ADOPT-050 How to Adopt a Child in California

In California, there are several kinds of adoption. Learn about stepparent/domestic partner adoptions on page 1 and independent, agency, and international adoptions and adoption of an Indian child on page 2.

Stepparent/Domestic Partner Adoptions

If you want to adopt your stepchild or the child of your domestic partner, fill out and file the forms listed below. You can get them from the court clerk or from the California Courts Self-Help Center: ***www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp.***

1 Fill out court forms.

☐ ADOPT-200	*Adoption Request*	This tells the judge about you and the child you are adopting.
☐ ADOPT-210	*Adoption Agreement*	This tells the judge that you and the child, if over 12, agree to the adoption. Fill it out, but do not sign it until the judge asks you to sign it.
☐ ADOPT-215	*Adoption Order*	The judge signs this form if your adoption is approved.
☐ ICWA-010(A)	*Indian Child Inquiry Attachment*	This lets the judge know that you have asked whether the child may have Indian ancestry.
☐ ICWA-020	*Parental Notification of Indian Status*	This proves that the child's parents have been asked about Indian ancestry.

2 Take your forms to court.

Take the completed forms to the court clerk in the county where you live. The court will charge a filing fee. Or, take the forms to your lawyer or adoption agency, if you are using one.

3 The social worker writes a report.

In every adoption, a social worker writes a report. This report gives important information to the judge about the adopting parents and the child. The social worker will ask you questions. You may have to fill out forms. You may be required to pay a fee for this report. The social worker will file the report with the court and send you a copy. When you get the report, ask the clerk for a date for your adoption hearing.

4 Go to court on the date of your hearing.

Bring:

- ☐ The child you are adopting
- ☐ Form ADOPT-210
- ☐ Form ADOPT-215
- ☐ A camera, if you want a photo of you and your child with the judge
- ☐ Friends/relatives *(optional)*

American LegalNet, Inc.
www.FormsWorkFlow.com

Independent, Agency, or International Adoptions

If this is an independent, agency, or international adoption, fill out and file the forms below. You can get them from the court clerk or from the California Courts Self-Help Center: ***www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp.***

1 Fill out court forms.

☐ ADOPT-200	*Adoption Request*	This tells the judge about you and the child you are adopting.
☐ ADOPT-210	*Adoption Agreement*	This tells the judge that you and the child, if over 12, agree to the adoption. Fill it out, but do not sign it until the judge asks you to sign it.
☐ ADOPT-215	*Adoption Order*	The judge signs this form if your adoption is approved.
☐ ICWA-010(A)	*Indian Child Inquiry Attachment*	This lets the judge know that you have asked whether the child may have Indian ancestry.
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3 Go to court on the date of your hearing.

Bring:

- ☐ The child you are adopting
- ☐ Form ADOPT-210
- ☐ Form ADOPT-215
- ☐ Form ADOPT-230
- ☐ A camera, if you want a photo of you and your child with the judge
- ☐ Friends/relatives *(optional)*

4 Is this an "open" adoption?

If you want your child to have contact with his or her birth family, fill out ADOPT-310, which asks for an open adoption.

5 If you are adopting an Indian child

In addition to the forms listed in 1, fill out and bring:

- ☐ Form ADOPT-220 *Adoption of Indian Child*
- ☐ Form ADOPT-225 *Parent of Indian Child Agrees to End Parental Rights*

If you are adopting through a tribal customary adoption:

- ☐ Attach a copy of the tribal customary adoption order to *Adoption Request,* ADOPT-200
- ☐ Attach a copy of the tribal customary adoption order to the *Adoption Order,* ADOPT-215