



38 Edge Hill Road • Waltham, MA 02451 • whfc.org

INDIA-SPECIFIC POLICIES ACKNOWLEDGMENT

As a child welfare agency, Wide Horizons For Children (WHFC) seeks to place children in need of adoptive homes regardless of circumstances of birth, gender, age, skin tone, or appearance. Our policies reflect this commitment and our obligation to comply with the provisions of the "Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption," to which both the U.S. and India are signatories. Compliance with these policies is critical in order for WHFC to continue to place orphaned and abandoned children from India. Accordingly, we ask our families (defined as the applicants, their relatives, friends, and any other agents) to understand our need for the following policies.

HOME STUDY CRITERIA:

WHFC will seek to refer a child based on the criteria set forth in the family's Home Study with regard to the age, gender, country of origin, and health status of the child.

Requested child criteria, including gender, must conform to WHFC's Policy Guidelines for Adoption. In addition, families adopting from India must be willing to accept a child regardless of skin complexion or tone.

CHILD REFERRALS:

Referrals will come from one of the Recognized Indian Placing Agencies only after the applicants dossier is sent to CARA (Central Adoption Resource Authority) in India. CARA will determine which Indian Placing Agency to send an applicant's dossier to based on where there are children in need. Families may specify in a dossier cover letter if they have a preference for the region in India or the Indian Placing Agency in India from where they prefer the child to be referred. However, CARA may not always honor this preference and families are encouraged to be open so that more children in underserved regions may be matched. If a family receives a referral from an Indian Placing Agency which was not indicated as a preference and the child still fits within Home Study Report criteria, the family will be expected to accept provided there are not any concerns noted by the applicants' pediatrician of choice. WHFC reserves the right not to honor the request for an Indian Placing Agency based on any concerns WHFC may have about the Indian Placing Agency and will inform the family of the same. Applicants may also specify in their dossier cover letter as to whether they are open to adopting a child above the age of 3 years, a sibling group, or if they are open to any specific special needs. Families open to older children, sibling groups, or children with special needs will likely be given priority by CARA. WHFC will not process referrals of children identified through private contacts or by Indian agencies identified directly by the adoptive parents.

WHFC will receive child referrals from CARA via the Indian Placing Agency and provide those referrals to the family. All referral information must come to the family through WHFC. Families may not influence the selection of the child that the Indian placing agency will refer to them. Families also agree not to call, email, or visit the India placing agency or CARA without the approval of the WHFC India Program.

Families acknowledge that referral information provided to WHFC may not be complete and critical information about the child may not have been provided to WHFC or even be known by the India placing agency. Families should expect that they might learn additional information about the child's health, age, and social history upon traveling to India or after arrival home.

Families are strongly encouraged to have the child's referral information reviewed by a pediatrician who is familiar with international adoption. WHFC will forward medical questions and requests from the family's pediatrician to the Indian placing agency. However, families must expect that responses may not be provided or that they may be provided only after a prolonged wait.

Families will execute and return the following documents together with WHFC's Placement Agreement (a sample of which was been provided to you with your application materials) upon referral acceptance:

- 3 General Powers of Attorney

(continued)

- Consent of Adoptive Parents (for Guardianship Cases only)
- Consent of Wife (for Hindu cases only)
- Undertaking by Relatives
- Undertaking by Parents
- Fee Sheet from India agency (may be provided at a later time)
- Original Child Study
- Physical exam
- Psychological Assessment Report (if relevant)
- Any other information required by the Indian agency

WHFC, at its sole discretion, may close the application of any family declining a referral for reasons other than medical or developmental concerns. WHFC will not accept appearance, skin complexion or tone as valid criteria for declining a referral.

CURRENT RISK OF NOT RECEIVING A REFERRAL:

WHFC advises that due to structural changes within India and applications/dossiers being sent through CARA first rather than to the Recognized Indian Placing Agencies, that the process may be highly unpredictable, that referral wait times may not be estimated, and that the family may NOT be guaranteed to receive a referral. For this reason families are highly encouraged to double apply to another country program or to have alternative adoption plans.

INDIA LEGAL PROCESS:

The India Placing Agency will designate an attorney to manage the court process in India. Families will not contact the attorney or the courts without permission of the WHFC India Program.

Families will not, under any circumstance, pay bribes or otherwise seek to unduly influence the adoption process.

POST-PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS:

Families agree to share new or additional information about the child's health and history with WHFC upon return to the U.S.

Families agree to provide WHFC with a copy of their child's legal documents and court papers upon return to the U.S.

Families agree to comply with post placement requirements of CARA and the Indian Court Order. CARA typically requires post-placements reports for 5 years. Families are required to have agency post placement reports written by their social worker after the first and the sixth month. Following these reports, parents are generally required to write quarterly reports until 2 years have lapsed, and then half-yearly reports for the following 3 years.

There may be some variation in the post-placement requirements specified by the Indian court order, depending upon the nature of the adoption (Hindu adoption vs. guardianship) and the region where the case is heard. Regardless, the family is still obligated to meet CARA's requirements, even should the Court waive post-placement reporting. This is required so that the family can meet its commitment to CARA, which is unaffected by the court order. The family must, however, also comply with any additional post-placement requirements the court may impose.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

I/We understand the information contained in this document and have had the opportunity to discuss any questions with the India Program Team. I/We agree to abide by these policies and realize that any violation could result in the closing of our application.

Applicant Signature

Date

Applicant Name (Printed)

Co-Applicant Signature

Date

Co-Applicant Name (Printed)