

## BENEFITS OF RELINQUISHMENT

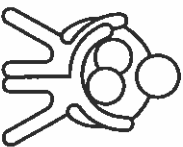
Voluntary relinquishment allows you to participate in adoptive planning and:

- offers an early exit from the court process
- allows your child to be placed in a permanent adoptive home more quickly
- allows for shared decision-making between you and DCFS
- may allow you to select the adopting parents and name them in the legal paperwork

## AFTER THE RELINQUISHMENT

After accepting the relinquishment, the adoptions social worker will:

- file it with California Department of Social Services (CDSS), either immediately, within 30 days, or after the rights of any other parents involved have been legally terminated. You have the right to choose the filing period option with which you are most comfortable.
- provide referrals to obtain help in dealing with any remaining emotional issues
- keep you informed about your child until the adoption is completed



Los Angeles County

Department of

Children and Family Services

Adoptions Division

695 S. Vermont Avenue

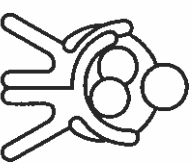
Los Angeles, CA 90005

1 (888) 811-1121

**Voluntary  
Relinquishment:**

**Considering  
Adoption for  
Your Child**

Los Angeles County  
Department of Children  
and Family Services



The law requires that you be advised of your option to relinquish your child for adoption and to participate in adoption planning. You have the right to have an attorney represent you in the dependency proceedings. Your attorney can advise you on the relinquishment process or in regaining custody of your child.

## **WHAT IS ADOPTION?**

Adoption is the permanent, legal transfer of parental rights and responsibilities from birth parents to adoptive parents. The Department of Children and Family Services' (DCFS) Adoptions Division can place children in adoption after your parental rights are involuntarily terminated by court action or after you voluntarily relinquish your parental rights.

## **WHAT IS RELINQUISHMENT?**

Relinquishment is the process by which you voluntarily surrender custody, control and all legal responsibility for the care and support of your child to DCFS for the purpose of adoption.

## **WHAT IS A DESIGNATED RELINQUISHMENT?**

A designated relinquishment is when you choose the person(s) whom you wish to adopt your child and list this person or persons on a relinquishment form provided by the adoptions social worker. DCFS or another licensed adoption agency must study and approve the person(s) you have chosen before your child can be adopted by this family. If the person(s) you have chosen cannot be approved or are unable to adopt your child, you will be told and given the opportunity to withdraw your relinquishment. You may choose to sign a new relinquishment or designated relinquishment.

If you do not designate someone to adopt your child, DCFS will search for the best possible family for your child. This will be a family who has already been studied and approved to adopt by DCFS or another licensed adoption agency. Although you may discuss the type of adoptive family you think would be best for your child with the adoptions social worker, federal law prohibits consideration of race, color or national origin when choosing a prospective adoptive family for a child except when extraordinary child-specific circumstances warrant such consideration.

## **SERVICES FOR BIRTH PARENTS**

The DCFS Adoptions Division has experienced social workers who will meet privately with you to discuss what should be considered for you and your child.

The discussion may include:

- **your wishes and all available options**
- **the child's needs**
- **how adoption works**
- **your feelings about voluntarily relinquishing your parental rights**
- **the availability of a Kinship Adoption Agreement when a relative is adopting**

The adoptions social worker will also obtain your family history and medical information to enable the adopting parents to meet the child's needs.

Prior to accepting your relinquishment, the adoptions social worker will conduct two separate interviews to ensure the relinquishment process is thoroughly explained. At the first interview, the social worker will provide a copy of the relinquishment documents for you to take and review.