

New Jersey's Adoption Law has changed What birth parents need to know ...

New Jersey's adoption law has changed. In the future, the names of all birth parents who gave a child to adoption in New Jersey will be available to adoptees unless the birth parents file with the State a form indicating that they do not want contact with the child.

Unfortunately, details on how birth parents should request continued privacy are not yet available from the State. As soon as that information is available, all Catholic Dioceses in New Jersey will post that information on diocesan websites. Here is what all birth parents should know.

For Adoptions finalized prior to August 1, 2015:

- Adoptees will be able to obtain an original birth certificate without involvement of the courts beginning on **January 1, 2017**.
- Birth parents have until **January 1, 2017** to file a request with the State of New Jersey indicating that they want *no contact* with the child they gave to adoption. If a birth parent files such a request, the State Registrar will redact the birth parent's name from any documents provided to adoptees. If they fail to file such a form – their identity will be revealed to the adoptee upon request.
- All birth parents who request redaction will be required to update medical history information every 10 years until the birth parent reaches the age of 40 and every five years thereafter.

For adoptions finalized after August 1, 2015:

- Long-form birth certificates will be available to adoptees *without* redaction of a birth parent's name.
- Birth parents, who give a child to adoption **after August 1, 2015**, will be able to file a form with the State indicating that they wish to have **no contact** with the adopted child or whether they are willing to have direct contact or contact through an intermediary. In all cases, in the future, birth parents will need to file with the State information about their medical history.

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