

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

- 1. PARENTING ABILITY:** The adoptive parents (APs) must give evidence of a mutual desire and love for children. They must be able to provide for the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs of a child from a hard place. They must recognize the complexities of parenting a child who is grieving and has experienced trauma and how this approach will be different from traditional parenting models.
- 2. HEALTH:** Applicants must be in good physical and mental health as determined by a doctor's examination. They must be able to physically and emotionally undertake the responsibility of parenthood. They must pass the medical examination required by the sending and receiving state of their placement.
- 3. CITIZENSHIP:** At least one spouse must be a United States citizen.
- 4. FINANCIAL STABILITY:** The applicants must have sufficient income to meet any expenses incurred by adding another family member. They must also be able to make reasonable provision for future financial stability including care for financial needs of a child with potential special needs. Medical insurance coverage is required.
- 5. HOUSING:** The applicants' home must provide adequate space and living conditions necessary to promote the health and well-being of the family members. Ownership is not required.
- 6. WORKING PARENTS:** If both parents work outside the home, one parent should plan to remain at home with the child following placement. (The exact length of time can be discussed with your social worker. A general rule we suggest is six to eight weeks off, the allotted amount of maternity leave provided by most companies. FMLA standards cover this for adoptive parents.) This is to promote nurturing, bonding, and security for the child, while he/she assimilates into the home. When the parent returns to work, there must be a plan for responsible childcare so that the security of the child can be sustained.
- 7. NO PRIOR HISTORY OF FELONY CONVICTIONS:** Criminal background checks will be conducted for each adult member of the family. Any criminal history in your past should be addressed with your social worker prior to moving forward. All prior legal convictions should be disclosed with an agency representative before starting your home study.
- 8. MARRIAGE:** A husband and wife will be married at least three years prior to filing an application. APs must show evidence of health and stability in their marriage.
- 9. TRAINING:** The family will have sufficient training/education to meet the needs of a child(ren) from a hard place, including training through the home study process and a live two-day training.
- 10. BIRTH FAMILY MINISTRY:** Lifeline desires to work with families who see adoption as not only a ministry to the child, but also an opportunity to minister to the biological family. While some children who have experienced foster care may not have a relationship with their biological family, many of them still do. These connections are a critical part of their identity and need to be maintained if possible. Many children in foster care have strong attachments to their foster parents and these relationships need to be considered. The more a child is allowed to maintain healthy relationships with the people they consider to be primary attachment figures, the better they will adjust and attachments will be built.

11. FAITH: We ask families to affirm our [Statement of Faith](#). Families that begin this journey to adoption need a firm foundation in Christ; in who He is, in who He created them to be, and in caring for a fellow image bearer through adoption. Your faith will be the bedrock that carries you through this process and sustains you as you step into forever with your child.