



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Options for adopted children and their birth parents in Alabama are unlike those in most other states

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For the past 12 years, persons born in Alabama who have been adopted and their birth parents have had options they did not previously have and which are available in only a few other states.

The Alabama Legislature amended the vital records law in 2000, to allow birth parents to complete contact information and family medical history forms and have those forms placed in the sealed file of a child he or she put up for adoption. In addition, the law allows adult adoptees, aged 19 or over, to make requests for informational copies of the contents of their sealed birth files.

The contact preference form is considered a private communication from the birth parent to the child, is kept in a sealed envelope, and copies of the form are only given to the adoptee. The medical history form asks birth parents to provide known information about whether they or their family members have had any of more than 30 conditions listed and provides space for comments.

The adult adoptee who applies will receive copies of all documents in the sealed file which often include the legal documents from the court where the adoption took place as well as the original birth certificate. If a contact preference form or family medical history form is in the sealed file at the time the adult adoptee requests the contents of his or her sealed file, that will be sent to the adult adoptee.

“Only 225 birth parents have placed contact or medical information in a sealed file while over 5,000 individuals have requested copies of the contents of their sealed files,” Cathy Molchan Donald, state registrar and director of the Center for Health Statistics, said. “We want to make sure birth parents and adult adoptees are aware they have this avenue available.”

A nonrefundable search fee of \$25 is charged for placing a contact preference form and family medical history form in a sealed file. The same nonrefundable search fee is charged to adult adoptees seeking copies of the contents of their sealed files.

Information and forms are available at adph.org/vitalrecords/.

In addition, adopted children and birth parents may call (334) 206-5426 to obtain the forms or send a letter that includes their mailing address and daytime telephone number to request forms. Requests for forms should be sent to Vital Records-Adoptions Section, P.O. Box 5625, Montgomery, Ala. 36103-5625. For additional information call (334) 206-5426.

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11/27/12