

FAQS- the DR

1. How long has Lifeline been working in this country?
Since 2011
2. How are you matched or referred to a child in this country?
A family can be matched directly by the central authority office (CONANI) or through the waiting children's files issued by CONANI. This would only occur officially once a dossier was approved.
3. My spouse and I have not yet been married the length of time for the marriage requirement. Can we go ahead and begin the home study?
This time is set forth by the central authority. Although Lifeline cannot waive any of the requirements, if you have been married close to the requirements, we would encourage you to start your home study process. Your dossier cannot be submitted until you have reached the minimum for length of time married.
4. What if I or my spouse has heritage from this country and/or is a dual citizen? Would we get any special exceptions in the adoption process?
No, dual citizens will not receive special exceptions (for example: the adoptive children's ages/ needs or timelines of dossier review/ approval by central authority). Your family will be registered as an international family within CONANI due to the fact that you permanently reside abroad.
5. Is this country Hague or Non Hague?
Hague
6. What is the ethnicity of the children?
The ethnicities of children vary significantly from Dominican Republican, European, Haitian, or biracial descent.
7. Do children reside in foster homes or orphanages?
Children eligible for international adoption reside in CONANI-run orphanages typically. Foster care does not exist formally in the DR, but the government will soon be piloting this. Some children eligible for international adoption may reside in privately-run orphanages, too.
8. We would like to adopt a specific child (whether family member or someone we met once on a trip to the country). Is this possible?
This is only permitted by the central authority on a case by case basis. Families in this situation will need to consult with Lifeline staff and understand that there will be inherent risks until the adoption is finalized in country. In addition, all children to be adopted internationally must first be declared abandoned in this country.
9. How do families afford the adoption process or take time away from work for so long to finalize in country?
Lifeline seeks to be a resource and support to each family throughout the process. If finances are a concern, please speak to one of our intake workers or program points. Lifeline would encourage families to apply for grants/ scholarships and will be here to assist in any way possible. For the time in country, many families use vacation/sick time, FMLA leave, or work out an agreement with employers to work part time from "home" in the country.
10. Why is the in-country stay so long? How will we prepare and navigate our time in country?
This is due to the steps that are required in country to finalize the adoption. There is a required 8-10 weeks Cohabitation Period in which both parents must be present to bond and attach with their child. After this, there are other steps that each vary in time length that must be completed before being able to obtain the travel visa permitted by the US Embassy. We strongly encourage families to reside in the National District in Santo Domingo for at least the first 8-10 weeks. This is to ensure your case is processed in a familiar and quicker court. However, after this point, your family is able to reside wherever desired in the country. We work with families to locate housing, apartments, or hotels to rent while in country. Our in country team also helps assist in this and coordinates your in-country travel preparations. As for transportation, many people elect to utilize cabs or rent a car or van in country.