

ADOPTION

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY/POLICY ON ADOPTION

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Peoria, (Illinois) is a Child Welfare Agency licensed by the State of Illinois under the Child Care Act (Section 2.08) for the purpose of “receiving any child or children for the purpose of placing or arranging for the placement of the child or children in foster family homes or other facilities, for child care, apart from the custody of the child’s or children’s parent.”

Catholic Charities operates under a Child Welfare License granted by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services according to prescribed standards contained in DCFS Rules and Regulations, Part 401: *Licensing Standards For Child Welfare Agencies*.

The Adoption Program of Catholic Charities addresses the needs of the child by placing the child with a permanent family, and by assisting the family to legally adopt the child. It operates according to the laws of the State of Illinois and professional practices as described by the National Conference of Catholic Charities. Adoptions may only take place between children who are legally free for adoption and parents who are legally licensed for adoptive placement.

The Catholic Charities Adoption and Women’s Counseling and Support Services Programs are committed to allowing birthparents and adoptive parents to design an adoption plan that is in the best interest of the child and will meet their needs. The majority of Catholic Charities birth and adoptive parents meet one another, with that meeting being facilitated by an Agency representative. They may exchange first names and other non-identifying information at this time. They may also exchange the location where they live or other identifying information or they may chose to exchange correspondence and pictures through the Agency.

The Adoption Program recognizes the importance of the adoptive parents and the birthparents developing an on-going relationship. We believe that a healthy open relationship between birth families and adoptive families serves to help the birthparents through the painful grief process after separation from their child. We also believe that this relationship provides the adoptive parents with information which helps them to guide their child’s development by being able to answer questions about the child’s background and the birthparents’ motivation for releasing their child for adoption.

As an incorporated not-for-profit social service agency, we believe that adoption fees should reflect the actual cost for such services. As a pro-life agency, we believe our adoption services are morally, economically, and professionally united with the operation of our maternity home program. We believe that adoptive parents should be responsible for all of the medical expenses relating the child placed with them only when all other public sources for the payment of these medial expenses have been exhausted.

Catholic Charities believes that the Adoption program has continuing responsibility to provide support services to birth families, adoptive families and to adopted children after the adoption is legally completed. We have a lifetime commitment to birthparents, adoptive parents and adoptees, as provided through our post-adoption counseling and adoption search services.

The agency, at its professional discretion, will arrange for search related contact or meetings between mutually consenting birthparents, birth siblings, adoptive parents and adoptees. An adult adoptee is an adoptee who is twenty-one years of age or older, or an adoptee who is eighteen years of age or older, and who have the expressed written consent of his/her adoptive parents or guardian to participate in contact or meeting with a member of the birth family.