



Strong families are a crucial component of a healthy society. As a community, we have great respect for those families that not only care for their own members but open their arms to others through adoption.

I'm proud of the more than 300 families that adopted a child in uncontested adoptions through the Maricopa County Attorney's Office Adoption Bureau last year. The Adoptions Bureau helps families with adoptions and prepares legal documents for adoptive parents, files adoption petitions with the court, and represents adoptive parents at all court hearings. These adoptions include relative adoptions, private adoptions, international adoptions and other agency placements.

It is a privilege to represent the generous and caring families that adopt children from all backgrounds and ages, and I commend those who make the decision to do so. Our representation of adoptive families means they only need to pay their adoption agency fees, keeping adoption more affordable.

If you are a prospective adoptive parent, please review this brochure for more information or call our Adoption Bureau at (480) 969-1551.

Sincerely,

Andrew P. Thomas  
Maricopa County Attorney

# ADOPTION



**Maricopa County Attorney's Office**  
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**ANDREW THOMAS**  
County Attorney

For over 30 years the Maricopa County Attorney's Office Adoption Bureau has brought families together.

## Adoption Bureau services

The Adoption Bureau represents families in a variety of uncontested adoptions including:

- Parent or other relative adoptions
- Agency placed children adoptions
- Privately placed children adoptions
- Foreign adoptions
- Foreign re-adoptions



Our services include the drafting of all adoption legal documentation, as well as legal representation at all court hearings. In cases where it is necessary, the Adoption Bureau handles temporary custody matters, and pre-birth or post-birth expense matters.

## What is an uncontested adoption?

An uncontested adoption is one of the most common forms of adoption today. Uncontested adoptions fall in one of three categories:

- The birth parents consent to the adoption.
- The parental rights of the birth parents or parent have been legally terminated.

- Consent cannot be obtained because the birth parents are deceased.

## The adoption process

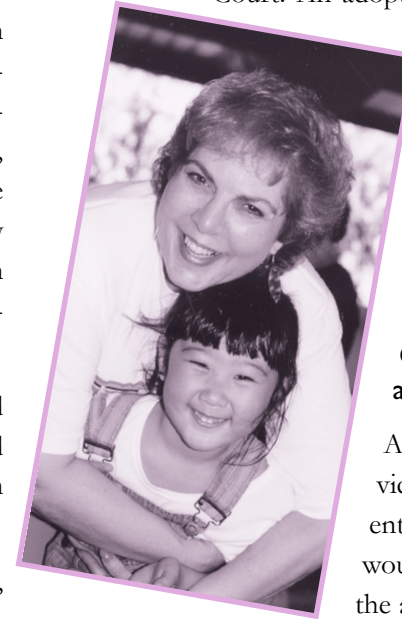
### The Adoption Bureau's role

To use the County Attorney's Adoption Bureau, adoptive parents must have either verbal consent for the adoption by the birth parents or the birth parents' parental rights have been legally terminated. In private adoptions, once the adoptive parents have the birth parents' consent or legally binding termination, they should call the Adoption Bureau at (480) 969-1551 and request an application.

- After the application and all other required documents are submitted to our office and reviewed, we will draft all necessary written consents for the birth parents.
- Upon receipt of the signed written consent, our office will call the adoptive parents to schedule an appointment to discuss and sign the petition for adoption.
- Once the petition for adoption is filed with Maricopa County Juvenile Court, the final hearing will be held approximately two to six months after the filing date, depending on the petitioner's qualifications for the adoption.

### Private adoption agencies' role

Except in very limited circumstances, all adoptive parents must have an adoption agency working on their case. These agencies prepare a "Social Study" which is submitted to the Juvenile Court. Adoptive parents, who are not adopting a relative, must be "certified as acceptable" through the Juvenile Court. An adoption agency will also complete the study for this



process. As a courtesy, a list of adoption agencies is enclosed with the Adoption Bureau applications sent to adoptive parents.

### Costs involved in the adoption process

All of our services are provided free to adoptive parents. The only costs involved would be the fees assessed by the adoption agency.

## Questions about adoption

If you have questions, or would like an uncontested adoption application, please call the Maricopa County Attorney's Office Adoption Bureau at (480) 969-1551.