



Adopting Children in Ukraine

In Ukraine all matters of child adoption are dealt with by the **State Department of Adoption and Children's Rights Protection Agency.**

Only Children 14 months and older can be adopted by non-Ukrainian citizens.

Children who are under the age of 14 months can be adopted by non-Ukrainian citizens if the child is not healthy, or if the child is handicapped. Health reasons may vary from being slight, to being quite severe.

All siblings of a child MUST be adopted at the same time as the first child by the same adoptive parents. Children are not allowed to be separated.

Foreign citizens wishing to adopt Ukrainian children must submit a **petition** to the Ukrainian State Department, requesting to be registered as prospective adoptive parents, and must have an interview at the Department. Upon registration and after having successfully completed the interview applicants are then given a permit to visit state orphanages for the purpose of meeting and establishing contact with orphan children.

The following documents must be included with the **petition**;

- 1) **Home Study or Domicile**, a document issued by a competent authority in the adoptive parents' country, attesting to his/her/their eligibility, specifying his/her/their housing and living conditions, family data, and information about his/her/their own children etc. If this document is issued by a non-governmental entity, a copy of the license authorizing this entity to conduct adoption procedures should be appended.
- 2) **Entrance and permanent residence permit for the adopted child**, issued by the competent authority in the adoptive parents' country.
- 3) **A copy of the passport** or other identification papers of the prospective adoptive

parents.

- 4) **"No criminal record" statement** supplied by a competent authority for each adoptive parent, attesting to his/her having no criminal record.
- 5) **A written Adoptive parents' commitment** to have the child registered with a Ukrainian consular office in their home country within one month after their arrival from Ukraine (with the particular consular office pre-specified). The adoptive parents must provide the Ukrainian consular office with information about the adopted child's living conditions and the child's upbringing. (This letter of statement must be resubmitted each year with no less than once a year for the first three years, and then once every three years thereafter.). The adoptive parents must also arrange for the consular officers to keep in touch with the adopted child.
- 6) **Certified proof of income.**
- 7) A copy of the **marriage certificate** (if applicants are a married and applying as couple).
- 8) **Bill of health** issued in the name of both of the adoptive parents.
- 9) In case that only one member of a married couple wishes to adopt a child, the other should provide a **legalized written consent for adoption.**

All documents will remain valid for one year (unless otherwise provided for by the laws of the adoptive parents' country of residence). There is no need to notarize all of the individual documents; the only required notarization is the actual applicant signatures verifying that the signed documents are authentic.

The documents are to be submitted to the State Department along with a **certified Ukrainian translation** of the documents. The translation should be extracted from the duly legalized documents, and must be validated by **written approval** in the **Ukrainian Embassy or Consulate office** in the adoptive parents' country of residence (this is if the translation is completed outside of Ukraine), otherwise the translation must be completed in the offices of the state notary in the territory of Ukraine.

Within the following **20 days** the Ukrainian State Department will examine the petition and will verify all of the documents. If there is a positive decision made the State Department will register the applicant as a candidate for adopting a child in Ukraine. In the event that the registration is denied the prospective parents will be given written notification containing the reasons of the denial, and all the documents they submit will be returned to the applicant.

If the application is positive the foreign citizens will be given an invitation to come to Ukraine by the State Department for the purpose of selecting a child. The date of the scheduled arrival will also be given. The adoptive parents will be given profiles of several children from which to choose from. After the adoptive parents have made their decision as to which child/children they are interested in; they are given a **visitation permit** to go to the orphanage to see the child (children) to meet with and to speak with the child. The permit is valid for **10 days**.

In addition to the visitation permit, the adoptive parents are given a folder with their documents (bound, numbered, and sealed) signed by an official in charge of the State Department. This folder also contains the prospective parents' registration file code.

In the event that the prospective adoptive parents are unable to establish contact with the child, or if they choose not to adopt that child, they may then request the State Department to issue another permit for them to see other children.

If the prospective adoptive parents decide to adopt the child, they should submit a written application for adoption to the **local Board of Education**. The document should be filled in Ukrainian. The board will then make a decision within the next **10 days**. If the decision is positive then the parents are given a **written resolution**, which they submit to the State Department to begin the adoption procedure. The procedure usually takes the State Department **5 days**.

After the parents get **adoption permission** from the State Department, they will need to go before the **Local Court** to finalize and authorize the adoption in accordance with Ukrainian law. The adoption is considered **final** on the day of the local court decision. The parents must then take the child from the orphanage.

Registration with **Immigrations at the US Embassy in Ukraine**, and securing travel documents are then required for the adoptive parents to take the child home to the United States.