

# COLOMBIA

Colombia is a stable and growing intercountry adoption program. The country of Colombia is child-focused and the government and institutions care deeply for children and work hard to provide the best care possible. Lifeline has been blessed with strong relationships benefiting adoption and orphan care ministry in Colombia.

## Adoption Requirements

- Adoptive parents must be 25 years or older
- Couples married at least 2 years or single women can adopt
- Colombia accepts families living internationally as expats on a case by case basis

## Children Coming Home

- 18 months and older, with moderate to significant special needs or children over 9 years with minor needs
- Sibling groups are common
- Typical medical needs can include:
  - larger sibling groups, older children, developmental & cognitive delays, Down syndrome, behavioral needs

## Travel

- 1 trip is required
- 3-5 weeks in country
- Lifeline's in-country team provides guide services in Colombia

*During your trip you will have a bonding period, court process and update visa paperwork for your child.*

## Matching Overview

- Families are eligible for matching once their dossier is approved by ICBF/IAPA
- Families can pursue children on the waiting child list or wait to be presented a file.
- Estimated timeline for the process is 1 to 3 years depending on the families openness to age, medical needs and sibling groups.



# Meet the Team



**Ferrah Poe, LBSW**

*Program Manager*

Ferrah Poe joined the Lifeline team in 2016 and leads our Latin America department. She graduated from The University of Alabama at Birmingham with her Bachelors of Social Work. Ferrah feels called to work with children and has a passion for Latin American culture. She is fluent in Spanish and enjoys using her gifts to help further the gospel.



**Amy Carolina Hulker, BSW**

*International Social Worker*

Amy Carolina is a Social Worker for the Latin America Adoption Team. She was born in Bogota, Colombia and her family immigrated to the United States in 2000. She graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Social Work from Auburn University in 2019 and spent the following years doing full-time ministry. Amy Carolina said she is "so excited to come alongside what God is already doing at Lifeline!"



**Alli Drummonds, LMSW**

*International Social Worker*

Alli joined Lifeline in August 2020 and is a social worker on the Latin America team. Alli graduated from Troy University with a BSW and a minor in Spanish in May 2019 and then again with her MSW in July 2020. "God has put such a big passion in my heart for vulnerable and orphaned children."



**Jordan Harris, LMSW**

*International Social Worker*

Jordan joined Lifeline in August of 2019. During her first year at Lifeline, she served as a social worker on Lifeline's China team. Since June 2020, she has been an International social worker serving families adopting from Colombia. Jordan received her Bachelor of Social Work degree from Auburn University in 2015, and her Master of Social Work from The University of Alabama in 2017.



**Casey White, BSW**

*International Program Adoption Specialist*

Casey joined Lifeline in July 2022 as the International Program Adoption Specialist on the Latin America team. Casey graduated from the University of Alabama at Birmingham with her BSW in 2020. She is happily married and has two children, Lynleigh and Jack. Casey said "I have always had a heart for adoption and I am so excited to live out my calling through this role at Lifeline."



**Sarah Willett**

*Administrative Assistant*

Sarah joined Lifeline in July 2020 as the Administrative Assistant for both the Latin America and the Global Care Initiative teams. Sarah earned her Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of Georgia in 2013. She later received her Master's from Liberty University in Teaching and Curriculum in Early Childhood in 2018.

Our representative in Colombia, **Soraya Diaz**, facilitates Lifeline's adoption program in Colombia. Lifeline has relationships with IAPAS in Colombia such as: FANA, La Casa, La Madre y El Nino, CRAN, Casita de Nicolas and Chiquitines and also advocates for children assigned from ICBF..



**Jana Lombardo**

Senior Program Director



**Karla Thrasher**

Director of  
International  
Adoption



# Process Timeline

## Application

The full application gathers in-depth information from families who wish to adopt from Colombia. Your application is reviewed by our Latin America team to affirm you are eligible for this program.

## Immigration

Throughout this 2 step approval process families will complete required paperwork and be fingerprinted for approval to adopt within certain parameters. Families then apply to immigrate a specific child to the US through adoption .

2 to 3 months

## Matching

Matching happens in Colombia after a family's dossier has been approved by ICBF/IAPA. After dossier approval families will either be matched with a child they previously submitted letter of intent for or wait to be directly match based on their openness to specific factors such as age, gender, and level of special need. Matching occurs directly from ICBF after a dossier is approved.

Current estimate is up to 24+ months after dossier approval waiting for a match

## Post Adoption

Lifeline continues to provide post-adoption support to families long-term. In addition to a family's social worker, Lifeline's Counseling Team and educational services are helpful resources for families. Post adoption reports are due to Colombia 6 , 12 , 18 and 24 months. Additional reports may be required if adopting older children or larger sibling groups. A Lifeline worker will also call to check-in periodically to provide resources and support.

## Home Study

During this part of the process, social workers and families will talk extensively about various aspects of a family's life such as finances, health, home life, capacity for care, and overall well-being. In addition, families will be part of specific training for how to parent children from trauma backgrounds.

3 to 4 months

## Dossier

When all of the information from the home study and immigration has been completed for the dossier, it will be sent to ICBF/IAPA for their official files and review. The Colombia dossier is compiled of about 25 items and is put together during the wait time for your Immigration Approval.

2 to 3 months

## Travel

During families' travel to Colombia, they will experience a bonding time with the child for the first 1-1 1/2 weeks. After the bonding period there will be a court process to FINALIZE YOUR ADOPTION! After the adoption decree is issued, families update the child's paperwork and await the child's US visa. There are opportunities for sight-seeing and cultural experiences during the stay and families are able to bring their entire immediate family to experience Colombia. Lifeline's in-country team will support the family, provide translation and guide services during the stay.

1 to 2 months after matching

# Chronological Fee Tool

Application Fee \$300  
due at the time of application

Agency Fee A \$3,562.50  
due upon program acceptance, 2 weeks  
after application

Agency Fee B \$3,562.50  
due at completion of home study,  
roughly 3 to 4 months after application

Agency Fee C \$3,562.50  
due at dossier submission, 6 to  
9 months after application

Agency Fee D \$3,562.50  
due prior to Trip 1, as early as 9  
months after application

Third Party Fees \$16,005.00  
due throughout the process including  
fees to US and Colombian governing  
bodies and in-country facilitation fees

Travel Fees \$9,700.00  
Estimated for two adults traveling to  
adopt one child. Expenses may vary  
based on time of year, preferences, and  
needs.



# Travel Details

## 3-5 week trip

Families will travel to Colombia for approximately three to five weeks to complete their adoption. The trip consists of a bonding period, court process, and visa paperwork.



## Bonding, Court, Visa

The first week and a half is considered bonding period where the child resides with the adopting family and they spend time getting to know one another. After this step families proceed to the court process and wait for their adoption decree to be finalized. After adoption decree is issued, travel documentation is updated to process the child's visa.



## While in-country

Lifeline's has an amazing in-country team who walks alongside families each step of the way and provides support during your stay in Colombia. Most of the teammates are bilingual and provide translation and guide services during your stay. Colombia is open to families traveling with current children in the home and our team helps to prepare your family if you choose to bring your children on the adoption trip.

