

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

IV. ADOPTION PROCEDURES

- A. Catholic Charities only places Caucasian infants (from 0-12 months).
- B. Couples wishing to adopt an infant must satisfy the following requirements:
1. Must be married at least three years by time of homestudy process.
 2. Must be an active member of a Christian Church.
 3. Must reside in the Diocese of Crookston.
 4. Must provide a physician's statement explaining, a. the couple's infertility or, b. that a pregnancy would endanger the mother or child.
 5. Must have fewer than two children.
 6. Cannot be older than 38 years at time of inquiry. They may remain on the list after age 38, with an annual review after the age of 45.
 7. After the age of 45 a review will annually occur to determine whether a couple will remain eligible for placement within the coming year.
 8. Each couple is required to attend at least one adoptive workshop sponsored by Catholic Charities before they receive their adoptive placement.
 9. Each couple is expected to maintain sufficient income and housing, as well as adequate health and life insurance.
 10. Medical examinations for everyone living in the home are required.
 11. Must provide three references as well as their priest's or pastor's reference.
 12. Can be actively (approved) working with Catholic Charities, and other adoption agencies as well.
 13. According to State law parental leave for the mother or father is expected and required after placement occurs.
- C. Procedure to enroll on the adoption inquiry list:
1. The couple confirms their interest in adopting through Catholic Charities by sending a letter to the Catholic Charities office.

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The following information should be included:

- a. The couple's full names;
- b. Address;
- c. Each person's date of birth;
- d. Each person's religion;
- e. Their status vis-a-vis the first 7 requirements listed above.

2. Couples are usually not contacted to do the homestudy for approximately two to five years. The entire adoptive process, from the initial letter until finalization of the adoption, takes an average of five to six years (these are approximations and each couple's wait may vary).

D. Following are the procedures Catholic Charities follows when making adoptive placements:

1. Each couple on the adoption inquiry list is given a date of inquiry, which is the date the agency received the couple's letter of interest. The couple's name and the date are placed on the inquiry list.
2. When the agency is ready to begin a homestudy, the names at the top of the list are considered first. A couple's inquiry date, as well as where the couple lives are factors that determine which couples complete homestudies.
3. The homestudy process involves a detailed look at the couple's background, marriage, education, occupation, children, health, finances, religion, adoption motivation and attitude, philosophy of parenting, and the type of child requested. This is done through several meetings with the couples.
4. The Adoption Board gives approval or disapproval of the homestudy.
5. Catholic Charities maintains several adoptive families, which have completed homestudies, on its approved adoptive homes list. (The approved adoptive homes list is completely separate from the inquiry list).
6. When a couple is approved, the agency waits for a child to become available for adoption.

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7. The objective of a child's placement into a home is to consider the needs of the child first. Therefore, children are not placed in a home on a "first come, first serve" basis. The child and the couple are matched to the best of the agency's ability. Birthparents' requests and an adoptive couple's location also play important roles in determining placement of a child.
 8. After determining which home will best meet the needs of the child, the child is placed in that home for a three-month supervision period. Pending recommendation by our agency to the court and subsequent finalization, the child is then legally adopted by the couple.
- E. Adoption fees (which are subject to change) are determined according to the couple's income; the fees range from \$2,000.00 to \$6,000.00 (cf. "FINANCIAL MATTERS," IX).

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