

# ETHIOPIA

## ADOPTION INFORMATION GUIDE



Department for Community Development  
Government of Western Australia

**ADOPTION SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

189 Royal Street, East Perth, Western Australia 6004  
PO Box 6334, East Perth, Western Australia 6892

Telephone 9222 2555  
Country callers 1800 622 258  
Fax 9222 2607  
Email [adoptions@dcd.wa.gov.au](mailto:adoptions@dcd.wa.gov.au)

This guide focuses on the process of adopting a child from Ethiopia. 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 for Ethiopia of any ideas, changes, new information or corrections that may assist in making this guide as concise and more informative for the community.

**Produced by**

**Adoption Service, Department for Community Development**

**Updated July 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.

**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 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 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.

**MOWA** – Ministry of Women's Affairs Ethiopia

**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 and Immigration Affairs. This is currently \$1340 and it is non-refundable.

## MAP OF ETHIOPIA



## INTRODUCTION

This guide is written to help you understand the processes, which occur from the time that 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 stage.

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.

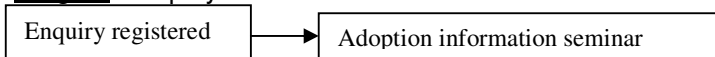
While every effort is being made to ensure information is as thorough and as accurate as possible at the time of publication, please be aware that there are frequent changes in various aspects of the process and that updates will be made from time to time.

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 applicants who follow you in their intercountry adoption.

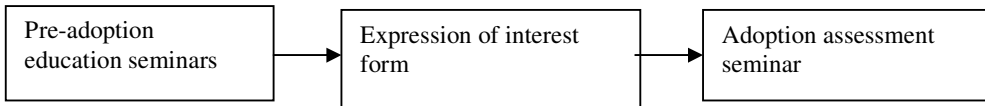
## FLOWCHART

### PROCEDURE FOR INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

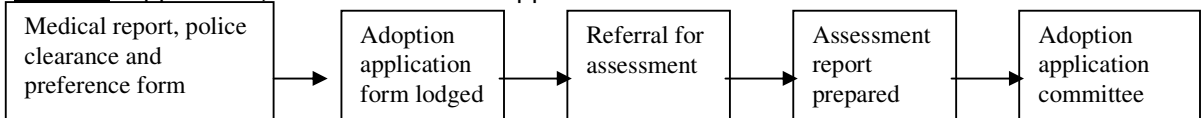
#### Stage 1: Enquiry



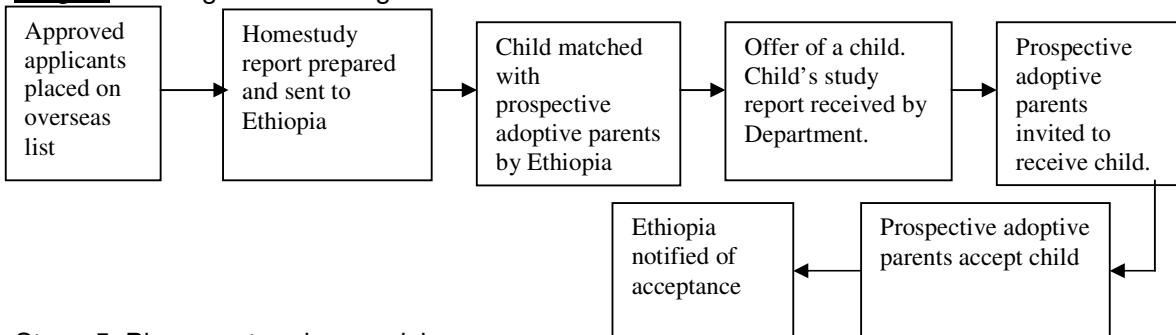
#### Stage 2: Education Program



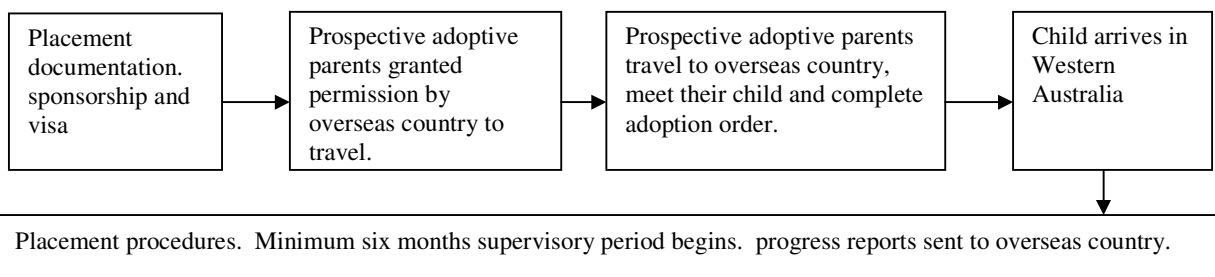
#### Stage 3: Application, Assessments and approval



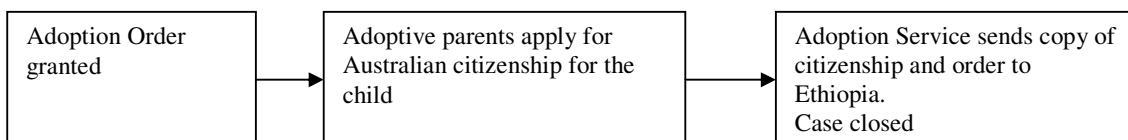
#### Stage 4: Waiting and Matching



#### Stage 5: Placement and supervision



#### Stage 6: Application for Adoption Order



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 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, 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 THE ETHIOPIAN PROGRAM**

The intercountry adoption program between Australia and Ethiopia was developed from a proposal submitted by the Australian African Children's Aid Support Association (AACASA) in 1992. A bilateral agreement was negotiated with the Ethiopian Government by Queensland on behalf of the States and Territories and signed in Addis Ababa on 11 November 1993 during a visit by the Manager of Queensland Adoption Services. The agreement was finalised by the signing by the Coalition of Australian Governments (COOAG) in March 1994.

Australian States and Territories appointed Ato Lakew Gebeyehu in Addis Ababa as the Australian representative to represent them and Australian families in tasks associated with completion of the adoption process in Ethiopia. In Ethiopia there is a unique arrangement with Lakew as sole representative, acting on behalf of government. This does not exist with the intercountry adoption programs between Ethiopia and other countries, which operated through NGO's. Other intercountry adoption programs, which Australia participates in, operate either directly with government in the overseas country or through and NGO registered in that country. Lakew acts as a representative of the Australian governments, as well as the coordinating point for AACASA aid and sponsorship activities in Ethiopia. He also carries the Power of Attorney for Australian parents in the adoption process in Ethiopia. He and his wife Misrak manage Koala Centre which is where the children are usually cared for after their allocation to an Australian adopter.

Most children adopted from Ethiopia are orphaned due to health issues such as AIDS, abandoned or relinquished due to poverty. About 300 children have been adopted to Australian families since the inception of the program.

The parent support group AACASA (Australian African Children's Aid and Support Association Inc) is active, particularly in Queensland. The Queensland AACASA group has taken a lead role with support groups in other states, although in recent years the other state groups have become more autonomous. The support groups provide extensive support and information to families who have adopted from Ethiopia or are interested in adopting from Ethiopia in the future.

## **AUSTRALIAN AFRICAN CHILDREN'S AID AND SUPPORT ASSOCIATION INC (AACASA)**

AACASA is an Australia-wide voluntary, non-profit and non-political association committed to the principle that every child has the right to a caring, loving environment in which to grow.

AACASA's aims are:

- To encourage and support Australian families in adopting African children for whom authorities in their countries of birth consider overseas adoption the most appropriate choice of care.
- To provide information advice and support for families who have adopted from African countries.
- To support and encourage proper intercountry adoption practices in accordance with The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption.
- To support African children and the maintenance of their culture within their Australian community.
- To provide aid and support to African children in need as well as for those awaiting adoption.
- To promote understanding and support for intercountry adoption within the Australian community.

AACASA does not organise adoptions but works in cooperation with Adoption Service to achieve these aims.

If you would like to find out more or become a member, the State Representative details can be found on the AACASA website ([www.AACASA.org.au](http://www.AACASA.org.au))

Please note that it is NOT a requirement that you join AACASA to enable you to send your homestudy to Ethiopia or for an adoption from Ethiopia.

## 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.

### ETHIOPIA'S CRITERIA FOR ADOPTION

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

Marital Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preference is given to married couples.</li> <li>• If either has a previous marriage, they are required to demonstrate that the current relationship is long term and stable.</li> <li>• Single females can apply</li> <li>• Defacto relationship accepted.</li> </ul>
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum age is 25 years old.</li> <li>• For married couples, the maximum age for males is 50 years, female is 47 years</li> <li>• For single females, maximum age is 45 years.</li> <li>• Ethiopia states that there should be no more than a 40 years age gap between the age of the child and the adoptive parents.</li> <li>• Applicants over 41 years are eligible to apply if they are willing to accept a child over the age of 2 years or a child with special needs (special needs include older children, sibling groups where one is under the age of five years and twins).</li> <li>• Flexibility is possible up to the age of 50 years age difference especially if the older person in the couple is the male applicant and in which the female applicant will be the primary carer and significantly younger.</li> </ul>

Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be physically and mentally well.</li> </ul>
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family with existing children are acceptable.</li> <li>• A couple who have biological children and who have also adopted from two other countries would not be eligible.</li> </ul>
Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants are required to name their religious beliefs and be considered to be living by Christian principles.</li> <li>• Applicants of only mainstream beliefs will be accepted.</li> <li>• Ethiopia will not accept applications from people who are Jehovah's witnesses.</li> <li>• A reference is required from a priest or minister of religion as part of the documentation to be forwarded with the file to Ethiopia.</li> </ul>
Type of child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male and female children aged between 6 months to 6 years.</li> <li>• It is preferable for couples to indicate a willingness to be placed with a child of either gender. Couples who nominate a specific gender, can expect to wait for longer to be placed with a child and may not get stated preference.</li> </ul>
Allocation Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption Service cannot advise what the waiting times will be for particular couples who have been approved for adoption of a child from Ethiopia. With the streamlining of processes in Ethiopia, however, the waiting time in country is now generally 6 to 24 months.</li> <li>• The waiting time for Allocation clearly reflects the needs of the children who are awaiting adoptive placements and the parenting capacities of the prospective adoptive parents at any given time.</li> <li>• From offer of a child to travelling to Ethiopia can be between 3 to 5 months.</li> <li>• There is a quota of 6 files from Western Australia in Ethiopia at any one time for children.</li> </ul>

### **CHILDREN REQUIRING AN ADOPTIVE PLACEMENT**

- **Non-Special Needs Children** – Healthy children
- **Special Needs Children** - Ethiopia refers to the adoption of twins, siblings groups (where one child is under the age of 5 years) or older children.

An Australia wide quota-based system is in place to manage the number of unallocated files in Ethiopian at any given time. This system is designed to ensure

equity on the numbers of files sent by each Australian state and to reduce the need for regular updating of documents in Ethiopia.

Please be aware that female circumcision is practiced in Africa.

\*Note:

The quality of the information about children requiring placement is very limited. Efforts are being made to gather more details about the children's background but because abandonment is illegal in Ethiopia, relinquishing families are reluctant to identify themselves. It also means that contact later in the child's life will be limited.

Prior to placement, the children are usually relinquished to a local orphanage then transferred to 'Koala House' where they are fostered by Lakew and his wife Misrak. The children range from being outgoing and well adjusted to very physically neglected. In some cases the children can die before Pap's are able to travel to collect them.

## 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

	Process	Cost Subject to change
Information Officer	Once you have been approved, the Information Officer will send you a letter outlining the homestudy requirements of Ethiopia.	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.	Processing fee of US\$750 bank cheque to go with folders.

Information Officer	All the information is collated as per Ethiopian requirement (into folders) including information from Adoption Service. The Information Officer will arrange for the documents to be notarised by Tim Cocks, who does not charge adoption clients for this service.	Nil
Public Notary	Notarises the documents and returns them to Adoption Service	Nil
Information Officer	Sends the notarised homestudy package to Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) for authentication.	AUD\$80
Information Officer	Once the documents have been authenticated by DFAT, the homestudy documents will then be couriered to the Consulate General of Ethiopia in Victoria for authentication.	AUD\$250
Information Officer	Once the document has been authenticated by the Consulate General of Ethiopia, the documents are ready to be couriered to Lakew (with a copy of the bank cheque as proof of payment)	Courier fees
Program manager	Follow progress of the case with Lakew	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>• Couple are within age criteria</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 may be included in the information from Ethiopia and will be given to the prospective adoptive parents at this time.	Nil

Prospective adoptive parents	Couple discuss the child offered and complete acceptance documentation and immigration procedure if they wish to proceed with acceptance.	Foster care fee for 3 months = <b>US\$600 - US\$840</b> DIMA Immigration fee = <b>AUD\$1340</b>
Prospective adoptive parents	You will need to organise a bank cheque of US\$2,000 into Lakew's bank account for 'Power of Attorney processing fee' payment.	US\$2,000 Per child
Program manager	Program manager courier's acceptance papers to Lakew and immigration papers to the Australian High Commission in Kenya.	Courier costs varies

### 5. Placement and supervision

	Process	Cost Subject to change
Lakew	Lakew will take the child to a panel doctors to complete medical clearance needed for immigration purposes. Once the medical have been completed, this is returned to the Australian High Commission in Kenya and then faxed to HAS for medical clearance.	Nil (costs covered in Power of Attorney service fee)
HAS	To clear immigration medicals. Medicals will be faxed back to Australian High Commission in Kenya and Lakew will be notified.	Nil
Program manager	Contact HAS and obtains a copy of the cleared medical. Program manager will forward this information to prospective adoptive parents	Nil
Lakew	Will obtain passport and organise for the visa to be in the passport once the Australian High Commission has approved the immigration visa. Once this is all in place, Lakew will notify Adoption Service that the prospective adoptive parents can travel.	Nil
Program manager	Contact prospective adoptive 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 and accommodation, provide a copy of full itinerary to program manager to forward to Lakew.	Return adult airfares x 2 One way child airfares x 1 approx = <b>AUD\$6,500</b> Accommodation approx = <b>US\$400</b>

Program manager	To fax a copy of the itinerary to Lakew.	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	To sign undertaking and provide results of pregnancy test (blood test) one week before travel. To sign placement conditions form.	Doctors fee
Program manager	To prepare travel papers for prospective adoptive parents	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	Travel to Ethiopia (minimum 7 working days). Lakew will meet you at the airport.	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	Will meet child	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents and child	Leave Ethiopia	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents and child	Visit program manger within one week of return. Give child's passport to program manager and certified copies of the passport will be given to you as well as other documents. A time is arranged for the first placement supervision to take place in the prospective adoptive parent's home.	Nil

## 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 6 visits, your program manager will prepare the Hon Judge report to support the Adoption Order	Solicitor = AUD\$700+
Solicitor or prospective adoptive parents	Lodges application for Adoption Order	Covered in Solicitor's fees
Family Court of Western Australia	Grants Adoption Order	Nil
Program manager	Returns child's passport to adoptive parents	Nil
Adoptive parents	Applies for child's Certificate of Australian Citizenship. Supplies copy of citizenship and Adoption Order to program manager	Nil
Program manager	Organises the Citizenship and Adoption Order to be notarised by Tim Cocks.	Nil
Program manager	Forward Citizenship and Adoption Order to Ethiopia	Nil
Program manager	Close case	Nil

## **SUMMARY OF COSTS**

(Approximate costs – subject to change)

Education Seminars	\$470
Police Clearance	\$70
Medical	varies
Application	\$750 per couple
Assessment	\$986
Courier of homestudy	varies
Processing fee	US\$1,000
Power of Attorney service fee	US\$2,000 – US\$4,000
Foster care fee for 3 months	US\$600 – US\$840
Airfares (2 x adults return, 1 x child one way)	AUD\$6,300
Immigration fee	AUD\$1340
Visa and immunisation	AUD\$400
Accommodation and spending costs	approx US\$700
Medical report (female applicant not pregnant)	varies
Adoption Order fee (only if applied for by Solicitor)	approx AUD\$700
<b>Total</b>	<b>approx AUD\$17,500</b>

## CHAPTER THREE

### HOMESTUDY

Adoption Service will help you prepare your homestudy **after** the Adoption Application Committee (AAC) has approved your assessment. 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 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 CCAA 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)

**Please note: this is a guide only; there may be changes to documentation by the time you are ready to prepare your home study.**

**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. It will include your Assessment Report and the following documents:**

- 2 x Power of Attorney – This will be provided to you by Adoption Service. This must be notarised by a Notary Public and should be signed in his presence. We are using the services of Tim Cocks for most of the documentation that needs to be notarised as he has obliged us in the past and has not charged for his services.
- Request by Applicants to adopt from Ethiopia – This is a letter written by you to the Ethiopian authorities. A sample letter will be given to you when you are approved as suitable to adopt for you to follow and consider. Please note that this letter is required to be signed in the presence of a witness and the Adoption Service Manager.

- Photographs (standard size, 5 x 7)
  - 2 x passport size photo of applicant one
  - 2 x passport size photo of applicant two
  - 1 x photo of applicants with children, if applicable.
  - 2 x photo of applicants home (1 of front and 1 of rear)
 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.
- Chartered Accountant's attestation – This form will be provided to you by Adoption Service. This form is attesting to the financial and employment position of the applicants.
- Financial Statement and Declaration of Income and Employment – This form will be provided to you by Adoption Service.
- 2 x Copy of Birth Certificates
- Copy of Marriage Certificate
- Change of Surname (if applicable)
- Australian Citizenship (if applicable)
- Medical letters – This form will be provided to you by Adoption Service. This is a separate letter for each applicant on your doctors letterhead addressed to Adoption Service.
- 3 x References – One needs to be from your priest / minister / pastor who knows both of you. Two personal referees who know both of you.
- Obligation letters – This form will be provided to you by Adoption Service. This is an obligatory contract with Adoption Service, Department of Community Development and with the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ethiopia, to report on child's progress until the child reaches 18 years of age.
- Fees
  1. Cheque made payable to Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for the sum of AUD\$80 for the authentication of homestudy documents.
  2. Cheque made payable to Consulate General of Ethiopia for the sum of AUD\$250 for the notarisation and authentication of homestudy documents by the Consulate General of Ethiopia, Victoria.
  3. Bank cheque for **Processing Fee** payment. The sum of the fee is US\$750. Please give cheque, made out to Lakew/Misrak to Information Officer to send with your homestudy.

## AUTHENTICATION AND CERTIFICATION

Once Adoption Service has received your documents above, the Information Officer will include other supporting documents required by Ethiopia from Adoption Service (such as letters, assessment etc). The documents will need to be notarised then authenticated by Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in Perth. After the documents have been authenticated by DFAT, your homestudy will be couriered to

The Consulate General of Ethiopia to be authenticated. This will be returned to Adoption Service before couriering to Ethiopia.

The notarisation is usually done by Tim Cocks who has kindly offered to notarise adoption papers at no cost. The account for the courier will be forwarded to you.

### **CHECK LIST**

- DCD Allocation and Placement conditions - signed by both applicants
- Power of Attorney x 2 (signature/s must be witnessed by Public Notary and sealed by Public Notary)
- Request by applicants to adopt from Ethiopia
- Photographs
- Chartered Accountants Attestation
- Financial Statement and Declaration of Income and Employment'
- Birth Certificates
- Marriage Certificate
- Medical letters
- 3 x References
- Letter of Obligation addressed to the Manager of DCD

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **OFFER OF A CHILD**

Once your homestudy is couriered to Ethiopia, Lakew will match a child to you on the basis of your homestudy documents. Matching is done by MOWA on the basis of the best interest of the prospective adoptive child and the birth parents wishes where possible.

#### **CHILD STUDY REPORT**

Once prospective adoptive parents are identified by Ethiopia for a particular child, a child study report will be forwarded to Adoption Service. The report will have basic information on the child including medical status, background information on parents and social history. A photo or two is sometimes 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 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. If available, you will also be given some letters which will outline the acceptance and immigration process should you wish to accept this offer of a child after you read the child study report and medical report.

## 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))

You will need to fill out the immigration forms (40CH and 47CH) as well as the acceptance paperwork. If you have any problems, please contact your program manager.

See Ethiopian checklist at the end of this chapter for a list of documents needed for forms 40CH and 47CH.

Hint to filling out immigration forms:

- Ensure that the child's name in both application forms is the original given name from Ethiopia.
- In form 47CH for correspondence address, fill in the following address: Lakew Gebeyehu, PO Box 4768 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia or the courier address is: Woreda 23 Kebele 13 House #1919 Sefere Genet, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (phone: 201425)
- Additional information (form 47CH, Part I, page 14), include that you would like a copy of all correspondence to be forwarded to yourself and Adoption Service (Attn: Mandy Birch, Adoption Service, Department for Community Development, PO Box 6334, East Perth WA 6892, Australia)
- All forms need to be completed by the applicant who is an Australian Citizen.
- Your program manager will need to sign as the authorising person to act and receive communication on your behalf.
- Please DO NOT lodge any forms in Perth. Only pay the Visa Application Charge.

#### 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:

- Letter to Mothers and Children's Affairs Department – This will need to be notarised by a Notary Public. Please note that we must notify Ethiopia of your acceptance of the child within 40 days of allocation.
- Declaration of Intent to Adopt – This needs to be completed and forwarded to Lakew within 40 days of its receipt. This will need to be notarised by a Notary Public.
- Fees – these need to be paid after the above documents have been sent to Ethiopia.
  1. Payment of Initial foster care payment. Payment is made for a 3 month period. Should the child be in foster care for a longer period, then you will pay the difference when you arrive in Ethiopia. If the child is in foster care for a shorter time, no refund is given.  
AACASA member: US\$600 (US\$200 per month)  
Non-AACASA member: US\$840 (US\$280 per month)  
Please note that you need to be a full AACASA member to get the discounted rate.  
Please make a teletransfer for the appropriate amount into the following account:  
Lakew Gebeyeh Likelew/Misrak Getahun Zewde  
Savings Account No.3567  
Andnet Branch  
Awash International Bank  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Details: For the purpose of adoption  
Please note, there are no branch numbers in Ethiopia  
You will need to quote Lakew's details. They are as follows:  
Lakew Gebeyehu/Misrak Getahun  
PO Box 4768  
Addis Ababa  
Ethiopia  
Ph: 0011 251 1 201 425  
Fax: 0015 251 1 711 555

Payment of Power of Attorney fees is US\$2000 per child. Payment should be by US\$bank cheque and made out to Misrak Getahun Zewde and Lakew Gebeyeh Likelew and attached to a letter stating the name and address of the applicants and sent to Misrak Getahun Zewde and Lakew Gebeyeh Likelew, PO Box 1431, Milton, Queensland 4064.

Please keep proof of transfer as proof of payment and provide Adoption Service with a copy of all payments. You will need to take all proof of payments with you to Ethiopia.

Once this is all completed, your program manager will forward this to Lakew.

Please note that if your child needs additional medical attention, that you will incur the additional cost when you travel to Ethiopia.

## ETHIOPIA 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, WA
- Typed letter of acceptance addressed to Ministry of Women's Affairs, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Complete and notarise Declaration of Intent to Adopt.
- Notarised letter addressed to the Mothers and Children's Affairs Department

**All the above need to be given to Adoption Service to courier on your behalf to Department of Children's Affairs, Ethiopia. The account for the courier will be forwarded to you.**

- Form 47CH
- Form 40CH
- Certified copy of child home study or medical report (in lieu of child's birth certificate)
- Certified copy of information page of each applicant's passport (if you do not have current passport, then a certified birth certificate is required)
- Certified copy of your marriage certificate.
- Certified copy of your current Tax Return Certificate
- Authorising letter from Adoption Services addressed to the Australian High Commission in Kenya.
- Original receipt of your visa application charge (AUS\$1340)

**All the above need to be given to Adoption Service to courier on your behalf to The Australian High Commission, Nairobi, Kenya. The account for the courier will be forwarded to you.**

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

Your child's Ethiopian passport will be organised by Ethiopia 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 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.

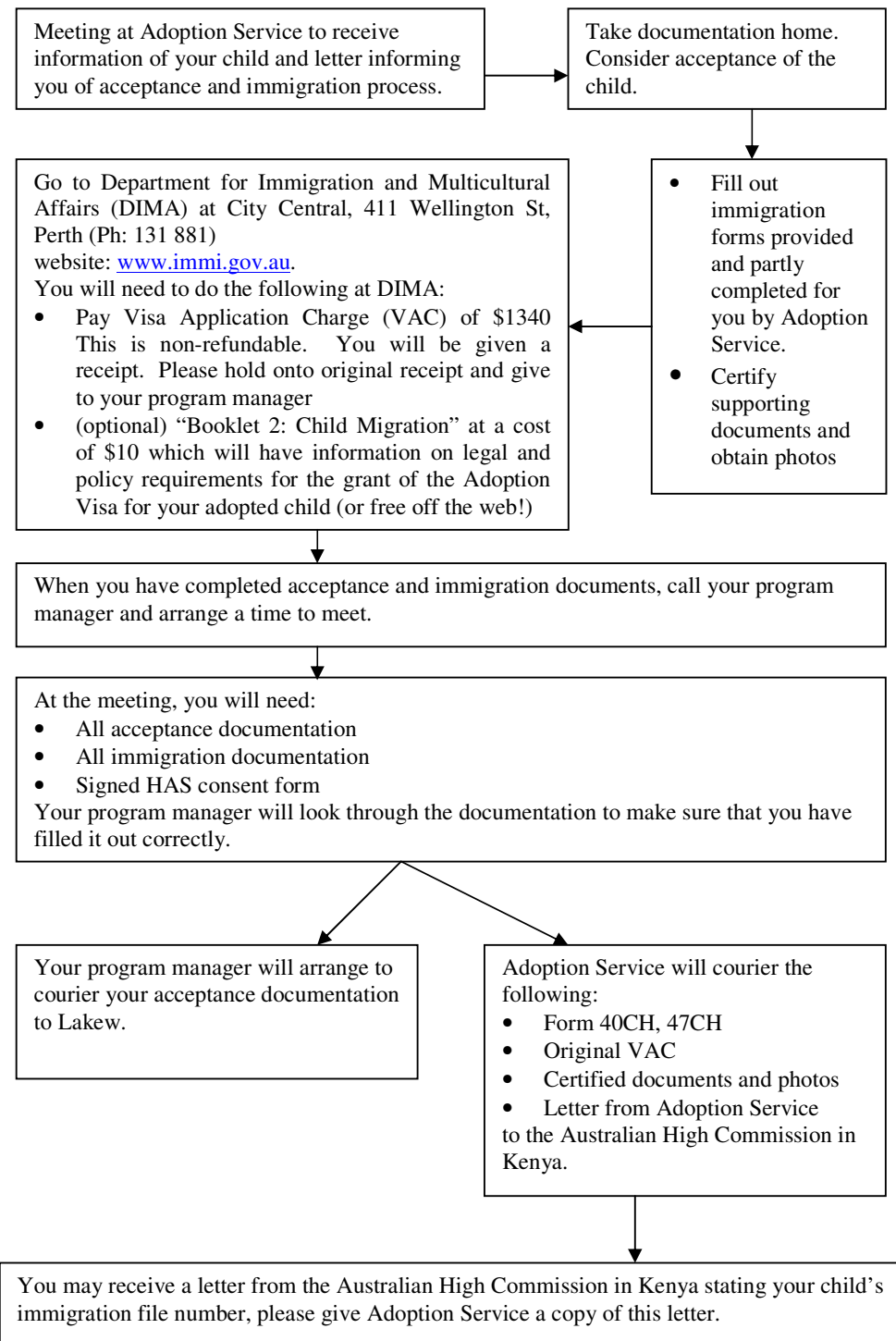
The visa permits the child to travel to and enter Australia for a period of 5 years from the date of grant.

## **MEDICAL**

Children under 2 years will be required to attend a second HIV medical 3 months after the first test. This may impact on travel time from acceptance.

HAS may also require, at their discretion, a second HIV test of any child. This can only be completed 3 months after the first test, again, having implications on travel times.

## FLOWCHART



## CHAPTER SIX

## PROCESS PRIOR TO TRAVEL

For those who wish to accept an allocation the waiting time until possible travel is normally 3 to 6 months. This is provided the Ethiopian court matters are successfully finalised and the child meets immigration health requirements. Prospective adoptive parents cannot travel until all the necessary immigration and court requirements have been finalised. The Australian High Commission has advised that the waiting time can be longer for babies who are required to have two medical tests three months apart.

### TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Once you have been given approval to travel by Adoption Service, you will need to give Adoption Service your travel itinerary. Please book your flights with your own travel agent. You will need to book a one way flight for your child. Please check with your program manager regarding the name on the plane tickets. The child may have a passport with their original Ethiopian name or your child may have the same surname as you. Please check with your program manager regarding the name of the child before booking and confirming tickets.

Your travel itinerary with flight numbers and airline, date of arrival and departure, accommodation etc will be faxed to Ethiopia. Lakew will then confirm these arrangements and arrange a time to meet with you in Ethiopia.

The Department will then proceed to prepare the relevant escort/introduction letters for you to collect your adoptive child.

To facilitate a reasonable 'getting to know you' period for the child, it is strongly suggested that couples spend at least 7 to 15 days in Ethiopia. It is considered to be of the utmost importance that parents are able to share with their child 'first hand' the experience of being in the child's country of origin.

### ACCOMMODATION

There are several accommodation options in Addis Ababa. It is recommended that you consult your travel agent for assistance.

### TRAVEL VISA FOR APPLICANTS

You will need to organise a tourist visa to enter Ethiopia. This is valid for 90 days. You can organise this or your travel agent can. If you wish to apply for a visa yourself, then you can obtain the application form from the internet at [www.consul.com.au](http://www.consul.com.au)

You will need to send the following:

- Your valid passport
- 2 x copies of the application form
- 2 x passport size photo
- Some form of self addressed envelop for the return of the passport and visa (express post, courier, envelope etc)

## **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 stating that you have had a hysterectomy etc.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

## FEDERAL DEMONCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA

### FACTS IN BRIEF

Area: 1,119,683 sq km

Population: 65,891,874

Government: Federal Republic

Capital: Addis Ababa

Currency: 1 birr = 100 cents

Climate: Ethiopia has two seasons.  
The dry season from October to May  
The wet season from June to September.  
Light, summer clothes are suitable for daytime wear and a jacket or sweater is useful for the evening when the temperature is much cooler.

Religion: Christian and Muslim

Language: Official language is Amharic. English is widely used and some Arabic, Italian and French are spoken.

Public holidays: 7 January Ethiopian Christmas  
19 January Epiphany  
2 March Battle of Adowa  
6 April Victory Day  
6 May May Day  
11 September New Years Day  
Plus chargeable Muslim holidays.



### INFORMATION FOR WHEN TRAVELLING IN ETHIOPIA

- Do address people by using Mr., Mrs. or Miss preceding their first name. A family surname changes with each generation.
- Do be prepared to haggle for everything.
- Do be patient with officials and you're more likely to get what you want.
- Don't give beggars money, as children may quit school to earn what seems to be a profitable income. And do expect beggars to thrust their hands inside your taxi if a window is open. There's not much you can do about it, however: Beggars have already removed the hand cranks used to raise and lower windows on most of the taxis in Addis Ababa.
- Do be careful to be accurate when completing your currency declaration forms, and don't import or export more than US\$100 in the local currency. The airport authorities make a great fuss over currency declaration forms on entry. On departure, however, the forms are often discarded without a glance.
- Do take along a coat and tie, as they may be needed for the better restaurants.
- Don't take photos indiscriminately: Ask permission before taking photographs of people, and pay them a modest tip. Don't take pictures of military installations, airports, bridges, etc. When in doubt, don't shoot.
- Do buy a guidebook before reaching Ethiopia. They are difficult to find once in the country.

#### To Stay Healthy, Do:

- Wash hands often with soap and water.
- Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes. If this is not possible, make water safer by BOTH filtering through an "absolute 1-micron or less" filter AND adding iodine tablets to the filtered water. "Absolute 1-micron filters" are found in camping/outdoor supply stores.
- Eat only thoroughly cooked food or fruits and vegetables you have peeled yourself. Remember: **boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it.**
- Take your malaria prevention medication before, during, and after travel, as directed. (See your doctor for a prescription.)
- Protect yourself from insects by remaining in well-screened areas, using repellents (applied sparingly at 4-hour intervals) and pyrethrum-impregnated mosquito nets, and wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants from dusk through dawn.
- To prevent fungal and parasitic infections, keep feet clean and dry, and do not go barefoot.

#### To Avoid Getting Sick:

- Don't eat food purchased from street vendors.
- Don't drink beverages with ice.
- Don't eat dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Don't share needles with anyone.
- Don't handle animals (especially monkeys, dogs, and cats), to avoid bites and serious diseases (including rabies and plague).
- Don't swim in fresh water. Salt water is usually safer.

#### What You Need To Bring with You:

- Long-sleeved shirt and long pants to wear whenever possible while outside, to prevent illnesses carried by insects (e.g., malaria, dengue, filariasis, leishmaniasis, and onchocerciasis).
- Insect repellent containing DEET (diethylmethyloamide), in 30%-35% strength for adults and 6%-10% for children. Unless you are staying in air-conditioned or well-screened housing, purchase a bed net impregnated with the insecticide pyrethrum. (Bed nets can be purchased in camping or military supply stores.)
- Over-the-counter antidiarrheal medicine to take if you have diarrhoea.
- Iodine tablets and portable water filters to purify water if bottled water is not available. See Do's above for more detailed information about water filters.
- Sunblock, sunglasses, hat.
- Prescription medications: make sure you have enough to last during your trip, as well as a copy of the prescription(s).

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

- Make extra copies of documents, passports, passport-sized photos (applicants' and child's) as this will save you looking for a photocopier in Ethiopia.
- A few common Ethiopian 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 can be bought in Ethiopia at a reasonable cost.
- 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 Ethiopia.

- 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 Ethiopia 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 Ethiopia to avoid creases. Don't forget sticky tape and wrapper (optional – you could purchase wrapping paper in Ethiopia, 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 Ethiopia. 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.
- 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.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

## ARRIVAL IN ETHIOPIA

In most instances, you will meet with Lakew on the second day that you are in Ethiopia as you are most likely to arrive early in the morning. You will probably spend a day settling in and start to get over jetlag. Try and be well rested as there is plenty of emotional work ahead of you.

### MEETING YOUR CHILD

When you arrive in Ethiopia, contact Lakew and let him know that you have arrived. He will arrange to pick you up at your accommodation and take you to see your child. You will then take custody of your child. When you meet with Lakew, Misrak and the child's carers please ask all the questions you may have, such as routines, food, sleeping needs, settling techniques.

Once you have the child in your custody, you are free to sightsee in Addis Ababa with him or her. Some prospective adoptive parents have taken an extra couple of days before meeting their child as they want to absorb some of the sights and culture of Ethiopia as it will be difficult to do this with a child, particularly a young child.

### USEFUL CONTACT

It is recommended when you arrive in Addis Ababa that you contact the Canadian Embassy to notify them of your arrival (the Canadian Embassy is in lieu of an Australian one).

Canadian Embassy

Stress address, not for correspondence:      Old Airport Area  
Higher 23, Kebele 12  
House Number 122  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Courier and all other correspondence:      PO Box 1130  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Ph: (0011 251 1)713 022

Fax: (0015 251 1)713 033

## 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 to the Chief Executive Officer via a written submission

### MEETING WITH PROGRAM MANAGER

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.
- 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 4<sup>th</sup> month of placement.
- 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 you have been granted the adoption order. Form 119 – Evident 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 Act 1994* 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.

## **QUARTERLY REPORTS**

Adoption Service will forward all six reports to Ethiopia. As per the undertaking that you would have signed, you are required to forward a report after 9 months of placement and another after 12 months of placement. From this time, you are required to forward a report every year until your child reaches 18 years.

A report to Ethiopia should contain information such as health, emotional and physical developments, how the child is adjusting, cultural continuity and any new information since the last report that you feel you would like to inform Ethiopia. You will need to include a few photos of your child and the family.

## **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.

## **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 the original passport will be returned for application for citizenship.

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

You are urged to apply for evidence of 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 forward to Ethiopia.

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 a certified copy of your child's Adoption Order and Certificate of Australian Citizenship, the Department will forward this to Ethiopia. Your case will then be officially closed.

### **KEEP IN TOUCH WITH ETHIOPIA**

It is the responsibility of the adoptive parents to send reports and photos to Ethiopia after the case is closed. You will have a responsibility to send a report every year until the child reaches the age of 18 years.

## **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 Ethiopia 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 parent's trip to Ethiopia.
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**

## USEFUL WEBSITES, BOOKS AND ARTICLES

- The Lonely Planet Guide to Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti OR  
<http://www.lonelyplanet.com>
- Bradt Guide to Ethiopia
- Ethiopian Amharic Phrasebook – Lonely Planet
- The Blue Nile – Alan Morehead
- The Colour of Difference – Journeys in transracial Adoption. Edited by Sarah Armstrong and Petrina Slaytor
- <http://www.immi.gov.au>  
*Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs*
- <http://www.dfat.gov.au>  
*The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website*
- <http://www.calib.com/naic>  
*Although this is an American website, there are numerous interesting articles (especially if you go into prospective adoptive parents and then into transracial and transcultural adoption). Just keep in mind that the procedures and laws are different to that in Western Australia.*
- <http://www.library.adoption.com/Ethiopia/International-Adoption-Ethiopia>  
*This website contains various articles, criteria and procedure for adopting in Ethiopia. Keep in mind that this is an American website so the procedure will be slightly difference.*
- <http://www.aacasa.org.au>  
*This is AACASA's website. Lots of information on the program and information on how to become a member.*
- <http://www.adoptivefamilies.com/>  
*This is an online magazine with articles, resources etc for adoptive families.*
- <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au>  
*Check out the latest travel advise/warnings from the Australian Government*
- [http://www.cyh.com/cyh/parenttopics/usr\\_index0.stm?topic\\_id=327](http://www.cyh.com/cyh/parenttopics/usr_index0.stm?topic_id=327)  
*This website contains health Information on your adoptive child.*

Be aware that in Africa, female circumcision may be carried out. There are numerous articles on the internet, so you might want to read up on this topical issue.

The following organisations can also offer you support and further information prior to, during and post adoption:

Australian-African Children's Aid & Support Association Inc(AACASA)  
PO Box 1319  
MILTON QLD 4064

Adoption Research Counselling Service (ARCS)  
38 Queens Crescent  
MOUNT LAWLEY WA 6050

Adoption Jigsaw of WA (Jigsaw)  
91 Hensman Rd  
Subiaco  
PO box 403  
SUBIACO 6904

Adoption Support for Families and Children (ASFC)  
PO BOX 122  
SUBIACO WA 6904

Other non-government organisations:

International Social Service – Australian Branch  
313 - 315 Flinders Lane  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Association Representing Mothers Separated from their Children by Adoption Inc  
(ARMS)  
PO BOX 521  
HAMILTON HILL WA 6963



