellectual disability and medical condition (correctable and non-correctable). Please keep in mind that some of these children may have difficulty meeting Australia's immigration health requirements.

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. Homestudy, Waiting and Matching

	Process	Cost <i>Subject to change</i>
Information Officer	Once you have been approved, the Information Officer will send you a letter outlining the homestudy requirements of the Philippines.	Nil
Prospective Adoptive parents	Contact a licensed psychiatrist or psychologist to complete Psychological evaluation required by ICAB	Approx AUS\$400
Information Officer	Write submission to the Minister regarding approval of the prospective adoptive parents.	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	Philippines Application Fee US\$200
Information Officer	All the information is collated as per Philippines' requirements (including assessment report, police clearances, medical forms etc). The Information Officer will arrange for your documents to be notarised by a Public Notary	Nil
Public Notary	Notarises the documents and returns them to Adoption Service.	Nil
Information Officer	Sends homestudy to Philippines by courier	Courier fees approx AUS\$100
Program Manager	Follow progress of the case with ICAB	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"> • Applicant(s) are within age criteria • Able to meet the needs and care for the allocated child 	Nil

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical, Police and adoption assessment are all current and up to date (all need to be updated every two years) 	
Team Leader	Endorses recommendation of Program Manager to accept the allocation	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	<p>Applicant(s) discuss the child offered and complete acceptance documentation and immigration procedure if they wish to proceed with acceptance. Program Manager couriers' acceptance papers and immigration forms to the Philippines.</p> <p>*Please note: For sibling groups the processing fee will be:- 1st child: \$2,000 2nd child: 75% of full amount 3rd and subsequent child: 50% of full amount</p>	Processing fee US\$2000 * Pre-placement costs US\$250 to US\$270 (Varies per case) Child Care donation US\$1000 DIMIA sponsorship fee AUS\$1340 Courier costs varies

5. Placement and supervision

	Process	Cost Subject to change
ICAB	ICAB will liaise with the child's orphanage for the child to visit the panel doctor to complete medical clearance needed for immigration purposes. Once the medicals have been completed, this is returned to the Australian Embassy in Manila and then faxed to HAS for medical clearance.	Nil
HAS	To clear immigration medicals. Medicals will be faxed back to the Australian Embassy in Manila and then onto ICAB.	Nil
Program Manager	Contact HAS and obtain a copy of the cleared medical. Program Manager will forward this information to prospective adoptive parents.	Nil
ICAB	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, ICAB will notify Adoption Service that the prospective adoptive parents can travel.	Nil
Program Manager	Contact applicant(s) 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 and accommodation, provide a copy of itinerary to Program Manager to forward to ICAB. If the child is living on an island, you will need to also book an internal flight to the island plus additional accommodation. You will still need to arrive and leave from Manila.	2 x adult return air fares 1 x child one way air fares. Accommodation where the child is located.
Program Manager	To fax a copy of the travel itinerary to ICAB.	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 Manila. Meet adoptive child and meetings with ICAB (minimum stay of 5 working days).	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents and child	Meet Program Manager within 72 hours after return. Forward child's passport and the Program Manager supplies copies of passport and other placement papers. Prospective adoptive parents and Program Manager arranges a time for the first placement supervision visit in the home.	Nil
Program Manager	Visit family monthly for a minimum of 6 months. These reports are forwarded to ICAB	

6. Application for Adoption Order

	Process	Cost Subject to change
Prospective adoptive parents	Following the first visit, prospective adoptive parents may wish to engage a solicitor to lodge an application for the adoption order. After 5 months, your program manager will prepare the Hon Judge report to support the application for the adoption order.	Solicitor = \$800AUD +
Solicitor or prospective adoptive parents	Lodges application for Adoption Order	Covered in solicitors fees
Family Court of Western Australia	Grants Adoption Order	
Adoptive parents	Applies for child's Certificate of Australian Citizenship. Supplies copy to Adoption Order	At the expense of adoptive parents
Program Manager	Completes Hague Convention requirements	Nil
Program Manager	Close case	Nil

SUMMARY OF COSTS

(Approximate costs. Subject to change)

Education Seminars	\$660AUD
Police Clearance	\$60AUD
Medical	varies
Application	\$750AUD per applicant(s)
Assessment	\$986AUD
Psychological report required by Philippines	approx \$500AUD
Courier of homestudy	\$150AUD
Philippines Application Fee	US\$200 (\$256AUD)
Philippines processing fee	US\$2,000 (\$2560AUD)
Philippines pre-travel, pre-placement fee	between US\$250- US\$500 (\$320-640AUD)
Philippines child care donation	US\$1,000 (\$1280AUD)
Courier of acceptance documents	\$100AUD
Immigration fees	\$1340AUD
Air fares (two adults return, one child one way)	Approx \$3600AUD
Accommodation	Approx \$500AUD
Travel expenses	Approx \$500AUD
Medical report (female applicant, not pregnant)	varies
Adoption Order fee (only if applied for by Solicitor)	approx \$700AUD
Total	approx \$14,000AUD

ADOPTION PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

Stage 1 Enquiry

DATE:

- 1. Initial telephone enquiry made. -----
- 2. **Adoption Enquiries Information** package received. -----
- 3. Participate in Adoption Information Seminar. -----

Stage 2 Education Program

- 4. Attended the required education seminars, approved by the Department and conducted by the non-government organisations: *Adoption Research and Counselling Service (ARCS)* and Adoption Support for Families and Children (ASFC).

Preparation for Adoptive Parenting	Date attended: -----
Intercountry Adoption	Date attended: -----
Separation & Attachment	Date attended: -----
Adopting Again (for a subsequent adoption application)	Date attended: -----

Notification of your participation in the pre-adoption workshops is provided to Adoption Service by the program organisers and your adoption records are noted accordingly however you should also keep a note of the dates for your own records and ensure you include the information on your Application to be Assessed for Suitability for Adoptive Parenthood - Expression of Interest Form.

Stage 3 Application, Assessment and Approval

- 5. Expression of Interest Form and Consent to Data Base Check sent into Adoption Service. -----

The Expression of Interest Form has to be forwarded to Adoption Service within 12 weeks of you attending the last relevant education seminar and must show the dates you attended each session. You must also ensure you also attach your signed Consent to a Data Base Check.
- 6. Acknowledgment of receipt of Expression of Interest Form by Adoption Service. -----
- 7. Currently, applicants are invited by Adoption Service to proceed upon receipt of the Expression of Interest Form and are advised of the Adoption Assessment Seminar dates. **(applicants adopting a subsequent time may not need to attend).** -----
- 8. Attendance at Assessment Seminar and receive Assessment Package. -----
- 9. Return Adoption Information Sheet (FCS 32) which includes referees, Consent for Criminal Record Check (Police Clearance), Medical Examination Report (all forms are included in the Assessment Package). -----
- 10. Return other forms as requested; copy of Marriage Certificate, proof of length of relationship if not married for three years, copy of Birth Certificates, copy of Citizenship and any other document/s as advised by the Department. -----
- 11. Notification regarding outcome of medical, police clearance and referee reports received. -----
- 12. Registration fee (\$750), and assessment fee (\$986 for intercountry applicants only)

- forwarded to Adoption Service and payable prior to commencement of your assessment interviews. -----
13. Letter of acknowledgment sent regarding receipt of your registration fee and, if applicable, assessment fee. -----
14. Notification that your file has been referred for the commencement of your assessment interviews and that you have been allocated an Assessor and an Adoption Social Worker. -----
15. Contacted by assessor to arrange appointments for assessment interviews – minimum of 6 interviews of approximately 2 to 3 hours in your home. Generally held during working hours. The assessment process generally takes 4 months from commencement of assessment until consideration by the Adoption Applications Committee (AAC). -----
16. Completed assessment report is viewed by you, returned to Adoption Service and referred to the Adoption Applications Committee (AAC). -----
17. Notification two weeks after the AAC meeting regarding formal approval/non approval of your assessment. -----

NOTE:
 During the application and assessment stage, medical and police clearances must be updated every 12 months.
 However, upon being found suitable to adopt by the AAC, assessments and police and medical clearances will be updated every 2 years from the approval date.
 Depending upon the length of time that may occur in the wait for an offer of a child it may be necessary to update your assessment and clearances a number of times. The inconvenience and costs involved is regretted but is unavoidable should you wish to maintain your approved status as required under the Adoption Act 1994.

Following approval by the Adoption Applications Committee the process between Local and Intercountry differs.

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.

UNDERTAKING FOR INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION APPLICANT(S)

Adoption Service asks all prospective adoptive parents to sign an agreement that all contact with the Filipino authority will be made by Adoption Service 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 personally make all enquires to the Philippines on your behalf. Adoption Service has the sole authority to act on your behalf for all arrangements and negotiations.

It is important that you do not have direct contact with the Philippines authorities or go through a third party. It can be open to misinterpretation and can be seen as making a private adoption arrangement. This could jeopardise your allocation and the reputation of the program. It will cause unnecessary delays and confusion for all parties involved.

The Program Manager will make every effort to contact you at least every 3 months. Please contact your Program Manager whenever you need to.

HOMESTUDY DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

(Please photocopy all documents for your records)

The homestudy documents are supporting documents provided by yourself and Adoption Service to confirm that you are approved by Adoption Service as suitable to adopt.

To complete the Philippines homestudy, you are required to supply Adoption Service with the following documents:

- Photographs (Standard size, 5 x 7)
 - 2 x applicant one
 - 2 x applicant 2
 - 2 x child/ren (if applicable)
 - 2 x Family group photo

- 2 x Extended family members
- 2 x Family home (including family pet if applicable)

Please securely attach these photos on A4 size paper with a maximum of two photos on each sheet. Do not staple the A4 sheets together.

☐ Psychological Report

As you are aware, this is a requirement of the Philippines Intercountry Adoption Law and needs to be a separate report to your assessment report. The report needs to include information on your relationship with each other and your extended families, your childhood experiences, how you cope with stress, your personal stability and your ability to care for a child. You will need to bear the cost of the report. Please contact your Program Manager if you need the name of a registered psychologist to complete this report.

☐ Medical Evaluation Form

The Information Officer will provide this to you. The questions and the format are required from the Philippines. ICAB will not accept the initial medical report you provide to Adoption Service.

☐ Latest Income Tax Assessment

A copy is required by the Philippines.

☐ Character references (1 x Minister, 1 x Employer, 1 x friend/community member. All must know you for at least five years or longer).

Your referees will need to write a letter explaining the following in their character reference: How long have they known you? How do they know you? What are your qualities? What are your strengths? Comment on their thoughts of your suitability to adopt a child and care for him or her.

☐ Agreement to act as Guardian

The Information Officer will provide this to you. You are required to nominate a guardian for the child for the event that you will no longer be able to care for the child. This nomination form needs to be signed by the persons nominated.

☐ Undertaking

The Information Officer will provide this to you. This is a requirement from the Philippines.

☐ Application for Intercountry Adoption

The Information Officer will provide this to you. This is a requirement from the Philippines. This form will need to be completed and then taken to a Notary Public for them to witness your signature. Please contact your Program Manager as one can be arranged for you free of charge.

☐ A Self Report Questionnaire

The Information Officer will provide this to you. This is a requirement from the Philippines.

☐ Form regarding children you will consider

The Information Officer will provide this to you. This is a requirement from the Philippines.

Cheque

The Philippines' have a processing fee of US\$100 made payable to 'Intercountry Adoption Board (ICAB)'. This may be in the form of a bank cheque NOT personal cheque.

Undertaking for Intercountry Adoption

The Information Officer will provide this to you. This is an Adoption Service requirement.

Once Adoption Service has received your photographs, the above documentation and the Psychological report, Adoption Service will prepare the necessary paperwork to be included with your homestudy. Adoption Service will prepare the necessary paperwork to be included with your homestudy. These documents will then be notarised and couriered on your behalf to the Philippines.

The cost of couriering the documents to the Philippines and other expenses will be forwarded to the prospective adoptive parents throughout the adoption process.

3.4 CHECKLIST

1. Signed Placement Conditions/Undertaking form
2. Philippines Undertaking
3. Information & Personal Data
4. Self Report Questionnaire
5. Children to Consider
6. Medical Evaluation Form
7. Written Consent (by existing children 10 years or over)
8. References (known you five years : Minister, Employer, Friend)
9. Psychological Report
10. Latest Income Tax Assessment
11. Photographs 2 x Mr; 2 x Mrs; 2 x child/ren; 2 x family; 2 x family home Including pet/s; extended family etc
12. Certified copy of Birth Certificate/s (Adoption Service can take copy from your file)
13. Certified copy of Marriage Certificate (Adoption Service can take copy from your file)
14. Certified copy of Divorce Decree (if applicable)
15. Adoption Decree (if applicable ie previously adopted child)
16. Bank Cheque for \$US100.00 made payable to ICAB

CHAPTER FOUR

MATCHING OF A CHILD

Once your homestudy is couriered to Philippines, ICAB 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 parent's wishes where possible.

There is never a guarantee that a child will be placed with you.

CHILD STUDY REPORT

Once prospective adoptive parents are identified by Philippines for a particular child, a child study report will be forwarded to Adoption Service. The report will have detailed information on the child including medical status, social history of the child and parents and current progress. 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 endorses. The case review sets out the formal allocation process. This is in line with the placement criteria for 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 photo of your child. You will also be given a letter outlining the acceptance and immigration process.

If you live in the country, this information can be sent to you and your Programme Manager will talk you through the process from here on.

CHAPTER FIVE

ACCEPTANCE & IMMIGRATION

ACCEPTANCE/NON 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 Information Officer.

- An acceptance letter to Adoption Service
- You will need to provide **three** bank cheques (either from ANZ or National Australia Bank) for:
 1. US\$900 for processing fee made payable to Intercountry Adoption Board, Philippines.
 2. US\$ 250 - US\$350 for child's pre-adoptive placement / pre-travel fee, made payable to Intercountry Adoption Board, Philippines (costs vary depending on each case)
 3. US\$500 Child Care Support Fund made payable to the specific child care agency where you child comes from.

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 all current information and the latest forms. If there are any queries, please also contact your Programme Manager.

LODGING OF IMMIGRATION SPONSORSHIP APPLICATIONS

After accepting the allocation prospective adoptive applicant(s) are required to pay the sponsorship application fee of \$1,305 (current as at July 2005) for the adoption/entry visa for their child. They are also required to complete 47 CH which is application for migration to Australia by a child and 40 CH which is Sponsorship/nomination for a child to migrate to Australia. These forms together with the receipt from DIMA are to be passed to the Program Manager at Adoption Service along with the documents as outlined in Migration checklist. N.B. DIMA provide a separate information sheet in their requirements and process.

Once all the documents are gathered, please make an appointment with Adoption Service to go through the documents prior to couriering them off. The account for the courier will be forwarded to you.

PHILIPPINES CHECKLIST

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

For ICAB:

- Acceptance letter address to Adoption Service
- 3 x bank cheque

For Australian Embassy in Manila:

- Form 40CH
- Form 47CH
- 4 x passport size photos of child.
- *Certified copy of child study report and medical report (in lieu of child's birth certified)
- *Certified copy of information page from each applicant(s) passport (if you do not have a current passport, then a certified birth certificate is required)
- *Certified copy of marriage certificate
- Original receipt of you visa application charge (AUS\$1305)

*certified by Justice of the Peace.

Adoption Service will courier the documents and the account for this will be forwarded to you.

CHILD'S PASSPORT AND ADOPTION VISA

Your child's Filipino passport will be organised by ICAB and he or she will travel to Australia on this passport.

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 for the Philippines), need to be completed. Please be assured that your Program Manager will keep in regular contact with ICAB and there is a good working relationship between Adoption Service and ICAB.

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

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. These two parts should be maintained as the child's first name.

It is now recognised that the child's first name is an important symbol of the child's past and therefore a very significant part of his/her identity. In cases where the birthparents have chosen the name for the child, the maintaining of the birth name recognises the undeniable fact that the child has birthparents who form a critical part of the child's identity. For children born overseas, maintaining the child's name affirms that your child's cultural and national heritage are important to his/her identity. It also demonstrates to the world that the child's original cultural identity is a source of pride. It is an open acknowledgment of a positive kind of difference that will always be part of your child.

The right of a child to maintain its original name is recognised in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child. Even for a child born overseas, who has been named by a foster carer or orphanage worker, it still remains an important link to their heritage and may be used in many years to come as a way of making contact with the adoptee.

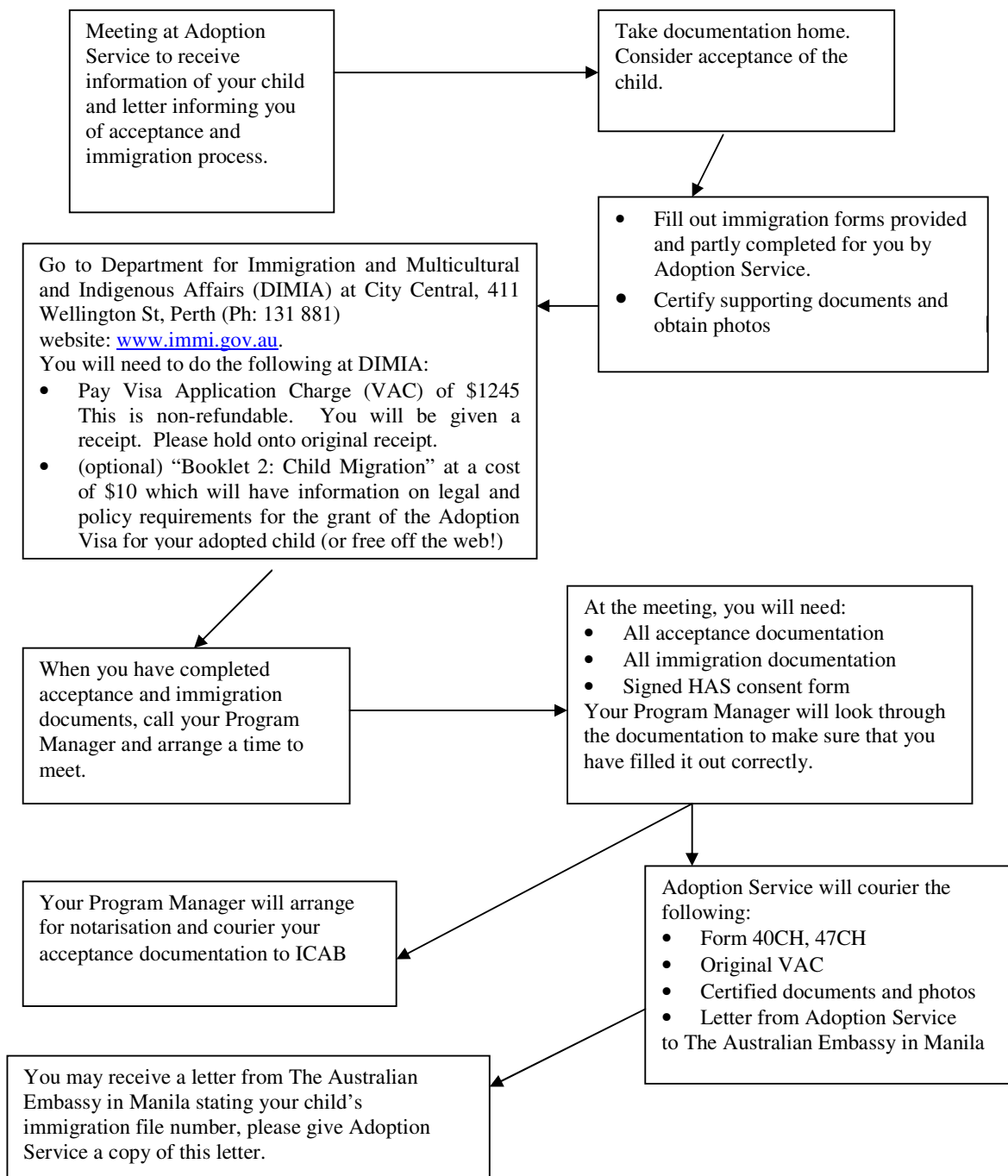
Although you may find that your child has a difficult name to pronounce it is important to check the actual pronunciation.

For these reasons the Adoption Act 1994 states the requirement that the child's first name is to be retained for those who have an adoption order granted in Western Australia. Occasionally there may be special circumstances for using an alternate name for reasons that would benefit the child. If you feel that in special circumstances the first name of the child should be changed, you are asked to inform Adoption Service of your intention to change the name, and this will form part of the report that goes to the Family Court of Western Australia. In most cases, adoptive parents willingly take the opportunity to recognise the child's origins and retain the child's first name.

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.

FLOWCHART



CHAPTER SIX

PROCESS PRIOR TO TRAVEL

The time from the offer of your child to the travelling to pick up your child in the Philippines can range between 2.5 months to 3.5 months.

SATISFACTION OF REQUIREMENT OF THE RECEIVING STATE FOR TRANSFER OF THE CHILD PENDING AN ADOPTION IN AUSTRALIA

Once ICAB has given approval for the prospective adoptive parents to travel, the Program Manager will make a submission seeking the approval of the WA Minister of Community Development regarding the Satisfaction of Requirement of the Receiving State for Transfer of the Child Pending an Adoption in Australia. The approval, which could take a couple of weeks, is compulsory as in accordance with *Article 5 of the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption*.

The Philippines authority has made it clear that prospective adoptive parents are only to travel to the Philippines AFTER the endorsement of the Satisfaction of Requirement of the Receiving State for Transfer of the Child Pending an Adoption in Australia has been received by them.

In conjunction with the approval being endorsed, you will be notified by the Department regarding travel arrangements. Upon the approval, you will be notified immediately by Adoption Service.

You are advised to personally collect the adopted child from the Philippines no later than 30 days after notice of issuance of the child's Australian Visa.

TRAVEL VISA FOR APPLICANTS

Check with your travel agent if a visa is required for you to travel to the Philippines. It is a good idea to tell your travel agent that your trip is for the purpose of adoption.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Once ICAB have advised Adoption Service of your child's clearance for travel, you will need to provide us with your travel itinerary details. Your travel agent will be able to help you with your flight arrangement. Adoption Service will then proceed to prepare the relevant escort / introduction letters for you prior to your trip to collect your child.

You will be required to stay in the Philippines for at least five working days and you will be expected to meet with ICAB staff upon arrival and before departure with your child. If your child's orphanage is on another island, arrangements will have to be made for internal flights and accommodation. Please speak to your Program Manager as to possible accommodation options.

You will need to book a one-way flight ticket for your adopted child. Ensure that the child's name is the original given name from the Philippines.

ACCOMMODATION

You will need to organise accommodation in Manila as you will need to attend meetings at ICAB. You are able to choose any type of accommodation in Manila. If your prospective adoptive child is being cared for on an island, after your meeting at ICB, you will need to travel to the island. The child's orphanage may or may not be able to provide you with accommodation. Your Program Manager is able to liaise with ICAB regarding this matter.

You will need to travel back to Manila with your child for a final meeting with ICAB. Please keep this in mind when booking accommodation. It is a good idea to consult with your travel agent regarding accommodation options.


PLACEMENT CONDITIONS FOR OVERSEAS ADOPTION

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 that you have had a hysterectomy etc.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PHILIPPINES

FACTS IN BRIEF

Area:	The Philippines is made up of 7,107 islands Covering a land area of 115,739sq.m.	
	The main island groups are Luzon, Visayas and Mindao	
Population:	76.5 million	
Capital:	Manila	
Currency:	peso (divided into 100 centavos)	
Climate:	March to May is hot and dry June to October is rainy November to February is cool. The average temperate is 25 degrees with 77% humidity.	
Religion:	80% of Filipinos are Catholic 15% are Moslem 5% are made up of smaller Christian denominations and Buddhist.	
Language:	Filipino (based on Tagalog) and English Eight major dialects (Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligaynon or Ilonggo, Bicol, Waray, Pampango and Pangasinense.	
Public holidays:	New Years Day	1 January
	Edsa Revolution Day	24 February
	Araw ng Kagitingan	9 April
	Maundy Thursday and Good Friday	varies
	Labour Day	1 May
	Independence Day	12 June
	National Heroes Day	Last Sunday of August
	All Saints Day	1 November
	Bonifacio day	30 November
	Christmas Day	25 December
	Rizal Day	30 December

CULTURAL INFORMATION WHEN TRAVELLING IN THE PHILIPPINES

- Remember to dress respectfully (smart casual), particularly for meetings with the adoption officials / representatives. It is inappropriate to show midriff and cleavage at any time when in Philippines.
- Regardless of circumstances, ALWAYS be patient and respectful, as becoming frustrated with delays (and therefore people) does not help you in any way, or the other adoptive parents that may be in your group.

- Gifts do not have to be elaborate or expensive. It is a good idea to present your gifts at the beginning of your meeting as a sign of sincerity and best wishes.
- You may like to include your child's main carers (and family), staff members of ICAB (including Dr Laraya and Social Worker for your child etc.). This is entirely at your discretion. Always bring a spare gift or two. Check with your Program Manager on names of staff.
- For both receiving and giving gifts, both hands are used to hold onto the gift.
- When giving gifts of several items, be sure that they do not total four (unlucky number). One gift is appropriate; it is the gesture not the number that is important.
- Acceptable gifts include native flower or animal books on Australia, chocolates, fresh flowers for drying, liquor, macadamia nuts (shelled), cookies (eg. short bread, Tim Tams etc) and even honey. Note: Food stuff may need to be declared at Filipino customs.
- Gifts should be wrapped.
- Card-giving: Avoid writing in red ink (it is believed to bring bad luck).

USEFUL TIPS FROM ADOPTIVE PARENTS

- Make extra copies of documents, passports, passport-sized photos (applicant(s) and child's) – as this will save you looking for a photocopier in the Philippines.
- A few common Filipino words would be useful in establishing a quicker rapport with your child. Even babies/ very young children can recognise their names and simple words.
- Bringing clothes for your child as he or she will usually leave the orphanage with only the clothes that he/she is wearing.
- Clothing and shoes can be bought in the Philippines cheaply.
- As your child may only leave the children's home with the clothes and shoes that he or she is wearing, it may be a good idea to bring a few essential items (nappies, clothes, shoes, food) so you do not have to go shopping as soon as you get there.
- If you are adopting a baby under 12 months old, it is a good idea to bring a couple of baby dummies or pacifiers that would suit your child's age.
- You can buy baby/toddler feeding bottles in the Philippines.
- Baby formulas: It is a good idea to continue with the current formula used by the carer/orphanage and even buy an extra tin or two from the Philippines to bring back with you. If you decide to do this, you must declare opened and unopened tins of baby formula when you arrive back in Perth. If formula tins are opened, it may be taken off you at customs. If you can, keep the tin sealed and unopened.
- Baby rug/blanket for the trip home. This is quite handy in the plane or you could ask the flight attendant for a spare blanket during your flight.

- Spare baby pillow – optional. The airlines will provide extra pillows during your flight.
- A photo album to give to your child’s carer or orphanage to show them where you live and where your adopted child will be growing up, and photos of your family.
- Enough Travellers Cheques (US currency) – shopping, emergency, etc.
- Imodium – in case you get the dreaded tummy bug. Check with your Medical/Health practitioner.
- Baby Panadol, a sedative to calm your child down during long flights etc. Check with your Medical/Health practitioner.
- Gift wrapping paper – it is best to wrap your gifts when you get to Philippines to avoid creases. Don’t forget sticky tape and wrapper (optional – you could purchase wrapping paper in the Philippines, but that means you have to go looking for it).
- Passport – check that your passport is not going to expire in 6 months time, before you leave for the Philippines. If it is, then it needs to be renewed. Passport renewal forms can be obtained at the post office.
- A gift for your child. Don’t forget to bring a gift for your child. A soft toy is usually popular with children.
- If families wish to give a gift to ICAB they should consider giving a book or the latest research article as ICAB are trying to establish a professional library regarding adoption for their social workers.
- You may like to take a few emergency supplies with you like cup-a-soups, packet of biscuits, muesli bars etc.
- Broad-spectrum antibiotics for yourself and your child – ask your GP about possible allergic reactions if taking for the first time.
- Antiseptic hand gel (from the baby section of the supermarket) is useful.
- Always drink bottled water and brush your teeth with bottled water.
- Due to the possible risks of travelling to the Philippines, adoptive parents have advised that it is not a good idea to wear jewellery to attract unnecessary attention to yourselves.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ARRIVAL IN THE PHILIPPINES

In most instances, you will arrive in the Philippines and call your social worker at ICAB to arrange a time to go into ICAB to meet with her and Dr Laraya before going to meet your child.

Director Dr Louna Laraya

MEETING WITH INTERCOUNTY ADOPTION BOARD

You are required to have a couple of meetings with different staff members from ICAB during your stay in the Philippines. As you are required to stay for at least five working days, most families chose to arrive in the Philippines on a Monday and leave on a Friday.

When you arrive in the Philippines and settle into your hotel, give ICAB a call and speak to the social worker in charge of the Australian program. Your Program Manager will provide you with her name before you leave. You will need to arrange a time to meet with the social worker at ICAB. Leave plenty of time to travel to ICAB by taxi as most taxi drivers get lost getting there.

Once you arrive at ICAB, you are required to sign some forms with the social worker. This is a short meeting. If your child is being cared for in a children's home in Manila, then you will be able to go to the children's home after leaving ICAB to see your child. You will need to make your own way to the children's home.

MEETING YOUR CHILD

Once you arrive at the children's home, you will be introduced to your child's carer and your child. You will be required to sign more paperwork and then be able to spend some time playing with your child. Depending on how the child warms to you, you will be able to take your child with you to your hotel the same day. If the child seems hesitant, then you are welcome to visit the children's home daily until the child is more comfortable around you before you are able to take the child with you.

Your child's carers may or may not have written information for you regarding the child's habits or routine, so it is a good idea to take a pen and paper and ask lots of questions and write the answers down as in the excitement, you will forget!

Families who have adopted from the Philippines have said that the child will leave the children's home with only the clothes and shoes that he or she is wearing. It is a good idea to bring a few essentials so you do not have to hit the shops as soon as you arrive.

LEAVING THE PHILIPPINES

On Thursday, you will have another meeting at ICAB. This time, you will need to bring your child with you. This meeting will be with the director of ICAB, Dr Laraya. She will ask you a few general questions and will also present you with your child's passport with the visa affixed to it and a few gifts for you and your child to remember the Philippines by. This meeting is usually an hour.

After this meeting, you will be free to leave the Philippines.

USEFUL CONTACTS

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

0011 618 9222 2555 during business hours.

Please note that there is no time difference between Manila and Perth.

Australian Embassy (Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs)

Level 23 – Tower 2

RCBC Plaza

6819 Ayala Ave

Makati City, 1200

Metro Manila

Philippines

Phone: 632 757 8340

Fax: 632 757 8269

CHAPTER NINE

RETURN TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA

LEGAL GUARDIAN

Your child's adoption has not been finalised yet. The Chief Executive Officer of the Department will be your child's legal guardian until the adoption is finalised through the granting of the Adoption Order by the Family Court of WA.

As the Chief Executive Officer is the child's legal guardian until the Adoption Order 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 from the Chief Executive Officer via a written submission.

MEETING YOUR PROGRAM MANAGER

When you have finally arrived in Perth, please contact your Program Manager within 3 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 medical 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.
- Letter for your solicitor – You may wish to seek legal representation to assist you in the Adoption Order application for Family Court. This should be done around the 4th month of placement.
- Child's Australian Citizenship – a copy is to be provided to the Department for forwarding to Korea. You are urged to apply for your child's citizenship (evidence) as soon as possible after you have been granted the adoption order.

Form 119 – Evidence of Australian Citizenship (your Program Manager will supply)

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 for a minimum of six months after 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 and forwarded to the Philippines.

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 Act 1994 (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. ICAB requests that families include several photographs with each report. The photos to include the child and their family together.

POST ADOPTION SERVICES

ICAB recognise the importance of being able to search for birth parents. They have an agreement that where a young person who is over the age of 18 years wants to search for their birth parents/birth family they should make initial contact with the Department for Community Development. The relevant section of the Department will contact ICAB and make the formal request.

CCA's are now obtaining additional information from birth parents at the time a Deed of Voluntary Commitment is signed. Some CCA's are also asking birth mothers about future contact and are asking whether they can be contacted in the future. There have been a number of young people who have found their birth parents. Also a Filipino Adoptees Network (F.A.N.) has been established. Its' website address is www.filipino-adoptees-networking.org

HON JUDGE REPORT

This is a report written by your Program Manager towards the end of the supervision period (minimum of six visits). It is sent to the Family Court of Western Australia to assist the Judge when determining your Adoption Order Application. The purpose of the post placement visits are to ensure that your Program Manager is satisfied with the placement of your child and that his or her interests are being met by you. The Hon Judge report recommends to the court whether the adoption order should be granted.

RELEASE OF GUARDIANSHIP

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

ADOPTION ORDER

Once the Adoption Order is granted, please provide Adoption Service with two certified copies of your child's Adoption Order and original passport with will be returned for application for citizenship.

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.

You will need to complete form 119 – Evidence of Australian Citizenship (can be obtained from Program Manager or DIMA website www.immi.gov.au).

Once you have organised your child's evidence of Australian citizenship certificate or Australian citizenship, please provide Adoption Service with a notarised copy of the citizenship or certificate as it is necessary to notify the Korean Embassy and ESWS of this.

You can apply for your Child's Australian passport once your child becomes an Australian Citizen. You will need to show your child's Korean passport for verification when lodging the application 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 a certified copy of your child's Adoption Order and copy of your child's Certificate of Australian Citizenship, your case will then be officially closed.

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THE PHILIPPINES AND POST ADOPTION SERVICES

ICAB would love to hear from you and how your new family is going, so feel free to forward photos and the child's information at any time. You are able to forward the information directly to ICAB:

Intercountry Adoption Board
2 Chicago Corner
Ermin Garcia Sts
Pinagkaisahan
Cubao, Quezon City
Philippines

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 the Philippines 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 the Philippines.
8. provide support and supervise the placement of the child.
9. provide the Hon. Judge report for Family Court.
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

HAGUE CONVENTION

The Commonwealth Government of Australia has ratified the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Intercountry Adoption. The Australian Ambassador to the Netherlands lodged Australia's instrument of ratification on 25 August 1998. The Convention came into operation in Australia on 1 December 1998.

The Convention was developed to prevent the trafficking and sale of children by putting in place internationally agreed minimum standards for intercountry adoption. The Convention ensures that the ratified countries observe standards and safeguards. The Convention establishes a Central Authority in each State or Country responsible for overseeing the arrangements for children being adopted overseas.

Philippines is a country that has ratified the Hague Convention and the Central Authority is Intercountry Adoption Board (ICAB).

APPENDIX

USEFUL WEBSITES, BOOKS AND ARTICLES

- <http://www.skyinet.net/~icaba/>
This is the official website for Intercountry Adoption Board (ICAB)
- <http://www.dfat.gov.au>
The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website
- <http://www.gov.ph/faqs/adoption.asp>
Republic of Philippines website on adoption.
- <http://www.angelfire.com/journal/adoptionhelp/C2philippines.html>
This website has lots of resources for parents and children regarding adoption where you can buy online. There are also interesting articles on people's experiences regarding adopting in the Philippines.
- <http://www.philippine.hypermart.net/links.htm>
Useful travel info
- <http://www.adoptionsites.com/information/adoptees-philippines.php>
Interesting articles and issues to consider. Explore the different links this website offers.
- http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/south_east_asia/philippines/
If you are considering buying the lonely planet travel guide on the Philippines then have a look at the website. It is not as detailed as the book, but it is a good start.
- <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au>
Useful website to check for updated travel advice for the Government.
- <http://www.immi.gov.au>
This is the Immigration department website for process on immigration and forms.
- http://www.cyh.com/cyh/parenttopics/usr_index0.stm?topic_id=280
http://www.cyh.com/cyh/parenttopics/usr_index0.stm?topic_id=326
These websites are from Child and Youth Health. The first site specifically deals with adopted children 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 parents and then into transracial and transcultural adoption). Just keep in mind that the procedures and laws are different! Enjoy!
- 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.

That's probably enough for you to read! If you find other informative websites, please let the Intercountry team know.

NOTES

Good luck and all the best.....