

Title: §96.49 PROVISION OF MEDICAL/SOCIAL INFORMATION IN INCOMING CASES

Policy: KidsFirst International Adoption, Inc. will provide its prospective adoptive families with any and all available medical and social information pertinent to the child two weeks prior to either the adoption or placement for adoption, or the date on which the prospective adoptive parent(s) travel to the other Convention country to complete all procedures in such country relating to the adoption or placement for adoption, whichever is earlier. At no time will KidsFirst withhold any medical information which the agency has knowledge of.

Purpose: In compliance with Regulation §96.49 and KidsFirst International Adoption, Inc. policy, the agency will provide as much medical and social information on the prospective adoptive child as possible two weeks before the placement of adoption or the formal adoption of the child. This will enable the prospective adoptive family to make an informed decision about the acceptance or the withdrawal of this child for consideration of adoption by the prospective adoptive parent(s).

Scope: The procedures outlined below will apply to every client/family who has engaged KidsFirst International Adoption, Inc. for child-placement services, whether they are adopting from a Convention country or a Non-Convention country.

Procedure:

1.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES

1.1 KidsFirst International Adoption, Inc. will, in accordance with the standard practices of the country of origin, obtain any or all readily-available medical and social information on the child from the proper authorities in the child's country of origin.

1.2 This information may be gathered through different sources, depending on the standard practices of the country, and may differ in content, format, and style from country to country. In some countries, the information may be compiled and issued to KidsFirst by the central authority or other governmental authorities of that country. In others, such information may be compiled and issued to KidsFirst by orphanage personnel or independent parties who are permitted to review and compile the medical information on the child. The Executive Director of KidsFirst will review and evaluate the information made available to assure that it is as concise and complete as possible.

1.3 This information will be, to the fullest extent possible, the original version in the native language, with a certified English translation, for review and consideration by prospective adoptive parent(s).

1.4 When the foreign government has referred a child to present to a family of KidsFirst, the Executive Director will gather the referral information and present it to the prospective

adoptive family. This may occur by email and through conversations in person or by phone.

- 1.5 The Executive Director will then follow up with a phone call to the prospective adoptive family to make sure the referral was received. All child referrals must be provided to the prospective adoptive family in writing (preferably by email). It is the Executive Director's responsibility to record all child referral information in the prospective adoptive family's file. The Executive Director must document every child referral with all information including the acceptance date. If the prospective adoptive family declines the child, information including the reason for the decline must also be documented.
- 1.6 The Executive Director will discuss the referral information concerns with the prospective adoptive family. KidsFirst will provide a copy of the child's medical records to the prospective adoptive family's as early as possible, but no later than two weeks before either the adoption or placement for adoption, or the date on which the prospective adoptive family's travel to the Convention country to complete all procedures in such country relating to the adoption or placement for adoption, whichever is earlier (in the case where the referral is not a blind or semi-blind referral in accordance with standard practices of that country).
- 1.7 Where any medical records provided pursuant to the above are a summary or compilation of other medical records, KidsFirst includes those underlying medical records if they are available. KidsFirst will also provide the prospective adoptive family with any untranslated medical reports as requested or videotapes (where allowable) or other reports and provides an opportunity for the prospective adoptive family to arrange for their own translation into a language other than English if needed. If further medical or other information is needed, KidsFirst will make a reasonable attempt to acquire the information.

2.0 Information Details

- 2.1 KidsFirst International Adoption, Inc. makes every reasonable effort to obtain any and all available medical information on a referred child from the proper authorities and/or this agency's appropriate representative in the child's country of origin. This information may include:
 - The date the child became available for adoption according to the Convention country's regulations
 - History of any significant illnesses, hospitalizations or surgeries
 - Growth and developmental status at the time of referral
 - Immunizations and medical tests performed on the child
 - Any medical or developmental concerns based on an overall evaluation of the child by the appropriate medical authorities.
- 2.2 If KidsFirst provides medical information, other than the information provided by public foreign authorities, to the prospective adoptive family from an examination by a

physician or from an observation of the child by someone who is not a physician, KidsFirst uses reasonable efforts to include the following:

- 1) The name and credentials of the physician who performed the examination or the individual who observed the child;
- 2) The date of the examination or observation; how the report's information was retained and verified; and if anyone directly responsible for the child's care has reviewed the report;
- 3) If the medical information includes references, descriptions, or observations made by any individual other than the physician who performed the examination or the individual who performed the observation, the identity of that individual, the individual's training, and information on what data and perceptions the individual used to draw his or her conclusions;
- 4) A review of hospitalizations, significant illnesses, and other significant medical events, and the reasons for them;
- 5) Information about the full range of any tests performed on the child, including tests addressing known risk factors in the child's country of origin; and
- 6) Current health information

2.3 KidsFirst International Adoption, Inc. itself uses reasonable efforts, or requests the Central Authority in the child's country of origin who is responsible for obtaining social information about the child on behalf of KidsFirst to use reasonable efforts, to obtain available information, including in particular:

- 1) Information about the child's birth family and prenatal history and cultural, racial, religious, ethnic, and linguistic background;
- 2) Information about all of the child's past and current placements prior to adoption, including, but not limited to any social work or court reports on the child and any information on who assumed custody and provided care for the child; and
- 3) Information about any birth siblings whose existence is known to KidsFirst, including information about such siblings' whereabouts.

2.4 Where any of the medical information cannot be obtained, the Executive Director documents in the adoption record the efforts made to obtain the information and why it was not obtainable. The Executive Director and international specialist continues to use reasonable efforts to secure those medical or social records that could not be obtained until the adoption is finalized.

2.5 KidsFirst ensures that any videotapes and photographs of the child are identified by the date on which the videotape or photograph was recorded or taken and that they were made in compliance with the laws in the country where recorded or taken.

2.6 KidsFirst does not withhold from or misrepresent to the prospective adoptive family any available medical, social, or other pertinent information concerning the child.

- 2.4 KidsFirst International Adoption, Inc. will disclose to the prospective parent(s) if the referral has been presented to another family prior to the current referral but does not identify the prior family, protecting the confidentiality and privacy of the adoption process.

3.0 Preparation of Prospective Adoptive Family to Receive Referral

- 3.1 The prospective parent(s) will be STRONGLY ENCOURAGED verbally by the Executive Director to only accept a referral after an international pediatrician or other international medical specialist has reviewed the medical information and reported their findings to the prospective parents. This is explained to the family at various stages of the adoption process:

At Inquiry: From the Executive Director's first meeting or comprehensive contact, families are informed of how the referral process works in each country. Typically this happens when they inquire about how the program works. During that conversation the referral process is explained in detail with examples of recent cases of referrals and timelines. This provides families with a realistic idea of what to expect as they continue further into the adoption process. At this time, the Executive Director also describes other referral situations and timelines to give them an idea of best and worst case scenarios and the lack of predictability in the process.

At Home Study: During the home study process, much time is spent discussing possible referrals, timelines, and situations in order to truly understand the family's expectations and openness to referrals of children with special needs or different ages than the family initially may have indicated. Aside from discussing family preferences and flexibilities, the home study preparer discusses again the referral process and answers family's questions about it.

At Referral: Once the Executive Director sends referral information to a family, she contacts the family by phone (or makes arrangements to make a telephone meeting). Time is set aside to walk the family through the entire process and what the next steps are. Families are encouraged to ask all questions and every referral document is reviewed carefully with the family.

4.0 Record Maintenance of Referral Information

- 4.1 KidsFirst International Adoption, Inc. maintains permanent records of all correspondence with the Executive Director and social work staff with regard to successful or unsuccessful attempts to gather any requested additional medical, developmental, or social information on a child referral.
- 4.2 Upon request, KidsFirst International Adoption, Inc. is able to provide limited information on the appropriate medical authorities reporting on the child. Depending on the regulations and agreements of individual countries, KidsFirst International Adoption,

Inc. will make reasonable requests to obtain additional medical information, and work cooperatively with the prospective adoptive parents and the officials in the child's country of origin to satisfy the medical authority reviewing the child/and or the child's medical information.

- 4.3 KidsFirst International Adoption, Inc. may provide prospective adoptive parent(s) with photographic materials identifying the child in consideration. The agency will maintain a checklist with dates of service to this end as a means of insuring that families have received proper updated information as requested or required. This information will be stored in the family's permanent file at KidsFirst International Adoption, Inc.
- 4.4 KidsFirst International Adoption, Inc. will not withhold or misrepresent medical, social, developmental or other pertinent information about the child.