



A California Licensed Adoption Agency

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China Program Information & Guidelines

Our *China Program* is just over eight years old and we have a growing family of wonderful children from People's Republic of China. We are preparing new groups of ongoing families and are very excited with the availability of young, healthy children. As many of you know, the situation for native families in China is difficult. The *One Child* policy has forced many rural families to abandon their female infant children in hopes of having a son. Everyday children are left on government building steps, street corners or police stations. Each small baby is taken to the nearest orphanage where its future hangs in the balance. Because China has opened its doors to desiring families, these abandoned children now have a chance for a new life through foreign adoption.

China has already placed tens of thousands of children. The projections showing the high number of children available for adoption from China is staggering. Political changes, global relationship shifts, leadership turnovers, and other factors do influence adoption rates, but in the past seven years there has been no shortage of children available for adoption. For now, we thank China for opening their doors to the world's scrutiny of their social affairs by allowing the adoption of their children.

Our *China Program* offers families many special opportunities. The children, mostly female infants of normal health, are readily available after your paperwork has been processed. Placement can happen in little over one year, and there is an added bonus of being able to see your child's country of birth as China invites and encourages families to travel to receive their child. Families qualifying for the *China Program* includes previously divorced applicants, families with children, and slightly older couples (who may qualify for older children.) Another exciting facet is traveling with other agency families, which gives a family added support and encouragement all the way to China, as well as leading to many lasting memories and friendships for the years to come.

We have an exceptional facilitator who also works with Bay Area Adoption Services (BAAS). She charges reasonable fees and is available at all times via Fax, telephone, and E-mail. She is a native Chinese, speaks and knows the subtleties of the culture, and can advocate for families with officials in Beijing. She will translate all the necessary documents (dossier contents) and can take the documents to the other official agencies in the Bay Area. She will coordinate the referral and in-country travel, and will help with any phone calls necessary to ensure the success of the placement.

Our program often couples families into groups who process their paperwork together. Our families also travel with BAAS families too. We are here to assist you the entire way, making this a wonderful, life-changing experience to treasure. You will have lasting memories of your child's country of birth and your child will understand, if only in a small way, the depth of your commitment. Most families can expect placement in under fifteen months.

We accept applications all-year-round. The excitement and kinship that develops with the other families will last after your work with this agency ends. Because of this "China Connection," there will be other children for your child to identify with here in this community as she or he grows up.

China's ideal family is one who is over thirty years old, childless or has up to four children in the home. Single applicants are obligated to use a program other than ours as we currently do not have any openings for this group. Families where both parents are over forty-five years old need to be prepared to accept children over one year of age. Some special needs children are also available from time-to-time. Families may specify the gender of a child; however there are many more female children available than males.

You must have a passport

All persons traveling outside the United States territory need a passport that includes families doing an international adoption. Anyone traveling to a foreign country using a Power of Attorney (as in the case of adoption where only one parent travels) will need to have a copy of the passport of the other spouse who is not traveling.

We recommend that you secure your passport early in the beginning stage of your adoption process. Passports are good for 10 years (adults only), so there's no worry that it will expire before you are united with your child. Passports are processed at various speeds (usually 4-6 weeks) but can be processed more quickly with additional fees.

There are two different application forms for passports. They can be acquired at the 7th & H Streets Post Office in Eureka (442-1828) and at some travel agencies.

If you've never had a passport before or if you have a passport that has expired for more than two years, you will need to use form DSP11 (tan). This form can be downloaded and other passport application information is available from the following website: www.travel.state.gov/passport_services.html. Follow the instructions and submit the necessary documents. Please read all of the instructions very carefully as missed information or documents delay the processing. These forms need to be taken back to the post office for submission. The cost is \$85 for adults, and \$70 for minors. You will need to be fingerprinted and will need to submit an expired passport (one that is over two years old) along with a birth certificate.

If you have previously had a passport that has expired for less than two years and you are over 16 years old, you will need to submit form DSP82 (pink). Again, read all the instructions very carefully and submit all documents. I usually request that they return my old passport (which they do). It might be standard procedure to do so, but since I'm not sure, you might want to request that they do so. These forms can be submitted by mail. The cost is \$40. Children under age 13 will apply under their parent's authority. A parent or guardian will need to accompany children when applying for a passport.

If you have a passport that is less than a year away from expiring, it is suggested that you renew it.

All passports require a current passport photo. A passport photo is taken with very specific measurements. If you are going to China, you will need a total of six photos (two for the passport, two for the dossier and two for the China visa). You can have them taken at places like Kinkos (2 @ \$13.89), Sears (2 @ \$14.99), Picture People (4 @ \$16.03) and Costco (2 @ \$5.35). Your passport will eventually need to be submitted to the Chinese Consulate for your visa as well as accompanying you when you travel to China.

U.S. State Department- Passport Division (for general passport info): 1-900-225-5674 (\$1 per minute)

Out-of-state birth & marriage certificates must be certified and authenticated by the family

If you were born or married in California, certified copies of birth and marriage certificates (from Vital Records or a state registrar) will suffice for your China dossier.

The following websites will be helpful to you during this process:

Vital Records.....<http://www.assistantstork.com/pages/myvitalrec.html>
Secretary of State.....<http://www.state.gov/secretary>

Out-of-state birth and marriage certificates need to be authenticated at the beginning of the adoption process.

If you were born or married out-of-state, you need to get certified copies from your county of birth or marriage. Furthermore, you need to get them certified by the Secretary of State of that state. You then need to get them authenticated by the Chinese Consulate before your dossier can be sent to China. We advise you to begin working on getting this done immediately so your dossier can be sent as soon as all other documents are collected.

If you were born or married out of the USA, there are two ways to process these certifications:

1. Have the documents certified and authenticated in the country of birth/marriage.

OR

2. Attach a cover letter to a photo of the passport stating: "This is a true copy replacing the birth certificate for the purpose of a Chinese adoption."

Note: The Chinese Consulate will not accept a birth or marriage certificate with an authentication that is more than three months old.

Note: If widowed, a death certificate of the deceased spouse must be submitted (same process)

Completing a Dossier

All forms must follow the exact format given to families by sample (or on disk)

1. The dossier documents can be prepared before the homestudy is completed but should not be notarized until your homestudy is completed.
2. Collect all the listed documents and have them notarized individually (by a California Notary). That means you will need to take a notary to your physician, your employer, and possibly to the police station.
3. Your homestudy will be notarized by Adoption Horizons (AH) (you will be billed for the notarization).
3. Your homestudy will be sent to the Bureau of Citizenship/Immigration Services (BCIS) (formerly called the INS) by Adoption Horizons.
4. Adoption Horizons will copy and send your notarized dossier contents (including homestudy and fees) to our facilitator, Xiaoqing for translation. You will receive a copy of your dossier by mail.
5. Xiaoqing will arrange to have your documents taken to Sacramento and San Francisco for certification and authentication.

<u>Service</u>	<u>Fees</u>
-Dossier transport fee	\$250
-Notarizations	\$10 each
-Certifications.....	\$20 each
-Authentications	\$20 each
-Notary.....	\$6 each (each one used)
-Marriage/Birth Certificates	\$26 each
-Adoption Center Application Fee.....	\$465

Five Process Steps

**Collection
Notarization
Certification
Authentication
Translation**

6. Xiaoqing will complete the translation and forward your dossier to China.

Forms need to be carefully completed, not omitting any information, which could result in lengthy delays. Again, out-of-state birth and/or marriage certificates need to be completed at the beginning of your adoption process.

Current Matching Process

WHEN DOSSIERS ARE SENT TO CHINA, THEY ARE PROCESSED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER:

STEP 1: Documents are accessioned by the China Center of Adoption Affairs (CCAA) which uses a computerized system. The dossiers are then either translated and/or verified.

Processing time: Three (3) months

STEP 2: Next, the dossier is sent to "Department 1", which is a "reader" department where dossiers are read and checked for accuracy and completion of necessary document requirements. Once completed, the reader attaches a coversheet checking off the necessary documents, and adding the family's name, date and the age and sex of the child desired.

Processing time: Three (3) months

STEP 3: The dossier is then transferred to "Department 2," the referral department, where the family is matched with a child. The match information is then forwarded to Adoption Horizons. You will then be asked to return an acceptance letter. Travel permission is then given by the CCAA. Finally, the approved dossier is mailed from the CCAA back to the child's province where the orphanage reviews and prepares the child for travel.

Processing time: Three (3) months

Travel time after a referral may be as soon as five weeks. The Center is sensitive to the stress that waiting parents experience. New applicants are being told that the entire process from the time the dossiers arrive at the Center to time of travel takes nine-twelve months.

Referral Information

When the assignments of children are made, the referrals will be sent to Adoption Horizons. You will receive a small photograph or two attached to two or more pages of a brief medical and social evaluation.

The following are the next steps:

1. The Program Director of AH will notify the family that their referral has arrived and make arrangements for the family to receive the documents.
2. The family is asked to review the assignment.
3. The family may then call Xiaoqing who will translate the information and answer questions.
4. You must then sign an "acceptance letter" which is forwarded immediately to the CCAA to initiate travel.

5. The family then meets with the AH Program Director and social worker to sign the Child Acceptance and Post Placement Contract. (AH fee: \$1,000.)
6. The family is given a travel checksheet and encouraged to review travel materials.
7. The family will be notified about travel dates from Xiaoqing after she secures all necessary appointments.
8. The family can then apply for a visa to enter China.
9. The family then coordinates travel plans with our associated travel agent.
10. The family then meets with the Program Director to organize their travel materials.
11. The family confirms travel plans.
12. Xiaoqing will send you a travel itinerary and other pertinent documents.
13. Leave for China to adopt your child!!!

***** You will get itinerary translations from Xiaoqing**