

Information about the advance notice in NSW

What is an Advance Notice?

This provision was introduced in September 1996 and allows for advance notice of two months in which the adoptive parents, an adopted person or a birth parent may prepare themselves before the release of identifying information and possible contact by a searcher. Current legislation is known as the Adoption Act (2000).

If you lodge an Advance Notice you will be informed in writing that a searcher has applied for the Supply Authority. Social and Medical information, i.e. information from medical or agency records, cannot be released during the period of the advance notice. One condition of the advance notice is that you can't make contact with the searcher without removing the advance notice first. No fee is charged for people wanting to use this provision.

An Advance Notice should not be seen as a message discouraging contact indefinitely. If you do not want contact at all you have the option of lodging a contact veto, See Information Sheets 16 and 17 Lodging a Contact Veto.

What are the benefits of lodging an Advance Notice?

While there are many potential gains to be made by contact, it's rarely a straightforward process. It's common for people to experience strong feelings around the time of contact for all sorts of reasons. You may be afraid that important existing relationships will be disrupted, or that a carefully guarded secret will be discovered. Or you may be aware that "life is never the same after contact" and need time to prepare.

If you are an adopted person, you may:

- want time to raise the issue with your adoptive parents
- not be ready for contact because of exams or you're getting married soon or some other reason
- want to state a preference for how contact is made, e.g., leave a correspondence address.

If you are an adoptive parent, you may:

- want time to tell your adopted son or daughter of their adoptive status if you haven't already told them
- want to prepare and support your adopted son or daughter before contact from birth relatives
- have a need to put off the added challenge of contact because your adopted son or daughter may be studying or the family may be dealing with a time of crisis.

If you are a birth parent you may:

- have kept the adoption a secret from family members and need time to tell them
- this may be especially difficult if you had more than one child who was adopted and the family is aware of only one
- want time to prepare yourself emotionally
- be dealing with another crisis such as an illness in the family
- want to leave a message stating a preference about how contact is to be made.

I would like to lodge a request for Advance Notice. How do I go about it?

For adoptees and adoptive parents, even though birth relatives are not able to apply for identifying information about adoptees until the 18th birthday of the adoptee, you can register an Advance Notice from the age of 17 years and six months. Doing this will ensure your wishes are recorded before a birth relative seeks information about you/your adopted child.

You will need to lodge a request for advance notice in person at one of the following services:

Post Adoption Resource Centre

Scarba House,
24a Ocean St, Bondi, NSW 2026

Community Services

Adoption Information Unit

4-6 Cavill Avenue
Ashfield NSW 2131
Ph: 1300 799 023

Catholic Care Adoption Services

8 Jacobs Street
Bankstown NSW 2200
Ph (02) 9793 7522

Anglicare Adoption Services

19a Gibbons Street
Telopea NSW 2117
Ph (02) 9890 6855

Community Service Centre of the Community Services (CS) in your local area

Please phone us if you wish to talk further about any issues raised in this information sheet.

Post Adoption Resource Centre
Locked Bag 6002
Hurstville NSW 1481
T 02 9504 6788
F 02 9570 2699
E parc@bensoc.org.au
www.bensoc.org.au