

POLICIES

Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area, Inc., is a private, non-profit agency whose child placement program was established in 1956. The agency is licensed to provide child placing services in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia

The purpose of Lutheran Social Services is "to provide professional social services that promote the well being of individuals, families and the community, to assist congregations in identifying and responding to community needs; to advocate for social justice, individual self-sufficiency and the inherent worth of each human being." We believe in the inherent dignity of the individual, the right to self-determination and the security of the family unit. Our policies are geared towards the client's needs. Services are offered in a non-discriminatory manner regardless of race, creed, religion, national origin, sex or handicapping conditions.

Lutheran Social Services provides services to all children available for adoptive placement. These may include children: of all racial and ethnic backgrounds; of all ages; with special needs or handicapping conditions. The children are domestic or foreign born.

Lutheran Social Services primarily serves prospective adoptive families within a fifty mile radius of the District of Columbia. Eligibility criteria in relation to age, marital status, sex, income or handicapping conditions may vary according to the needs of a specific child, or child placement source. All home studies will be conducted according to jurisdictional regulations in a professional and timely manner. Placement decisions for LSS domestic adoptions are geared towards the best interest of the child and are made by the staff with input from birth parents. Therefore, we cannot ensure an adoptive placement for every applicant.

We affirm the principle of confidentiality in all client relations. Exceptions include release of information mandated by local, state or federal law or authorized by the affected individual. Home studies will be released upon your request to other licensed child placing agencies, Interstate offices, U.S. Immigration Offices or Courts holding jurisdiction over an adoption, or other placement sources, as applicable.

Fees for independent or international adoptions are \$250 for the application fee and \$1,500 for a non-Hague or independent home study and \$1,700 for a Hague Country home study. There may be additional fees from the child placement source. Fees for home study reevaluation/updates range from \$400 - \$1,425. Fees for post placement services are \$350 per visit; \$1,050 for three visits in six months, and \$325(VA)-\$450(D.C.) for court reports. Fees paid to the agency are to cover the costs incurred by the agency in relation to the adoption program. Decisions about child placement are not related to individual fees paid and no contributions will be accepted or solicited from adoptive applicants or waiting approved families. Post adoption services are provided throughout the lifetime of an adopted child. If Lutheran Social Services cannot provide the service requested, every effort will be made to identify appropriate resource referrals.

If for any reason the adoption home study/services cannot be completed, payments already received will be refunded proportionate to the amount of service already rendered by the agency.