

Annual Report
Children's Resource and Consultation Centre of Ontario
IAA Year end March 2013

The Organization

Executive Director: Michael Blugerman, M.S.W.

Executive Assistant: Carolyn Matthews

Bookkeeper: Anne Gordon

Staff: Sarah Kane, M.A.
Abigail Muere, B.A.

Board of Directors

President: Art Lupinacci

Secretary: Kate Hughes

Treasurer: Richard Blair

Agency Activities

Children's Resource and Consultation Centre of Ontario provides services in adoption related work. In this last year, the agency completed cases locally and internationally:

	Completed Adoptions	Average Cost
CFSA¹		
Ontario	3	\$11,075.63
Bangladesh		
Iran	2	\$10,605.50
Morocco	1	\$10,633.49
Pakistan	7	\$10,402.41
Sudan		
IAA²		
USA	7	\$13,097.12
U.K.	1	\$7,000.00

Please see the discussion on fees below. These fees listed above refer to our fees only.

¹ For CFSA year ended June 22, 2013

² For IAA year ended Sept. 19, 2013

Complaint Procedure

Adoption planning is an emotional and anxious making process. Children's Resource and Consultation Centre of Ontario will work to the best of its ability to help you achieve your adoption goals. If you feel that your interests are not being dealt with properly please follow the following steps to resolve the issue:

1) Send a letter by mail to the Executive Director of the agency outlining your concern and the issue that seems to be at impasse.

2) If the issue is not resolved at that level, please email the Board of Directors at **resolutions@ontarioadoptions.com**

3) You will receive a confirmation that your complaint has been received from the Board of Directors and you will receive information about the next step.

4) You will send a letter stating the issue, and your concerns. The letter will be signed and mailed to the agency office.

5) A board member will review your letter and cause an inquiry into the issue. A written response will be provided to you.

The agency will attempt to resolve the issue to the best of its ability. Failing resolution, you can direct your complaint to:

The Ministry of Children and Youth Services
Client Services Branch
Private and International Adoptions
101 Bloor Street West
6th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2Z7
(416) 327-1766 (416) 212-6799 fax

Fees:

Children's Resource and Consultation Centre of Ontario provides services under the Child and Family Services Act, R.S.O. 1990 and the Intercountry Adoption Act. In addition to fees charged by this agency, there will be fees that you need to take into account in the financial planning for your adoption. These fees may involve an approved adoption practitioner, legal fees and other fees for services in Ontario. In cases where a portion of the plan involves activity in another country, there may be fees there, for legal services and for disbursements covering birth certificates, passports or other documentation. There may be translation fees.

Children's Resource and Consultation Centre of Ontario works on a case basis and recognizing that each case is different, we will present you with a service agreement setting out the fee structure for the work

to be done in your particular case. Some of our work will be charged at an hourly rate and some will be charged at a flat fee quoted in advance.

Example: in a case where we act as licensee in an adoption finalized under the Child and Family Services Act, the fee range will be \$8,000 to \$20,000. There will be reasons why the gap between the low and high rate is so wide, but at the time of discussion about your particular case needs, we will try to provide information so that you can plan for the low, high or in the middle of the range.

Example: in a case where we act as licensee in an adoption finalized under the Intercountry Adoption Act, the fee range will be from \$3,000 to \$13,000. There will be reasons why the gap between the low and high range is so wide. At the time of discussion about your particular case needs, we will try to provide information that explains the costs of services to your individual adoption plan.

At the time of our case consultation, we will also try to assist you in determining the costs of work or expenses involved in the other country, in the event that you are planning an adoption involving the bringing of a child from another country.

Audited Financial Report

Children's Resource and Consultation Centre of Ontario is audited on an annual basis by a firm of Chartered Accountants. A copy of the financial statements is available on written request. Please send a stamped self-addressed envelope to our office with your request.

These questions apply to an adoption plan with the USA.

Can you describe the profile of a child who may be adopted from the USA?

There have been significant changes in law and practice with the implementation in the USA of their Intercountry Adoption Act in April 2008. Our experience at this time is that there may be a situation involving a hard to place child where the chances of the child being placed in an American home may be very low. A local court will have to consider a motion to declare the child available for an outgoing placement plan with a family from Canada. The cases that we have worked with so far, involve African American or Hispanic birth families.

How long does it take?

A prospective applicant must complete a SAFE homestudy assessment conducted by an adoption practitioner approved by the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services. The Ministry publishes a list of approved adoption practitioners [here](#)ⁱ. This usually takes between 2 and 3 months to accomplish. The prospective applicant must complete Parent Resources Information Development Education (P.R.I.D.E.) training (27 hours of training usually conducted on the weekends, full days Saturday and Sunday each weekend. There are alternate delivery models. Details can be found [here](#)ⁱⁱ: The P.R.I.D.E training must be completed within the time frame of completing the homestudy. The adoptive applicant needs to apply to this agency. This may take a week or ten days to accomplish. This agency will need to review and perfect the documentation of your file prior to submission to Ministry review. This may take a day to three weeks. The Ontario Ministry needs to review your file and provide the necessary letter regarding your suitability and eligibility to adopt. This can take 2 to 3 months.

There is an undetermined amount of time required where the applicant applies to an entity authorized in the USA to facilitate adoptions and where a birth parent chooses the prospective adoptive applicant.

The US authorized entity will provide a proposal of child once the child is born. It may take 3 to 10 days to complete the next step of reviewing the proposal, submitting a Notice to a Director (the Ministry of Children and Youth Services) and 5 to 10 days to receive the Decision of the Director concerning the proposed child.

There is a parallel process to the adoption plan involving Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The adoptive applicant has to apply to sponsor a child and then once the child is born, apply on the child's behalf for a permanent resident visa for the child to enter Canada and live here. The sponsorship process can take 3 weeks. The application for a visa (usually a temporary resident permit) can take anywhere from 3 weeks to 3 months to accomplish. Information provided on the Citizenship Immigration Canada website suggests that they can take a much longer time to process a visa application. Thankfully, our experience shows this to take a lot less time than what is posted.

There will be some sort of post-placement supervision and reporting to the US authorized entity as a condition of applying for an adoption finalization. Our experience so far has been about three or four months including two or three reports.

Once the final adoption order is available, and provided to the Canada Consulate General visa office in Buffalo New York, USA, you will receive a visa, be required to leave Canada, and re-enter with the child to accomplish a confirmation of residence. A permanent resident card will follow by mail in about a month. At that point, you may apply for Canadian Citizenship for the child – there is no 3 year waiting period. It may take 3 months to 10 months to receive this Citizenship. At that point the child can apply for a Canadian passport. This can take a week or three to accomplish.

The point of receiving a temporary resident permit to enter Canada is that it allows the child to be considered resident here for the purpose of school or for the receipt of an Ontario Health Card.

This is a long process.

How long will I be out of the country?

Each case will be unique to the state in the USA that is dealing with your application. You should plan to be away for 3 to 8 weeks until the child is cleared to live in Canada. Each state and sometimes the US authorized entity will need to provide clarification in the case of your particular adoption plan, about how soon after the birth of the child, that the child will come into your care and clarification about how long it will take to obtain a guardianship order from the local court, how long it will take to obtain a birth certificate and how long it will take to get a passport for the child. The US authorized entity will also clarify whether you can travel to another state while you are waiting for travel documents. There are issues that arise that impact on the length of time out of Canada and these will be discussed at the time of the initial consultation or during the case planning phase with this agency.

How much will it cost?

There will be two areas of cost: the work in Ontario and the work in the US state of the child's origin. Once we have set out the scope of work regarding your particular plan we will prepare and complete a service agreement setting out the fees and expenses clearly. The costs regarding work in the particular US state will be set out once the US authorized entity is chosen. There will be a large variance across states and in a particular case, depending on the particular birth parent case scenario. Each State has its own rules about how much can be charged and for what services. In considering an adoption from the

USA you should probably budget \$30,000 to \$50,000 for your adoption plan. The fees and expenses in a relative case or a non-compliant case will need to be sorted out in the early scope of work process.

These estimates do not include travel or accommodation costs.

Will There be Post placement requirements for reports or Post Adoption reports?

The most probable case will involve a finalization of your adoption several months after you are home with a child. The length of time of the reporting period and the number of visits and reports will vary from State to State and from US authorized entity to another. Once we firm up the scope of work for your particular adoption plan from a particular state we can set out these requirements and the costs associated with them. The typical pattern that we have encountered to date involved three visits and three reports over a period of three or four months. These reports are required by the state Court as part of the material that they will review at the time of the final adoption hearing. We have no experience where reports or visits are required once the adoption is finalized.

Why do I need to have a consultation first? Why can't I just send my file over with a completed application form?

This agency is not processing an application for a child who is in an orphanage, where a foreign based government authority or agent is making placement proposal decisions. Each case situation is unique in the characters and entities involved and the jurisdiction where the child will be born. There are the extra complexities of possible openness arrangements between birth parent(s) and the adoptive family. There are significant legal and financial risks involved. The emotional stakes are very high. The position of this agency is that an adoption plan involving a placement of a child from the USA is not programmatic and each case involves a unique plan depending on you, the applicant and the participants in the USA plan. The acceptance of your application by the US authorized entity and the selection of your profile from the other profiles that a birth parent may consider is completely out of our or your hands, will involve expense and may in fact never result in an adoption placement. Therefore, we do not feel that one can enter into such a plan without consultation about the risk factors and the unique case information and the information and education that should be in place before making a decision about this kind of adoption plan. In fact, depending on your particular interests, before we commit to working with you, we may require that you receive independent legal advice or advice from an immigration lawyer about the particular fact set of your plan.

Through this last program period, CRCC has been involved in one-outgoing case involving a relative (grandchild) who went to the USA to be adopted by their grandparents. This is the first of this kind of case that we have worked with.

CRCC has been monitoring Intercountry adoption issues and has noted that there is increasing sentiment internationally about the concerns of human trafficking. This shadow has cast over intercountry adoptions. As well nationalism and pride has impacted the notion of the need for children to leave their home country to live with an adoptive family abroad. This sentiment is true as between the USA and Canada. Both countries are usually 'receiving countries' under the Hague Convention. This means that the parts of the Convention that were meant to protect the rights of children in 'countries of origin' may not apply in the sense of intention or effectiveness in situations where both countries are receiving countries. For example, the impact on relative adoptions or family re-unifications involving family members who are not closely 'related' is hugely complicated and expensive. In some cases, these family adoption plans are made impossible with potentially tragic outcomes.

In this past program year we have worked on a case involving a public school aged niece in the USA coming to live with her aunt and uncle here, where her biological father had died suddenly and her biological mother was not able to care for her.

CRCC will continue to work on a case by case basis in Intercountry adoption and will continue to monitor international sentiment about adoptions worldwide.

Michael Blugerman, M.S.W.
Executive Director
July 2013

ⁱ <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/adoption/practitioners.aspx>

retrieved on March 14, 2012

ⁱⁱ <https://secure.adoptontario.ca/pride.main.aspx> retrieved on March 14, 2012