

# Qualifications for Adoptive Families

## **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 the child being adopted. APs should have the ability and desire to minister to their child's birth family.

## **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.

## **Age:**

The applicants should not be more than 50 years older than the adopted child.

## **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. Medical insurance coverage is required.

## **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.

## **Working Parents:**

If both parents work outside the home, one of the parents should be able to remain at home with the child for a reasonable amount of time following the placement. (The exact length of time can be discussed with a social worker at the time of the home study. A general rule we suggest is that one parent takes six to eight weeks, usually the allotted amount of maternity leave provided by most companies. FMLA standards require adoptive parents the same amount of leave.) This is to provide for the nurturing and security of the child, while he/she assimilates into the home. When the parent returns to work, there must be a plan for responsible child care so that the security of the child can be sustained.

## **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 the agency representative before starting your home study.

## **Marriage:**

A husband and wife should be married at least three years prior to filing an application. APs should show evidence of health and stability in their marriage.

## **Domestic Training:**

Have sufficient training/education to meet the needs of the child and ministry to the birth family. Attend Lifeline's Domestic Mini Conference in Birmingham, AL.

## **Birth Family Ministry:**

Lifeline desires to work with families who see this adoption as not only a ministry to the child, but also an opportunity to minister to the birth family and therefore willingly desire a relationship with the birth family. At a minimum we require AP's to send letters and pictures: 1<sup>st</sup> year- 4 times; every 6 months up to child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday; and annually from ages 5-13. Once a child is 13, it becomes the decision of the child/family if they feel comfortable continuing correspondence. We also require that AP's be willing to meet the birthparent(s) at their request prior to placement

## **Faith:**

We ask families to affirm to our [Statement of Faith](#)