



This is a Contact Register for those affected by adoption.
Participation is completely voluntary.

The National Adoption Contact Preference Register



THE ADOPTION
BOARD
AN BORD UCHTÁLA

This leaflet is being distributed to all households nationwide.

Introduction

In the past, adoption was seen as a single event with no need for follow-up once the adopted child had been placed with the adoptive parents. We now know, of course, that in many cases, both adopted people and natural parents have a desire for information and/or contact. In recent years, there has been a marked increase in the number of enquiries for adoption information and tracing services. Last year the Adoption Board received over 2000 enquiries from people affected by adoption. *It is therefore important that there is a way for those affected by adoption to make known their wishes in relation to voluntary contact with the adopted person, the natural parents, or relatives, as the case may be.*

What is the National Adoption Contact Preference Register?

An Bord Uchtála (The Adoption Board), the national government agency for adoption is establishing a National Adoption Contact Preference Register. The purpose of the Register is to facilitate contact between adopted people and their natural families.

Participation is voluntary and contact through the register will only be initiated where both parties register. The Register allows you to choose what level of contact you wish to have. It includes an option to have no contact with the other party to the adoption if this is your wish.

Who has access to the information on the National Adoption Contact Preference Register?

The Register will be maintained by the Adoption Board. It is not open to public scrutiny. The information will be stored on a secure computerised database and will be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act. The information you provide will only be used to facilitate the preference you have expressed.

Who can join the register?

The National Adoption Contact Preference Register is available to the following people:

- ▶ Adopted people
- ▶ Natural parents
- ▶ Any natural relative of an adopted person

You must be 18 years of age or over for your name to be entered on the Register.

Friends/Confidants

As a friend you may have been a natural parent's closest confidant during pregnancy. You can be a source of information for an adopted person, where a natural parent has passed away. If you feel you can provide information you can contact the Adoption Board and the Board will hold your contact details on file. If the adopted person in question applies to be included on the Register, the Board will advise the adopted person of the information on file. The adopted person can then decide on what to do with this information.

How do I register?

If you wish to join the Register please complete the attached application form and send it together with one form of ID (see application form for acceptable forms of ID) by registered post to:- **P.O. Box 9957, Dublin 4.**

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for one of the Adoption Board's staff to contact you in confidence to clarify some details on the application form. If you are uncomfortable about being contacted at your home address you can provide an alternative address, telephone number, mobile number or e-mail address. Alternatively, please contact the Adoption Board on Freephone 1800 309 300 and we will be happy to arrange for a means of contact that is appropriate to your particular circumstances.

What contact preference can I choose?

You choose the level of contact with your relative that you are most comfortable with. The various contact options are listed below.

Willing To Meet:

If you wish to meet you may select this option. A reunion can be a very positive experience for all concerned but such meetings have to be planned with care and due concern for the sensitivities of all those involved. In order to prepare you for the first meeting the Adoption Board has prepared a booklet with advice on meeting, which it will send to you.

Exchange of letters/information, Contact via telephone/email:

If you would like to build a relationship with someone before deciding on whether to meet it is open to you to choose to correspond via letter, e-mail or telephone.

No Contact but willing to share medical information:

For adopted people, especially those with children of their own, it is vitally important to have a knowledge of their family medical background as successful treatment of many medical conditions is dependent on this. For this reason we would strongly encourage you to choose this option if you do not feel open to contact at the moment.

No Contact but willing to share information:

If you do not wish to have direct contact for the moment, you can also provide some personal information about yourself. To know that a person is alive and pursuing their own life can be a relief to a person who has no information at all.

No Contact at the moment:

For any number of reasons you may not wish to have contact with your relatives at the moment. However, if the other party to the adoption enters his or her details on the Register and is seeking contact, you have the option of being discreetly notified of this. If you still wish to have no contact, your wishes will be respected.

What happens if I choose not to register?

If you choose not to register you should be aware that the Adoption Board may have to make contact in exceptional or emergency circumstances or if a trace is initiated by a third party. The Adoption Board also has to contact a natural mother to ascertain her views on the release of a birth certificate to an adopted person.

What happens with my application?

When your completed application form is received by the Adoption Board a check will be made for a matching registration. If we find that a match has been made we will notify both parties.

Your name will be left on the Register permanently unless you decide to remove it. Requests to remove or amend details on the Register can be made in writing by registered post to the Adoption Board at any time.

You may find speaking to a member of the following organisations helpful:

HEALTH SERVICE EXECUTIVE AND ADOPTION AGENCIES:

Details on contacting the Health Service Executive and Adoption Agencies are available on our website: www.adoptionboard.ie or by phoning **Freephone 1800 309 300**.

ADOPTION IRELAND

The Adopted Peoples Association
14 Exchequer Street, Dublin 2.

Tel: **01-679 0011**

E-mail: register@adoptionireland.com

Website: www.adoptionireland.com

ADOPTION LOSS

The Natural Parents Network of Ireland
Po Box 6714, Dublin 4

Advice line only on Sundays 2pm – 4pm

LoCall 1890 2000 46

Email: info@adoptionloss.ie

Website: www.adoptionloss.ie

THE ADOPTIVE PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Helen Scott, 40 Fairyhouse Lodge, Ratoath, Co. Meath

Tel: **01-8256961**

E-mail: scotthelen@eircom.net

Helen Gilmartin, Roundwood, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Tel: **0404-45184** Fax: **0404-45700**

E-mail: apai@eircom.net

If you have not been affected by adoption personally but know someone who has, please bring this leaflet to their attention.

NOTES ON COMPLETION OF APPLICATION FORM:-

Proof of Identity:- (Please include a photocopy of one form of identification listed below.)

- ▶ Drivers Licence (including provisional licence)
- ▶ Passport
- ▶ Pension Book or Senior Citizens travel pass
- ▶ Social Welfare Services Card
- ▶ Student ID Card
- ▶ Medical Card

If none of the above are available please contact the Adoption Board.

- ▶ You may change the level of contact preferred at any time by contacting the Adoption Board in writing.
- ▶ You may use an alternative address for correspondence purposes but please agree this with the resident first. You can also contact the Adoption Board to make alternative arrangements.
- ▶ You must notify the Adoption Board of any future change of address.
- ▶ You must be over eighteen years of age or over for your name to be entered on the Register.
- ▶ You should be aware that the Adoption Board may have to make contact in exceptional or emergency circumstances. The Board also has to contact a Natural Mother to ascertain her views on release of a birth certificate to an adopted person.

If you have enquiries or concerns regarding the Register or the completion of your application, contact:
The Adoption Board, Shelbourne House, Shelbourne Road, Dublin 4.
Freephone 1800 309 300, email adoptioninfo@health.gov.ie
website www.adoptionboard.ie.