

POLICY

Title:	Considering a person's health in assessing their suitability to be adoptive parents
Policy No:	CPD620-2

Policy Statement:

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services will consider a person's health when assessing the person's suitability to be an adoptive parent. A person's health will be considered when determining whether the person's name should be entered in the suitable adoptive parents register and whether the person is suitable to have a final adoption order made in his or her favour.

Prospective adoptive parents must have good physical, psychological and mental health to enable them to provide stable, high level care for a child until adulthood.

Principles:

- The wellbeing and best interests of an adopted child, both through childhood and the rest of his or her life, are paramount considerations in all adoption matters.
- It is in the adopted child's best interests to be cared for by adoptive parents who are physically, psychologically and mentally able to ensure a safe, stable and nurturing family home life that best promotes the child's emotional, mental, physical and social needs.

Objectives:

To ensure children requiring an adoptive placement are placed with adoptive parents whose health is sufficient to provide a child with stable, high level care throughout their childhood.

Scope:

A person's overall health is considered in the assessment of his or her suitability to be an adoptive parent, including the person's physical, psychological and mental health.

Although a person's health may be assessed as being able to provide stable, high level care for a child, health criteria specified by overseas adoption authorities may preclude the person from being considered suitable to adopt a child from certain overseas countries.

Unless Adoption and Specialist Support Services is satisfied that, based on the medical assessment, a preliminary report stating the person is unsuitable can be made, a person's health is considered in the overall assessment of the person's suitability.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Adoption and Specialist Support Services will:

- provide a person with written notice of the medical information the person needs to provide to the chief executive to enable the chief executive to assess the person's suitability to be an adoptive parent and to have a final adoption order made in his or her favour.
- seek expert advice from relevant medical consultants when assessing medical information
- ensure a multi-disciplinary assessment (for example, assessment of the information by a general practitioner, occupational therapist, psychologist, social worker or speech and language pathologist) of the impact any condition or disorder is likely to have on a person's capacity to provide high level care for a child
- arrange for a medical consultant to review all health reports and provide a recommendation about the impact on a person's health has on the assessment of their suitability to be an adoptive parent. The medical consultant may contact a person's general practitioner or treating specialist for further information prior to making a recommendation about the impact a persons health has on their suitability to be an adoptive parent
- provide a person with notice of a decision that the person's health is such that they are unsuitable to be an adoptive parent. The notice will state the reasons for the decision and the information on which it is based.

Persons seeking to have their suitability assessed will:

- give the chief executive any relevant information required to assess the person's suitability
- provide requested information in the required timeframe
- advise the chief executive if there is any change to information previously provided.

Authority:

Adoption Act 2009, sections, 101, 109, 119, 122, 135.

Delegations:

Executive Director, Operations

Manager, Adoption and Specialist Support Services

Team Leader, Adoption and Specialist Support Services (excluding section 135)

Records File No.: CHS-16721
Date of approval: 04 March 2013
Date of operation: 12 March 2013
Date to be reviewed: 04 March 2013

Office: Communities, Child Safety, and Disability Services
Help Contact: Child Protection Development

Links:

Adoption Practice Manual

Related Adoption policies:

The wellbeing and best interest of the child in adoption (626)

Regular re-assessment of persons whose names are included in the suitable adoptive parents register (623)

Rescinded policies:

2.5 CHS-16721 Considering a person's health in assessing their suitability to be adoptive parents

620-1 Considering a person's health in assessing their suitability to be adoptive parents

Margaret Allison

Director-General