



**Designated Adoption: *Our family has been matched with a birth parent who lives in Colorado.***

LFS provides a full range of services to a birth parent and to you as an adoptive parent. Colorado is an agency state which means that an attorney is not necessary.

- Birth parent counseling and support
- Legal process of relinquishment for mother
- Relinquishment or termination of rights for the adoptive father
- Home study
- Adoption Education Classes
- Birth plan coordination
- Post placement reports

### **Home study Process**

In order to adopt a child in Colorado, you are required to complete a home study which includes extensive background checks and interviews. Your family will be assigned an adoption counselor who will meet with you a minimum of three visits. Medical evaluations and references from friends along with other documents will be necessary. The process usually takes about 10 -12 weeks but can be expedited if necessary.

Adoption Family Training is required and LFS provides the training twice per year. The 16 hour training is held on two consecutive Fridays. Training must be completed prior to the adoption being finalized.

### **Birth Parent Counseling**

If the birth mother has not yet spoken with an agency, you can have her speak to our pregnancy counselor who will be her advocate and support person through her journey. Options counseling through an agency is mandatory in Colorado and will be necessary prior to the judge granting the relinquishment. During the initial meeting, we discuss her interest in making an adoption plan and make sure that she is able to access health services, prenatal care and is able to meet her basic needs.

There is no charge to you for the initial meetings with a birth parent. After two sessions, we will contact you to inform you of the birth mom's current plan for making an adoptive plan with your family and the initial assessment of the father's intent to intervene. If you choose to go forward, you will be billed for birth parent counseling. Her decision may change and is not meant to be considered a guarantee that the child will be placed for adoption with you. The cost is for services provided and not for the child.

### **Birth Parent Expenses**

At this time, we may also have an estimate of possible birth parent expenses. It is important not to give money directly to the birth family. Regulations exist regarding what can be provided to the birth parent and all money or substantial gifts need to go through an agency. Colorado law states that all approved birth parent expenses cannot be reimbursed to the adoptive family in the event that the birth parent changes her mind and decides not to place with your family. You will be responsible for all medical expenses not covered by insurance.

### **Legal Process**

Colorado mandates that every birth mother be provided with counseling before a relinquishment will be approved by the court. The length of counseling varies but we are committed to working with a parent for as long as she needs our support.

Birth fathers have many rights, one of which is to contest the adoption and parent their child. We often do not know of the birth fathers intent to parent prior to placement. If the birth father is able to parent and follows through with the court process, he most likely will receive custody.

As part of the fee for birth parent counseling, LFS will provide legal services relating to the relinquishment or termination of parental rights. The majority of cases are done without a court hearing and relinquishment paperwork will be completed by the pregnancy counselor. The process includes legal notification to all potential birth fathers, the preparation and filing all relinquishment documents, appearance in court if necessary and compliance with Indian Child Welfare Act.

An attorney is not necessary to file relinquishment and termination cases with a Colorado Court. However, you are encouraged to seek legal counsel in order to obtain a better understanding of the adoption laws in the state of Colorado at your expense if you choose.

For a complete copy of our fee agreement or for any other questions or concerns, please contact the office at 303-217-5863 or at [adoption@lfsrm.org](mailto:adoption@lfsrm.org). It is our honor to be part of your adoption journey!