

US CITIZEN AND IMMIGRATION PROCESS: I800A

It is now time to initiate the immigration process by completing the I800A form and supporting evidence for US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Overview

The Hague Convention on Protection of Children in Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (the Convention) entered into force with respect to the U.S. on April 1, 2008. The Convention strengthens protections for children, birth parents and prospective adoptive parent(s), and establishes internationally agreed upon rules and procedures for adoptions between countries that have a treaty relationship under the Convention. The Convention provides a framework for member countries to work together to ensure that children are provided with permanent, loving homes, that adoptions take place in the best interests of a child, and that the abduction, sale or traffic in children is prevented.

The Form I800-A (Application for Determination of a Suitability to Adopt a Child from a Convention Country, to initiate the immigration process if you intend to adopt a child who resides in a Convention country. **Form I-800A and supporting evidence are required for USCIS to determine your eligibility and suitability to adopt a Convention child.**

There are two parts to the Immigration process for your child: 1) I800-A and 2) I-800. Families submit the I-800A along with supporting evidence, to petition the federal government to determine you eligible to adopt a child. After being granted I-800A approval AND you have formally accepted the referral of a child(ren), WHFC will then submit the I-800 petition to determine the child's eligibility for classification as a Convention adoptee. You will receive more information regarding the I-800 later in your process. You are welcome to read more about the whole process at: www.uscis.gov/adoption.

Steps to Complete the I-800A Petition

Please be aware that these are our best recommendations based on our past experiences for filling out these forms.

1. Read the I-800A instructions thoroughly.

<https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-800ainstr.pdf>

This could prevent the need for time-consuming corrections in the future. The most current Form I-800A Petition to Classify Convention Adoptee as an Immediate Relative can be found at <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-800a.pdf>

2. Complete the I-800A forms. For further recommendations, see ***Recommendations for Completing the I-800A Form***, below.

3. Gather other required documents.

a. Review “Checklist of Required Initial Evidence” at the following link:

<https://www.uscis.gov/i-800a> Depending on your individual situation, you will be required to include documents which may include: copies of birth certificates, copies of marriage certificates, copies of divorce decrees, evidence of any prior unlawful incidents.

b. Payments can be made in the form of a check or credit card payment. Make checks payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security or use the G-1450 Form for a credit card payment (<https://www.uscis.gov/g-1450>). **The fee is: \$920**

c. Include an original copy of your home study (6 months old or newer when received by USCIS) signed by your social worker and notarized.

d. If your home study was not written by WHFC, you must include the Home Study Approval Letter you received from WHFC via email, stating that our agency has reviewed and approved your home study. If your home study was written by WHFC this document is not needed.

e. If you have a history of an unlawful incident, USCIS requires evidence of that incident be included with your submission. Please contact Christina Cetrone/Jessica Ellison for USCIS instructions on an unlawful incident.

f. Scan a completed packet of all documents in one PDF to Christina/Jessica for a full review of your packet.

4. Submit the documents.

a. A cover sheet may be helpful to ensure all required documentation is included. Please see the attached cover sheet template and edit the form to fit your situation and required documentation.

b. Make a copy of your complete submission to retain for your records.

c. We **strongly encourage** you to use a courier service which offers traceable and quicker delivery options to send your application materials. Please note that USCIS has a separate address for deliveries received via the postal system versus those received by courier companies. Be sure to use the correct address.

Where to File

U.S. Postal Service (USPS):

USCIS
Adoption I-800A
P.O. Box 660087
Dallas, TX 75266-0087

FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries:

USCIS
Attn: Adoption I-800A
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business; Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067-8003

5. You will receive a letter acknowledging receipt of the documents (I-797C, Notice of Action), then a letter giving you a biometrics appointment. For current processing times: <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/>

6. Your petition and evidence will be adjudicated. If some information is lacking, your officer will issue a Request for Evidence (RFE) stating the problem and instructions and due date for correction. Please **email a copy of the RFE** to either Christina Cetrone (Burundi, Colombia) or Jessica Ellison (Philippines) as soon as possible.

7. When your petition is approved, you will receive a letter labeled "I-797, Notice of Action". This is your I-800A Approval.

Your Responsibilities

1. Please **email a copy of the I-800A Approval** to either Christina Cetrone (Burundi or Colombia) or Jessica Ellison (Philippines) as soon as possible. Failure to do so may cause a significant delay in your adoption process.

2. Please make note of your expiration date and track it. **It is your responsibility to track your documents and keep them up to date.** You should initiate the extension process about four months prior to the expiration date. It is necessary to keep your I800A approval current throughout your adoption process.

3. Inquire with Christina or Jessica about the next steps once you receive your I-800A approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPLETING THE I-800A FORM

Note: There may be no blank spaces on an I-800A. Spaces you cannot answer should be filled in with "N/A". Type or print in black ink.

Part 1. Basis of Filing

Check first box.

Part 2. Information About You

1. Provide information requested.

2. Write in Convention Country.

3-6. Provide information requested.

7. Provide information requested. If you answer “yes” please contact your social worker.

8-9. Provide information requested.

10. If you answered “Yes” to any question, please contact Christina Cetrone/Jessica Ellison at WHFC to find out what arrest documentation is required for USCIS.

Part 3. Information About Your Spouse (if You are Married)

1-6. Provide information requested.

7. Provide information requested. If you answer “yes” please contact your social worker.

8. If you answered “Yes” to any question, please contact Christina Cetrone/Jessica Ellison at WHFC to find out what arrest documentation is required for USCIS.

Part 4. General Information

1. Check first box.

2. Check “b” and write in:

Wide Horizons For Children, Inc.

144 Moody Street, Bldg #24

Second Floor

Waltham, MA 02453 USA

Point of Contact: Christina Cetrone 781-419-0314 cctrone@whfc.org

Jessica Ellison 781-419-0397 jellison@whfc.org

3. Type this wording in the box:

“In accordance with 8 CFR Part 204.311 & 22 CFR Part 96, we have successfully completed the required adoption home study, background checks, medical checks, and 10 hours of pre-adoptive parent training as mandated by The Hague Convention and applicable State law (see home study for details).”

For Philippines: Please confirm this information with your home study agency before entering on the form, as some states will require additional steps.

4. All countries Select "a" **(Philippines only will select “b”)**

(Note: it is recommended that, regardless from what country you adopt, you finalize the adoption in the U.S.)

5. This applies to this adoption and does not include future adoptions. If you check “No” you will be limited to one child for this adoption. If you check “Yes” and indicate “2”, you will be able to adopt one or two children. If there is any possibility that you may adopt a sibling group you should check “Yes” and indicate “2” or more. The way you answer this question should be consistent with your child recommendation in your home study.

6-7. Provide information requested.

8. List all of your children, under 18 years of age, whether in your home or not. Also, list any child, under 18 years of age, in your home whether or not you are related.

Part 5. Certification and Signature of You, the Prospective Adoptive Parent(s)

Applicant and Spouse must sign and date. Under no conditions may you sign for each other, even if you are legally authorized to do so.

Part 6. Signature of Person Preparing Form if Other Than Above

In almost all cases you will write “n/a” in this section unless you are having an attorney or other legal representative complete the I-800A for you.

FORM I-800A, SUPPLEMENT 1:

LISTING OF ADULT MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Age 18 and over)

NOTICE: You must complete the entire I-800A, Supplement 1 for every additional adult household members.

Part 1. Information About an Adult Member of the Household

1. Fill in the information as it relates to this adult member of the household.

2. If you answered “Yes” to any question, please follow the same instructions as applicants with an arrest history.

Part 2. Signature of You, the Prospective Adoptive Parent (Applicant) and Signature and Certification of the Adult Member of the Household.

The primary petitioner should sign and date and fill in the information requested.

Under Certification of the adult member of the household: The adult member of the household should sign and date and provide phone number and email (if any).

**FORM I-800A, SUPPLEMENT 2:
CONSENT TO DISCLOSE INFORMATION**

All applicants must fill out this form so that WHFC may work with USCIS on your behalf. Primary applicant and spouse must sign and print names along with date at the bottom.

Wide Horizons For Children, Inc.

144 Moody Street, Bldg #24

Second Floor

Waltham, MA 02453 USA

Daytime Phone is 781-894-5330

Fax Number is 781-899-2769

**WHFC USCIS Contact: Christina Cetrone ccetrone@whfc.org or Jessica Ellison
jellison@whfc.org**

FORM G-1145: E-NOTIFICATION OF APPLICATION/PETITION ACCEPTANCE

Use this form to request a text message and/or email when USCIS accepts your form.

Supporting Evidence Guidelines:

Certificates should be the civil record from the town in which the birth, marriage, etc. was registered. Marriage certificates filled out by the person who performed the ceremony are not acceptable. Birth certificates filled out by the hospital are also not acceptable.

Foreign documents must be accompanied by a translation into English which the translator has certified as complete and accurate and by the translator's certification that he or she is competent to translate from the foreign language into English.

None of these documents need to be notarized

- Birth certificates that include your parents' names. If you cannot obtain a birth certificate, you may submit a photocopy of your **unexpired** U.S. passport as evidence of birth or Certificate of Naturalization as evidence of birth.
- If you have changed your name legally, submit a court record as documentation of that change (if your last name has changed due to marriage, your marriage certificate will serve as proof of your legal name change). Please be aware that if you use a name different than the name on your birth certificate, for example you fill out documents using your middle name as your first name, but never legally changed your name, CIS might request that you clarify the discrepancy in your paperwork. Clarification may require filling out a new application or legally changing your name.
- **Copies of U.S. citizenship papers are required** if the applicant or spouse is a naturalized citizen. If spouse is not a U.S. citizen, include a copy of the front and back of his/her permanent resident card.
- Marriage Certificate: If you had a marriage annulled and your new marriage certificate does not include the annulled marriage in the amount of times you have been married, CIS might request an amended copy.
- Divorce Decree(s) must be the final divorce decree indicating the date the divorce **became** (not becomes) final.
- If you have had a history with Child Protective Services, or substance abuse, (even if you were never arrested), CIS may require additional documentation to support "appropriate rehabilitation." If this applies to you please speak to your social worker.

All documents should be photocopies *except* for arrest documents, USCIS will require originals

TO: U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services
Attn: Hague
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business, Ste 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

DATE:

PROSPECTIVE ADOPTIVE PARENT(S):

CONVENTION COUNTRY: Burundi, Colombia or Philippines

TYPE OF REQUEST: I800A

APPROVAL SHOULD BE CABLED TO THE U.S. CONSULATE/EMBASSY IN:

Nairobi, Kenya or Bogota, Colombia or Manila, Philippines

Please forward a copy of the Favorable Determination to:

Wide Horizons for Children, Inc.
144 Moody Street, Bldg. 24, Second Floor
Waltham, MA 02453
Attn: Christina Cetrone or Jessica Ellison

Best regards,

Names