



FAQ

QUESTIONS WE'RE OFTEN ASKED



At Shorstein & Kelly, our board certified adoption attorneys, as well as our women advisors, get lots of questions from pregnant women considering adoption. The ones we hear most often are listed here as a general guide. Because adoption is so complex, please contact us for answers that apply to your specific case.



NOTE: The answers below reflect adoption law in Florida. If you live in another state, some of the answers may be different.

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 3821 Atlantic Boulevard Jacksonville, Florida 32207
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HOW MUCH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE CAN I RECEIVE?

You can receive financial assistance for actual living and medical expenses while you are pregnant and for as long as six weeks after the child is born. Reasonable living expenses may include:

- **Rent**
- **Utilities**
- **Basic telephone service**
- **Toiletries**
- **Necessary clothing**
- **Transportation**
- **Insurance**

You may also receive other expenses if the court decides they are necessary for your (or your unborn child's) health and well-being.



IS AN OPEN ADOPTION AVAILABLE?

Yes. You can decide what features you're looking for in the adoptive parents, and we'll provide information about families with similar qualities. If everyone agrees, you can speak with the adoptive parents by phone or meet them in person before making a final decision. You may also have free, open and unstructured communication with the adoptive parents both during your pregnancy and following placement—again, if everyone agrees.

If you choose a “semi-open” adoption, you'll be able to select, meet and exchange non-identifying information with adoptive parents before birth, but contact between you and the adoptive family will be limited after the child is placed.



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AM I REQUIRED TO SELECT AND MEET THE ADOPTIVE PARENTS?

No. If you choose a closed adoption, you can have very limited contact with the adoptive parents, or none at all. If you'd like help from our experienced, caring adoption counselors, we can arrange that too. Our counselors can select the adoptive parents for you or help guide you through the process. It all depends on your personal preference and comfort level. It's not unusual for some birth mothers to choose a closed adoption at first, and then change their minds after participating in counseling.



HOW MUCH CONTACT WILL I HAVE WITH THE BABY BEFORE PLACEMENT?

That's a very personal decision, and you're free to decide for yourself. You can "room in" with the baby at the hospital, or choose to have limited contact—or none at all. Whatever you decide, no one will judge you.

WHEN DO I SIGN THE FINAL CONSENT PAPERS?

Generally, you'll sign after the child is born and before you're discharged from the hospital. If you have a caesarian section, you won't be asked to sign until after your body is free of any narcotic pain medications. Once a Consent for Adoption is signed, it is binding and irrevocable (meaning you cannot change your mind).



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WHEN DO THE ADOPTIVE PARENTS RECEIVE THE BABY?

The adoptive parents receive the baby directly from the hospital. In fact, many birth mothers request that the adoptive mother be present in the delivery room so that the adoptive mom can start bonding with the baby from the moment of birth. That's your choice, and your wishes will be respected.

CAN I RECEIVE PHOTOS AND UPDATES AFTER THE BABY IS BORN?

Yes. We ask adoptive parents to provide our office with photos and updates for at least 18 years after the baby is born. We can forward these to you if you want. You and the adoptive parents may also share electronically through photo sharing and social networking sites.



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HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO ADOPT?

It costs nothing for a birth mother to place her child for adoption. All fees, costs, and expenses are paid by the adoptive parents. The amount varies widely. Birth mother expenses may include your medical care, counseling, living expenses, transportation and other items. In addition, adoptive parents have their own expenses, which typically include fees for a home study, adoption agency services, consultants, legal services, and travel costs.

