

**PLEASE READ** if you are adopting from **BURUNDI, CHINA, COLOMBIA, PHILLIPINES** or any other Hague country:

Attached you will find instructions for filing your initial CIS application, entitled “**I-800A: Application for Determination of Suitability to Adopt a Child from a Convention Country.**” The following instructions only apply to families adopting from countries that are a party to The Hague Adoption Convention, a treaty designed to protect children, birthparents and prospective adoptive parent(s), and establish internationally agreed upon rules and procedures for adoptions. Please note: you will not need to complete your I-800A application until you have met and discussed this with your Social Worker and your Home Study is in its final stages, however you may want to start gathering the necessary documents now.

**If you are not adopting from one of the countries listed above, STOP—these instructions do not apply (additional CIS instructions applicable for non-Hague compliant countries have been provided in this packet).**

*Please be aware, these instructions only apply to full service adoptions through Wide Horizons For Children. If you are pursuing a Parent Initiated adoption (using a different placing agency), you must discuss whether or not the country you are adopting from is a party to the Hague Convention to determine which CIS application you will need to file.*

**Contact your WHFC Adoption Coordinator for all questions pertaining to the I800A process.**

## **FILING PROCEDURES FOR IMMIGRATION**

**Please read these instructions thoroughly.**

In order to adopt a child internationally, applications need to be submitted to CIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service under the Department of Homeland Security) which allows U.S. citizens to bring an internationally adopted child into the U.S.

**The preliminary application, “I-800A: Application for Determination of Suitability to Adopt a Child from a Convention Country, is filed after the home study is complete** and allows adoptive parents to be approved for the purpose of international adoption from countries that are a party to the Hague Treaty.

Please be advised that your I-800A approval and fingerprints are only valid for 15 months and you will need to file additional Immigration documents to renew them. Please see instructions for Form I-800A: Supplement 3 provided in this packet.

Once a child has been identified, a more specific application will be required prior to travel. This is referred to as the I-800 application. Further instructions regarding the I-800 will be provided by WHFC once you have accepted the referral of a child.

**To begin the process:**

You may obtain the form, free of charge, by either calling **(800) 870-FORM** (3676), by visiting the CIS website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

Request the following form:

**“I-800A: Application for Determination of Suitability to Adopt a Child from a Convention Country”**

**How the I-800A application process works:**

- Applicants submit a completed I-800A application packet to:

**Wide Horizons For Children, Inc.  
(ATTN: Adoption Coordinator's name)  
391 Totten Pond Road, Suite 303  
Waltham, MA 02451**

- Adoption Coordinator attaches a copy of your home study report to your application and sends the complete packet to the National Benefits Center (NBC)-The NBC is the specialized unit within CIS that processes all Hague applications
- The National Benefits Center will be responsible for sending you a fingerprint appointment notice and subsequently approving your case

## DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO FILE THE I-800A:

**You will need to submit the following with your I-800A application:**

- Fee (details below)
  - I-800A Supplement 1 (if applicable)
  - I-800A Supplement 2
  - Copies of birth certificate(s) for adoptive applicant (s) only, or copies of valid US Passports
  - Copy of marriage certificate (if applicable)
  - Copy(ies) of divorce decree(s) for each spouse (if applicable)
  - Copy(ies) of death certificate(s) for former spouse(s) (if applicable)
  - Original arrest documents (if applicable) – see instructions provided in WHFC’s Application Packet B
- **Fee: USCIS accepts credit card payments. The credit card authorization form, (G-1450 ), can be downloaded here: <https://www.uscis.gov/g-1450>. Complete and attach to your I800A application. USCIS will destroy this form immediately after processing payment.**

OR

- **Fee: A check made payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (CIS accepts personal checks)**

-Current fee amounts are:

**\$775 – application fee**

**\$85 – per person for fingerprinting** (adults in the home over 18)

-One check for the total amount is acceptable. All adults living in the home, who will be 18 years or older at the time the I-800A is approved, must be fingerprinted.

### All Forms:

Certificates should be the civil record from the town in which the birth, marriage, etc. was registered. Marriage certificates filled out by the person who performed the ceremony are not acceptable. Birth certificates filled out by the hospital are also not acceptable.

**Foreign documents must be accompanied by a translation into English which the translator has certified as complete and accurate and by the translator's certification that he or she is competent to translate from the foreign language into English.**

**None of these documents need to be notarized**

- Birth certificates that include your parents' names. If you cannot obtain a birth certificate, you may submit a photocopy of your **unexpired** U.S. passport as evidence of birth or certificate of naturalization as evidence of birth.
- If you have changed your name legally, submit a court record as documentation of that change (if your last name has changed due to marriage, your marriage certificate will serve as proof of your legal name change). Please be aware that if you use a name different than the name on your birth certificate, for example you fill out documents using your middle name as your first name, but never legally changed your name, CIS might request that you clarify the discrepancy in your paperwork. Clarification may require filling out a new application or legally changing your name.
- Copies of U.S. citizenship papers are **required** if the primary petitioner or spouse is a naturalized citizen. If spouse is not a U.S. citizen, include a copy of the front and back of his/her permanent resident card.
- Marriage Certificate: Note: If you had a marriage annulled and your new marriage certificate does not include the annulled marriage in the amount of times you have been married, CIS might request an amended copy.
- Divorce Decree(s) must be the final divorce decree indicating the date the divorce **became** (not becomes) final.
- If you have had a history with DSS, domestic violence or a substance abuse problem (even if you were never arrested), CIS may require additional documentation to support "appropriate rehabilitation." If this applies to you please speak to your social worker.

**All documents should be photocopies *except* for arrest documents,  
CIS will require originals**

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING I-800A APPLICATION:**

**Please read instructions carefully!**

**Type or print in black ink.**

**Part 1. Information About You (person filing this application)**

1. The person filing the application is the “Primary Petitioner”

The Primary Petitioner: must be:

1. A U.S. citizen.
2. The person traveling to the child’s country of origin if only one spouse is traveling, **and/or**
3. The primary wage earner, if both parents are traveling.

If this is the first document you are submitting to CIS on this adoption you will not have a USCIS number, write n/a in that space and & fill in your U.S. Social Security Number.

2. Write in the country you wish to adopt from. Note: If you are not adopting from India, the Philippines, China, Costa Rica, Burundi or Colombia **STOP**. You should not be filling out this form; you should be filing out an I-600A instead. If you are using an agency other than WHFC for placement, please contact that agency to determine which form you should use.

Items 3-6: provide information requested.

Item 7: provide information requested. If you answer “yes” please contact your social worker.

Items 8 and 9: provide information requested.

10. If you answered “Yes” to any question, please refer to WHFC’s packet B for arrest documentation requirements: For Applicants (includes adult household members) with an Arrest History

**Part 2. Information About Your Spouse (if You are Married)**

Items 1-6: provide information requested.

Item 7: provide information requested. If you answer “yes” please contact your social worker.

8. If you answered “Yes” to any question, please refer to WHFC’s packet B for arrest documentation requirements: For Applicants (includes adult household members) with an Arrest History

### **Part 3. General Information**

1. Select “Is attached to this application.” You will be sending your I-800A application to your CIS Coordinator at WHFC who will attach the home study and submit both to CIS on your behalf.

2. If you are a Full Service Client check “b”.

If you are a Parent Initiated client (using another agency for placement ) check “a”.

In either case write in:

Wide Horizons For Children, Inc.  
391 Totten Pond Road, Suite 303  
Waltham, MA 02451 USA

Point of Contact: Leave this blank-*your Adoption Coordinator will complete this for you*

3. Write: “All Pre-adoptive state requirements have been met. Please refer to the attached home study for details”

4. **If** you are adopting from Burundi, Colombia, China, select "a"

**If** you are adopting from the Philippines select "b"

(Note: it is recommended that, regardless from what country you adopt, you finalize the adoption in the U.S.)

5. This applies to this adoption and does not include future adoptions.

If you check “No” you will be limited to one child for this adoption.

If you check “Yes” and indicate “2”, you will be able to adopt one or two children. If there is any possibility that you may adopt a sibling group you should check “Yes” and indicate “2”.

NOTE: This answer must match your child approval in home study

6 and 7: provide information requested.

8. List all of your children, under 18 years of age, whether in your home or not. Also, list any child, under 18 years of age, in your home whether or not you are related.

### **Part 4. Certification and Signature of You, the Prospective Adoptive Parent(s)**

Primary Applicant and Spouse must sign and date. Under no conditions may you sign for each other, even if you are legally authorized to do so.

**Part 5. Signature of Person Preparing Form if Other Than Above**

In almost all cases you will write “n/a” in this section unless you are having an attorney or other legal representative complete the I-800A for you.

**FORM I-800A, SUPPLEMENT 1:  
LISTING OF ADULT MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD**

NOTICE: You must complete the entire I-800A, Supplement 1 for every adult member of your household other than the Primary Petitioner and Spouse.

**Part 1. Information About an Adult Member of the Household**

1. Fill in the information as it relates to this adult member of the household.
2. If you answered “Yes” to any question, please see attached instructions: For Applicants (includes adult household members) with an Arrest History

**Part 2. Signature of You, the Prospective Adoptive Parent (Applicant) and Signature and Certification of the Adult Member of the Household.**

The primary petitioner should sign and date and fill in the information requested.

Under Certification of the adult member of the household: The adult member of the household should sign and date and provide phone number and email (if any).

**FORM I-800A, SUPPLEMENT 2:  
CONSENT TO DISCLOSE INFORMATION**

All applicants must fill out this form so that we may liaison with CIS on your behalf. Please fill in the following information:

Wide Horizons For Children, Inc.  
391 Totten Pond Road, Suite 303  
Waltham, MA 02451 USA  
Daytime Phone is 781-894-5330 (main office)  
Fax Number is 781-899-2769  
WHFC CIS Contact: Leave this blank-your Adoption  
Coordinator will complete this for you



The primary applicant and spouse must sign and print names along with date at the bottom.

**FORM I-800A, SUPPLEMENT 3:  
REQUEST FOR ACTION ON APPROVED FORM I-800A**

You do not need to fill out this form at this time. You will need to fill out this form only if you are making changes or extending an already approved I-800A.

**NOTICE OF FAVORABLE DETERMINATION:**

*(may also be referred to as an I-800A approval, I-171H, and/or I-797C)*

Once your complete I-800A application (including the home study) has been reviewed and approved by CIS, and your fingerprints have been processed by the FBI, your I-800A approval will be issued. CIS will send you an approval notice, entitled "Notice of Favorable Determination." Please notify your Adoption Coordinator when received.

Your approval will also be sent to the National Visa Center (NVC) located in Portsmouth, NH. The National Visa Center will then cable your approval to the appropriate embassy/consulate in the country from which you are adopting. Once you receive your Favorable Determination, please make sure all of the information listed is correct. If an error has been made on your approval, please contact your Adoption Coordinator immediately for further instructions.

I-800A applications for those applicants born outside of the United States (including other adults that may be living in the applicant's home) and applicants with arrest histories, may take longer than average to be approved. In these cases CIS is required to do additional background checks which happen independently (outside of their office) and thus are out of their control. These delays are typically not significant.

**Upon receipt of your approval, it is important to make note of the expiration date.**

I-800A approvals are valid for 15 months, and fingerprints are valid for 15 months. Wide Horizons typically contacts prospective adoptive applicants 3-4 months prior to their I-800A expiration date. Though Wide Horizons will certainly be available for guidance throughout the update process, **it is ultimately the**

**responsibility of applicants to keep their CIS approval valid. All correspondence regarding CIS updates will be via e-mail.** Please be sure that we have your correct e-mail address on file.