



I600A Instructions

PLEASE READ if you are adopting from **KOREA** (or any Non-Hague country)

Attached you will find instructions for filing your initial CIS application, entitled —**I-600A: Application for Advance Process of Orphan Petition**. The following instructions only apply to families adopting from non-Hague compliant countries.

Your WHFC contact for CIS I600A questions:

**Christina Cetrone, Adoption Coordinator
Wide Horizons For Children, Inc.
391 Totten Pond Rd., Suite 303, Waltham, MA 02451
Direct line: (781) 419-0314**

FILING PROCEDURES: Please read 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.

All children adopted internationally need to be determined to be orphans by CIS laws and definition.

The preliminary application (I-600A) is filed early in a family's process and allows adoptive parents to be approved for the purpose of international adoption.

A later step, the filing of the orphan petition (I-600), is completed when the adoptive parents travel to adopt the child(ren) (for most countries) or in the months prior to travel (Korea). Further instructions regarding the I-600 will be provided by program staff later in the adoption process.

TO BEGIN THE PROCESS:

You may obtain the form, free of charge, by visiting the CIS website at www.uscis.gov. Click FORMS and then scroll down to I600A.

Request the following form:

I-600A – “Application for Advance Processing Of Orphan Petition”

HOW THE I600A APPLICATION PROCESS WORKS:

- Applicants submit a completed I-600A application packet to the CIS lockbox address provided at www.uscis.gov (click FORMS and then I600A for address). Please be sure to have a current form at the time of filing. The lockbox serves as a clearinghouse for all incoming applications and will process all payments. Once the application is accepted, it will then be forwarded on to The National Benefits Center, (NBC), for processing. (*please see details below for packet contents*)
- Your home study should be submitted **with** the I600A packet. The NBC will mail fingerprint appointment letters to applicant(s) directly, usually 3-4 weeks after receipt of your complete I-600A application.
- An approval is sent to the family after the NBC has reviewed the complete file, including the home study and the fingerprint results. Estimated time frame from receipt of complete application to approval is 6-8 weeks.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO FILE THE I-600A:

You will need to submit the following with your I-600A application:

- 1) I600A form completed and signed
- 2) Two statements (see below)
- 3) Photocopy of birth certificate(s) for adoptive applicant(s) only
- 4) Photocopy of marriage certificate (if applicable)
- 5) Photocopy of final divorce decree(s) if applicable
- 6) Photocopy of death certificate of former spouse (if applicable)
- 7) Original arrest documents (if applicable)
- 8) Home study (original, notarized)
- 9) WHFC Home Study Approval Letter (be sure to contact Admin Coord. for this)
- 10) Supplement 1 forms for additional adults living in your home age 18 and older.
(if applicable)
- 11) Fee – see below for further details

Item 2: Two Statements

1. I, _____, primary petitioner for the enclosed I-600A, hereby certify that the enclosed certificates and documents are true and exact copies of the originals. I agree to provide originals of same for your inspection. (sign and date)

2. I, _____, primary petitioner for the enclosed I-600A, hereby request that my home study and placement agency (name both agencies) be able to receive information about my I600A application.

These must have your original signature and date.

These need to be written only by the primary petitioner.

These may be on the same sheet of paper.

Items 3-6: Certificates (additional details)

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 translated into English by an actual translation service (i.e., not a friend who happens to be able to translate).

We recommend that copies of documents are sent, not originals or certified copies.

Birth certificates should 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.

Items 7: Arrest documents

Please speak with your home study social worker regarding required information. CIS will need an original disposition from the court and a letter from the applicant explaining the circumstances and resolution.

If you have had a history with Child Protective Services, or substance abuse, (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.

Item 8: Home Study – Original Notarized

Item 9: Fee

- **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 I600A application. USCIS will destroy this form immediately after processing payment.**

OR

- **Personal checks are accepted**

Current fee amounts are:

\$775 – application fee

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

Check made payable to **U.S. Department of Homeland Security**.

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-600A is approved, must be fingerprinted.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE I-600A APPLICATION:
(These instructions pertain to a Korean adoption)**

The "Primary Petitioner" must be:

1. A U.S. citizen
- Part 1. Information about you – please complete
 - Part 2. Information about your home study preparer and adoption service provider
 - Question 1 – check box "A"
 - Question 2 – check box "B"
 - Question 3A. Wide Horizons For Children, Inc.
 - Question 3B. Point of Contact at agency is Christina Cetrone, 391 Totten Pond Road, Suite 303, Waltham, MA 02451.
 - Daytime Phone – 781-419-0314, FAX- 781-899-2769, EMAIL – ccetrone@whfc.org
 - Part 3. General Information
 - Question 1 – yes
 - Question 2A – unknown and unknown
 - Question 2B – City – Seoul, Province – leave blank, Country – South Korea
 - Question 3 – yes
 - Question 4 – pre-adopt requirements have been met in the state of " ". See enclosed homestudy."
 - Question 5 – South Korea
 - Question 6A – leave blank
 - Question 6B – Seoul, South Korea
 - Question 7 - answer yes or no. Your answer must match the child recommendation you have been approved for in your home study.
 - Part 4. Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities or Impairments
 - Question 1 – no
 - Proceed to part 5
 - Part 5.
 - Question 1.A. check box and proceed to next page, (page 8).
 - Primary petitioner will acknowledge, sign and date on this page and provide Contact info.
 - Part 6. Applicant's Duty of Disclosure – primary applicant signs and dates
 - Part 7. Spouse completes – continues to page 10. Complete as primary petitioner did.
 - Pages 11 and 12. Leave blank but please submit with completed application

Mail your completed I600A application, home study and documentations to:

Courier packages only, regular mail is NOT accepted

USCIS
ATTN: Adoptions
2501 S. State Hwy., 121 Business
Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- Within a few weeks of mailing your application, you will receive a receipt notice. Please retain this for your files and note the number assigned your application. If you want to receive an E-notification please complete this form and attach it to your application packet when mailing to USCIS. (G-1145) can be found where you downloaded the I600A form.
- Shortly thereafter, the NBC will either request additional information (via a form called an RFE) or send notice of your fingerprinting appointment. The appointment letter will list each person to be fingerprinted and indicate the **date and time** you are required to go to the CIS support location local to you. Each person must have the letter of appointment (or a copy) with them. If you are unable to make the appointment given, please follow the instructions on the notice to request a new appointment. ***CIS requests that children under the age of 18 do not accompany you to this appointment.**
- If the person having prints taken is not the primary petitioner or spouse, he/she should tell the person taking prints the name of the primary petitioner with whom they live so that their prints are filed with the correct applicant(s).

NOTICE OF FAVORABLE DETERMINATION:

(may also be referred to as an I-600A approval, I-171H, and/or I-797C)

Once your complete I-600A application (including the home study) has been reviewed and approved by the NBC, and your fingerprints have been processed by the FBI, your I-600A approval will be issued. CIS will send you a letter entitled "Notice of Favorable Determination."**PLEASE SEND WHFC A PHOTOCOPY.**

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

embassy/consulate in the country you are adopting from. Once you receive your Favorable Determination, **please make sure your approval has been cabled to the correct embassy or retained.**

Please be aware that I-600As 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-600A approvals are valid for 18 months, and fingerprints are valid for 15 months. Wide Horizons typically contacts prospective adoptive applicants 3-4 months prior to their I-600A 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.

I600A EXTENSIONS, HOME STUDY UPDATES AND ADDENDUMS:

Please contact your home study agency or Adoption Coordinator at WHFC prior to filing Home study updates, Addendums, or Extensions with CIS for the most current information on where to file.

All questions regarding the USCIS I600A process should be directed to:

Christina Cetrone, Adoption Coordinator

ccetrone@whfc.org

781-419-0314