

POLICY

Title:	Application and assessment fees for the proposed adoption of a child by a step-parent
Policy No:	CPD615-2

Policy Statement:

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services will support the wellbeing and best interests of each child subject to a step-parent adoption application by undertaking a holistic assessment of the step-parent's application, in which the interests of each step-child and other matters that must be considered in the assessment are considered separately and together and reported on accordingly.

To support the department's commitment to efficiency and accountability in the administration of the *Adoption Act 2009*, a person making an application to adopt more than one step-child is required to lodge a separate application for each step-child as the applicant's eligibility and suitability must be established, and consent requirements satisfied, in relation to each step-child he or she is seeking to adopt. The applicant is required to pay a separate fee for each application. However, as far as possible and where it meets each child's best interest, one assessment will be undertaken in relation to an applicant who has applied to adopt two or more step-children and only one assessment fee will apply.

Principles:

- The wellbeing and best interests of an adopted person, both throughout childhood and the rest of his or her life, are paramount considerations in all adoption matters.
- A step-parent's eligibility to make an application to adopt more than one step-child must be separately considered and a decision made in relation to each step-child.
- Requiring a step-parent to make a separate application for each step-child he or she seeks to adopt supports efficient and accountable practice in the delivery of adoption services by ensuring that a step-parent is eligible to make an application for each step-child he or she is proposing to adopt.

Objectives:

Each step-child a step-parent proposes to adopt will be the subject of a separate application and each application will require the payment of a separate application fee.

Where a step-parent makes an application to adopt more than one step-child, only one assessment will be undertaken requiring the payment of one assessment fee per family. If all of the applications are not received on the same date, more than one assessment fee may be required.

Scope:

This policy applies to an application by a step-parent to adopt a child in accordance with the *Adoption Act 2009*, Part 5, Division 1 and the *Adoption Regulation 2009*, Schedule 2.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Adoption and Specialist Support Services will require a step-parent who proposes to adopt a step-child or step-children to:

- complete a separate application for each step-child a step-parent wishes to adopt and pay a separate fee for each application at the time of lodgement of the application form
- pay one assessment fee if a step-parent proposes to adopt more than one step-child and all requirements under the Act are satisfied which enable the application to be assessed. If all of the applications are not received on the same date, pay more than one assessment fee if required.

Adoption and Specialist Support Services is required to:

- upon receiving an application by a step-parent to adopt his or her step-child and payment of the required application fee, determine whether or not a person may make an application and either refuse or accept the application.

Authority:

Adoption Act 2009 Sections 5 and 6, Part 5, Division 1, Sections 92 and 93, Part 6, Division 3, Section 112

Adoption Regulation 2009, Sections 12, 13 and Schedule 2, Part 1 and Part 2

Delegations:

Executive Director, Operations

Manager, Adoption and Specialist Support Services

Team Leader, Adoption and Specialist Support Services

Senior Adoption Officer, Adoption and Specialist Support Services

Adoption Officer, Adoption and Specialist Support Services

Records File No.: CHS/16721
Date of approval: 04 March 2013
Date of operation: 12 March 2013
Date to be reviewed: 04 March 2016

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

Links:

Adoption Practice Manual

Related departmental policies:

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

Forms:

Application to adopt a step-child Form 7

Rescinded policies

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