Hands Across The Water
International Adoption Information Packet

*Children in photographs are not available for adoption

734-477-0135 www.hatw.org 781 Avis Dr. Suite 200
734-477-0213 (fax) info@hatw.org Ann Arbor, MI 48108
HELLO!

Thank you for your interest in Hands Across The Water. We look forward to the opportunity of working with you. Enclosed you will find information about our International Adoption services and programs.

Hands Across The Water is a non-profit, Hague-accredited, licensed child-placing agency in the State of Michigan. We are the only adoption agency in Washtenaw County that specializes in international adoption and services. Hands Across The Water is comprised of professionals who have been touched by adoption in some way. Our professional experience in the field of adoption is greatly enhanced by our personal adoption experience. Our purpose and goal is to help build and support families through adoption and education.

While browsing through the enclosed materials, you will notice Hands Across The Water could serve as your international placement agency, that is the agency that works directly with the foreign country, or we could provide you with home study and post adoption services necessary if you are working with another agency’s international program. (We have established collaborating relationships with a number of agencies throughout the US if you would like to discuss their programs.) We can also serve as both your home study and placement agency. We can also assist you if doing an independent international adoption (acting on your own behalf) or are adopting a relative from another country. Hands Across The Water is Hague Accredited so we can assist you with an adoption from a Hague or non-Hague country.

The Hands Across The Water education programs are designed to provide adoptive parents with as much information before and after they adopt. All families are welcome to attend our workshops, regardless of which agency you are working with.

If you are interested in learning more about the services and programs provided by Hands Across The Water, you may want to attend an information meeting. Enclosed is a schedule of upcoming dates. You can also find these dates online on our website, www.hatw.org

If you are interested in working with Hands Across The Water, you should submit an application. Once we receive and review the required documentation back from you, a social worker will contact you to arrange your first appointment.

If you are unclear which adoption path you should take, I would be happy to meet with you, one-on-one, for a free consultation to help you sort out your options.

Please call if you have any questions about our agency, our programs, adoption options, or to reserve your place at an information meeting.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Nelson, LMSW, ACSW
Agency Director

734-477-0135  www.hatw.org  781 Avis Dr. Suite 200
734-477-0213 (fax) info@hatw.org  Ann Arbor, MI 48108
BULGARIA

WHO CAN ADOPT FROM BULGARIA?
- HETEROSEXUAL COUPLES MARRIED AT LEAST 1 YEAR
- HETEROSEXUAL SINGLE WOMEN
- APPLICANTS MUST BE AT LEAST 15 YEARS OLDER THAN CHILD
- OTHER CHILDREN IN THE HOME ALLOWED

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN?
- BOYS AND GIRLS ARE AVAILABLE
- 12 MONTHS-15 YEARS
- SIBLING GROUPS AVAILABLE
- NEEDS MAY VARY

WAIT TIME
- THE CURRENT WAIT TIME VARIES ON DESIRED AGE, GENDER AND NEED
- 12-24 MONTHS FOR MATCH
- UP TO 3 YEARS FOR HEALTHY 0-3 YEAR OLD
- YOU WILL TRAVEL WITHIN 1-2 MONTHS AFTER ACCEPTING YOUR MATCH

TRAVEL INFORMATION
- TWO TRIPS; FIRST TRIP IS ONE WEEK AND SECOND TRIP IS 6-10 DAYS (APPROX.) WITH 4-6 MONTHS IN BETWEEN
- ONLY ONE PARENT NEEDS TO TRAVEL ON EITHER TRIP
- YOU WILL BE ESCORTED BY AN ENGLISH-SPEAKING REPRESENTATIVE FROM FAMILY NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
- LOCATION OF STAY WILL VARY DEPENDING ON WHERE YOUR CHILD IS LOCATED.

BULGARIA AT A GLANCE
- ROUGHLY THE SIZE OF TENNESSEE
- 7,167,998 POPULATION
- OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: BULGARIAN
- RELIGION: EASTERN ORTHODOX (59.4%) & MUSLIM (7.8%)
- ETHNICITIES: BULGARIAN (76.9%), TURKISH (8%), ROMA (4.4%)
- GOVERNMENT: PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY
### HATW Bulgaria Adoption Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fee or Expense</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>When Paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HATW Fees</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Fee</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>with application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Study*</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
<td>before home study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HATW Program Fee</td>
<td>$5,700 (additional $2,000 for 2nd child)</td>
<td>prior dossier preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HATW Humanitarian Aid Fund</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>before home study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dossier Review/Approval Fee</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>prior dossier submission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordination Fee (Hague/Program Only)**</td>
<td>$1500.00</td>
<td>with program fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bulgaria Program Fees- These costs are approximate and/or subject to change</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Program Fee</td>
<td>8,000 euro</td>
<td>Increments due with dossier and after match</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orphanage Donation</td>
<td>Goods purchased in Bulgaria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dossier document MI seal</td>
<td>$15 ($1/document)</td>
<td>Dossier preparation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-Adoption Reports*</td>
<td>$1200.00</td>
<td>Prior to dossier preparation</td>
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<td>Post-Adoption Reports Translations</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Country Stay</td>
<td>$1600</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel to Bulgaria</td>
<td>$1,125/person</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Airfare</td>
<td>$450</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Costs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>US Passport</td>
<td>$110/person</td>
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<td>USCIS I-800A Application</td>
<td>$720.00</td>
<td>with I-800A application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fingerprinting adult household members</td>
<td>$85/person</td>
<td>with I-800A application</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child's Immigrant Visa</td>
<td>$230.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child's visa medical/photos</td>
<td>$100</td>
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*If a non-MI resident, must have home study and post-adoption reports completed by a licensed agency in your state, so fees may vary*
**WHO CAN ADOPT FROM DOMINICAN REPUBLIC?**

- Heterosexual couples married for at least 5 years
- Applicants between the ages of 30-60
- Other children in the home allowed

**WHO ARE THE CHILDREN?**

- Boys and girls are available
- 6 months and older
- Needs may vary

**WAIT TIME**

- The current wait time varies on desired age, gender, and need
- 12-24 months for referral
- You will travel 4-6 weeks after accepting your referral

**TRAVEL INFORMATION**

- One trip for 60 days
- You will stay in an apartment within the national district
- Your child will live with you during your stay.

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AT A GLANCE**

- Twice the size of New Hampshire
- 10,528,954 population
- Official language: Spanish
- Religion: Roman Catholic (95%)
- Ethnicities: 73% ‘mixed’
- Government: Democratic Republic

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## HATW Dominican Republic Adoption Expenses

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<td>$1500.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dominican Program Fees - These costs are approximate and/or subject to change</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>International Program Fee</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Translation of Documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-Adoption Reports*</td>
<td>$750</td>
<td>Prior to Dossier preparation</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Country Stay</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel to Dominican Republic</td>
<td>$700/person</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Airfare</td>
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<td>Travel phase</td>
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**Non-MI residents only**
**WHO CAN ADOPT FROM MEXICO?**
- HETEROSEXUAL COUPLES MARRIED FOR AT LEAST 1 YEAR
- SINGLE MEN AND WOMEN
- SAME-SEX MARRIED COUPLES ADOPTING FROM NATIONAL DISTRICT
- APPLICANTS MUST BE AT LEAST 17 YEARS OLDER THAN THE CHILD
- OTHER CHILDREN IN THE HOME ALLOWED

**WHO ARE THE CHILDREN?**
- BOYS AND GIRLS ARE AVAILABLE
- 5 YEARS AND OLDER
- SIBLING GROUPS OF VARIOUS AGES AVAILABLE
- NEEDS MAY VARY

**MEXICO AT A GLANCE**
- THREE TIMES THE SIZE OF TEXAS
- 123,799,215 POPULATION
- OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: SPANISH
- RELIGION: ROMAN CATHOLIC (83%), EVANGELICAL (5%)
- ETHNICITIES: MESTIZO (60%), AMERINDIAN (30%)
- GOVERNMENT: FEDERAL REPUBLIC

**WAIT TIME**
- THE CURRENT WAIT TIME VARIES ON DESIRED AGE, GENDER AND NEED
- 6-12 MONTHS FOR REFERRAL
- YOU WILL TRAVEL 1-6 MONTHS AFTER RECEIVING YOUR REFERRAL

**TRAVEL INFORMATION**
- TWO TRIPS: AT LEAST 3 WEEKS EACH
- LOCATION OF STAY WILL VARY DEPENDING ON WHERE CHILD IS LOCATED
<table>
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<td>$1,500</td>
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<td><strong>Mexico Program Fees-These costs are approximate and/or subject to change</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>International Program Fee</td>
<td>$6,902</td>
<td>Increments due with dossier and after referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Country Process Costs</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>By time of travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document Translations</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Adoption Reports*</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>Prior to Dossier preparation</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Country Stay</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel to Mexico</td>
<td>$700 person</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Airfare</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
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**Non-MI residents only
**WHO CAN ADOPT FROM PANAMA?**

- Heterosexual couples married for at least 2 years
- Heterosexual single women between the ages of 30-50
- Applicants must be at least 18 years older than the child
- Other children in the home allowed

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**WHO ARE THE CHILDREN?**

- Boys and girls are available
- Ages 2-16 years
- Sibling groups available
- Needs may vary

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**WAIT TIME**

- The current wait time varies on desired age, gender and need
- **24-48 months** for referral
- You will travel **1-2 months** after receiving your referral

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**TRAVEL INFORMATION**

- One trips of at least **60 days**
- Location of stay will vary depending on where child is located
- Child will live with you during your visit

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**PANAMA AT A GLANCE**

- About the size of South Carolina
- 3,926,017 population
- Official Language: Spanish
- Religion: Roman Catholic (85%), Protestant (15%)
- Ethnicities: Mestizo (70%), Amerindian (20%)
- Government: Constitutional Democracy
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<td>$1500</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Panama Program Fees - These costs are approximate and/or subject to change</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>International Program Fee</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
<td>Increments due with dossier and after referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Country Process Costs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Adoption Reports*</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>Prior to Dossier submission</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Country Stay</td>
<td>$1,500/month</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel to Panama</td>
<td>$700/person</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airport Exit Taxes</td>
<td>$60/person</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Airfare</td>
<td>$450</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Costs</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>US Passport</td>
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**Non-MI residents only
**WHO CAN ADOPT FROM ROMANIA?**

- HETEROSEXUAL COUPLES MARRIED FOR AT LEAST 1 YEAR
- HETEROSEXUAL SINGLE MEN AND WOMEN
- APPLICANTS MUST BE AT LEAST 18 YEARS OLDER THAN THE CHILD
- OTHER CHILDREN IN THE HOME ALLOWED
- ONE PARENT MUST HOLD A ROMANIAN PASSPORT OR BE WITHIN THE 4TH DEGREE OF KINSHIP TO THE CHILD

**WHO ARE THE CHILDREN?**

- BOYS AND GIRLS ARE AVAILABLE
- AGES 3 YEARS AND OLDER
- SIBLING GROUPS AVAILABLE
- NEEDS MAY VARY

**WAIT TIME**

- THE CURRENT WAIT TIME VARIES ON DESIRED AGE, GENDER AND NEED
- DEPENDENT ON CHILDREN AVAILABLE OR RELATIVE RELATIONSHIP
- YOU WILL TRAVEL 1 MONTHS AFTER RECEIVING YOUR REFERRAL

**TRAVEL INFORMATION**

- ONE TRIPS OF AT LEAST 30 DAYS
- LOCATION OF STAY WILL VARY DEPENDING ON WHERE CHILD IS LOCATED

**ROMANIA AT A GLANCE**

- ABOUT THE SIZE OF OREGON
- 21,640,968 POPULATION
- OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: ROMANIAN
- RELIGION: EASTERN ORTHODOX (82%), PROTESTANT (6%)
- ETHNICITIES: ROMANIAN (83%), HUNGARIAN (6%)
- GOVERNMENT: REPUBLIC

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<td>In-Country Process Costs</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
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<td>Post-Adoption Reports*</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
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<td>$2,400</td>
<td>$300 submitted with each report</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Country Stay</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
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<td>Travel to Romania</td>
<td>$1,100/person</td>
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**Non-MI residents only**
WHO CAN ADOPT FROM UKRAINE?

- HETEROSEXUAL COUPLES MARRIED FOR AT LEAST 1 YEAR
- APPLICANTS MUST BE NO MORE THAN 45 YEARS OLDER THAN THE CHILD
- OTHER CHILDREN IN THE HOME ALLOWED

WAIT TIME

- THE CURRENT WAIT TIME VARIES ON DESIRED AGE, GENDER AND NEED
- YOU DO NOT RECEIVE A REFERRAL UNTIL YOU TRAVEL TO UKRAINE
- YOU WILL TRAVEL 2-12 MONTHS FROM DOSSIER ACCEPTANCE

TRAVEL INFORMATION

- ONE TRIPS OF 6 WEEKS OR
- TWO TRIPS OF 2 WEEKS EACH WITH 1 MONTH IN BETWEEN
- STAY IN KYIV AND TRAVEL TO AND FROM REGION WHERE CHILD LIVES
- ACCOMPANIED BY BILINGUAL FACILITATOR

UKRAINE AT A GLANCE

- ABOUT THE SIZE OF TEXAS
- 44,941,303 POPULATION
- OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: UKRAINIAN
- RELIGION: ORTHODOX (66%)
- ETHNICITIES: UKRAINIAN (78%), RUSSIAN (17%)
- GOVERNMENT: REPUBLIC

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN?

- BOYS AND GIRLS ARE AVAILABLE
- AGES 2-14 YEARS
- SIBLING GROUPS AVAILABLE
- NEEDS MAY VARY

734-477-0135  www.hatw.org  781 Avis Dr. Suite 200
734-477-0213 (fax)  info@hatw.org  Ann Arbor, MI 48108
### HATW Ukraine Adoption Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fee or Expense</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>When Paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HATW Fees</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Fee</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>with application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Study*</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
<td>before home study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HATW Program Fee</strong></td>
<td>$5,700 (additional $2,000 for 2nd child)</td>
<td>prior dossier preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HATW Humanitarian Aid Fund</strong></td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>before home study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dossier Review/Approval Fee</strong></td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>prior dossier submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coordination Fee (Non-Hague/Program Only)</strong>**</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td>with program fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ukraine Program Fees- These costs are approximate and/or subject to change</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Program Fee</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
<td>Increments due with dossier and after referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphanage Donation</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dossier Translations</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>Dossier phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Adoption Reports*</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>Prior to Dossier preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Adoption Reports Translations</td>
<td>$600</td>
<td>$200 submitted with each report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel to Ukraine</td>
<td>$600-$1,200/person</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train transportation to/from region</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Airfare</td>
<td>$100-450</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Passport</td>
<td>$110/person</td>
<td>prior to dossier submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USCIS 1-600A Application</td>
<td>$720.00</td>
<td>with I-600A application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fingerprinting adult household members</td>
<td>$85/person</td>
<td>with I-600A application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's Immigrant Visa</td>
<td>$230.00</td>
<td>with visa application prior to travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's visa medical/photos</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>with visa application prior to travel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If a non-MI resident, must have home study and post-adoption reports completed by a licensed agency in your state, so fees may vary

**Non-MI residents only
China at a Glance

- 4th largest country in the world geographically
- 1,393,783,836 population
- Official Language: Mandarin
- Religion: Unaffiliated (52.2%) & Buddhist (18.2%)
- Ethnicities: Han (91.65); 56 recognized groups
- Government: Communist State

Who Can Adopt from China?

- Heterosexual couples married for at least 2 years; if history of divorce, married at least 5 years
- Applicants age 30-50
- No more than 5 other children in the home; they must be over 1 year old

Who Are the Children?

- Boys and Girls are available
- All ages, including infants
- Minor to moderate special needs

Wait Time

- The current wait time varies on desired age, gender and need
- For a healthy infant, the wait could be 5 years or more
- You will travel 1-2 months after receiving your referral

Travel Information

- One trip for 10-14 days
- Travel with group of other adopting parents
- Brief tour of the country included
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fee or Expense</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>When Paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>HATW Program Fee</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>HATW Humanitarian Aid Fund</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dossier Review/Approval Fee</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>prior dossier submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>China Program Fees - These costs are approximate and/or subject to change</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCCWA Submission Fee</td>
<td>1100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network Agency Fee</td>
<td>$5,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphanage Donation</td>
<td>$5,500-$5,700</td>
<td>Determined by orphanage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dossier document certification</td>
<td>$600</td>
<td>Dossier phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courier Fee for Dossier</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>Dossier phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Adoption Reports</td>
<td>$750</td>
<td>Prior to Dossier preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Adoption Report Processing</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visa to enter China</td>
<td>$140/person</td>
<td>Prior to travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel/Food</td>
<td>$750/person</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel to China</td>
<td>$1,500/person</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Guide</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Country Transportation</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Country Flight</td>
<td>$300/person</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Airfare</td>
<td>$270-$1,800</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Passport</td>
<td>$110/person</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>USCIS 1-800A Application</td>
<td>$720.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fingerprinting adult household members</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's Immigrant Visa</td>
<td>$260.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's visa medical/photos</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>with visa application prior to travel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHO CAN ADOPT FROM CHINA SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM?
- HETEROSEXUAL COUPLES MARRIED FOR AT LEAST 2 YEARS; IF HISTORY OF DIVORCE, MARRIED AT LEAST 5 YEARS
- SINGLE, HETEROSEXUAL WOMEN
- APPLICANTS AGE 30-55
- NO MORE THAN 5 OTHER CHILDREN IN THE HOME; THEY MUST BE OVER 1 YEAR OLD

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN?
- BOYS AND GIRLS ARE AVAILABLE
- 6 MONTHS-14 YEARS
- MINOR TO SIGNIFICANT SPECIAL NEEDS.
- SPECIAL NEEDS MAY BE MEDICAL, PHYSICAL, DEVELOPMENTAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AGE-RELATED OR MULTIPLE DIAGNOSES.

WAIT TIME
- THE CURRENT WAIT TIME VARIES ON DESIRED AGE, GENDER AND NEED
- 2-12 MONTHS FOR REFERRAL
- YOU WILL TRAVEL 2-8 MONTHS AFTER RECEIVING YOUR REFERRAL

TRAVEL INFORMATION
- ONE TRIP FOR 10-14 DAYS
- TRAVEL WITH GROUP OF OTHER ADOPTING PARENTS
- BRIEF TOUR OF THE COUNTRY INCLUDED
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Needs Submission Fee</td>
<td>$1100</td>
<td>Increments due with dossier and after referral</td>
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<tr>
<td>Network Agency Fee</td>
<td>$5,500</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Orphanage Donation</td>
<td>$5,500</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dossier document certification</td>
<td>$480 ($40/document)</td>
<td>Dossier phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courier Fee for Dossier</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>Dossier phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Adoption Reports</td>
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<td>$150</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ETIOPÍA

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN?
- Boys and girls are available
- 6 months-14 years
- Sibling groups available
- Needs may vary

WHO CAN ADOPT FROM ETIOPÍA?
- Heterosexual couples married for at least 1 year and single women
- Applicants between the ages of 25-50, greater than 50 for older children
- Other children in the home allowed

WAIT TIME
- The current wait time varies on desired age, gender and need
- 12-18 months for referral
- You will travel 2-4 months after accepting your referral

TRAVEL INFORMATION
- Two trips; 5-7 days each; 6-8 weeks between
- Stay in guest house operated by West Sands with your child for both trips
- English in-country documents as well as bilingual guides

ETHIOPIA AT A GLANCE
- Twice the size of Texas
- 96,506,031 population
- Official Language: Amharic
- Religion: Ethiopian orthodox (43.5%), Muslim (34%)
- Ethnicities: Oromo (34.5%), Amhara (30%)
- Government: Federal Republic

734-477-0135  www.hatw.org  781 Avis Dr. Suite 200
734-477-0213 (fax)  info@hatw.org  Ann Arbor, MI 48108
## HATW Ethiopia Adoption Expenses

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Cost</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Study*</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
<td>before home study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HATW Program Fee</td>
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<td>prior dossier preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HATW Humanitarian Aid Fund</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>before home study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dossier Review/Approval Fee</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>prior dossier submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination Fee (Non-Hague/Program Only)**</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td>with program fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethiopia Program Fees—These costs are approximate and/or subject to change</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Program Fee</td>
<td>$10,200 (Additional child $6,600)</td>
<td>Increments due with dossier and after referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find Processing Fee</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dossier Authentication Fee</td>
<td>$365</td>
<td>Dossier phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Adoption Reports*</td>
<td>$750</td>
<td>Prior to Dossier preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Country Service Fee</td>
<td>$415</td>
<td>By time of travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Country Stay</td>
<td>$1,400</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel to Ethiopia</td>
<td>$1,500/person</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Airfare</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Passport</td>
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<td>prior to dossier submission</td>
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<tr>
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<td>with I-600A application</td>
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<td>with visa application prior to travel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child’s visa medical/photos</td>
<td>$100</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If a non-MI resident, must have home study and post-adoption reports completed by a licensed agency in your state, so fees may vary

**Non-MI residents only
WHO CAN ADOPT FROM DRC?

- HETEROSEXUAL COUPLES MARRIED FOR AT LEAST 5 YEARS
- APPLICANTS MUST BE AT LEAST 15 YEARS OLDER THAN CHILD
- NO MORE THAN 2 OTHER CHILDREN IN

WAIT TIME

- THE CURRENT WAIT TIME VARIES ON DESIRED AGE, GENDER AND NEED
- 1-6 MONTHS FOR REFERRAL
- YOU WILL TRAVEL 6-12 MONTHS AFTER RECEIVING YOUR REFERRAL
- ADOPTION IS FINALIZED PRIOR TRAVEL

TRAVEL INFORMATION

- ONE TRIP FOR 5-7 DAYS
- LOCATION OF STAY WILL VARY DEPENDING ON WHERE CHILD IS LOCATED
- MUST BE APPROVED BY CENTRAL AUTHORITY TO EXIT COUNTRY WITH YOUR CHILD

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN?

- BOYS AND GIRLS ARE AVAILABLE
- ALL AGES, INCLUDING INFANTS
- SIBLING GROUPS OR 2 UNRELATED CHILDREN
- NEEDS MAY VARY

DRC AT A GLANCE

- ONE-FOURTH THE SIZE OF THE U.S.
- 69,360,118 POPULATION
- OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: FRENCH
- RELIGION: ROMAN CATHOLIC (50%), PROTESTANT (20%), MUSLIM (10%)

734-477-0135 www.hatw.org 781 Avis Dr. Suite 200
734-477-0213 (fax) info@hatw.org Ann Arbor, MI 48108
# HATW DRC Adoption Expenses

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<td>before home study</td>
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<tr>
<td>HATW Humanitarian Aid Fund</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>before home study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dossier Review/Approval Fee</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>prior dossier submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination Fee (Non-Hague/Program Only)**</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td>with program fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DRC Program Fees - These costs are approximate and/or subject to change</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Program Fee</td>
<td>$6,150</td>
<td>Increments due with dossier and after referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphanage Donation</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Adoption Reports*</td>
<td>$750</td>
<td>Prior to Dossier preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's Monthly Care</td>
<td>$600/month</td>
<td>After receiving referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Process Costs</td>
<td>$3,925</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent's Visa</td>
<td>$150/each</td>
<td>Prior to travel</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Country Stay</td>
<td>$1600</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel to DRC</td>
<td>$1,250/person</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit Permit</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>Prior to leaving DRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Airfare</td>
<td>$450</td>
<td>Travel phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
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**Non-MI residents only
ABOUT HANDS ACROSS THE WATER

Hands Across the Water was founded in 1999 under executive director, Kathleen Nelson and her husband, James after adopting their own children internationally. HATW was created primarily for international services, and has since grown. Many of our adoption staff have personal experience with adoption, as well as professional qualifications.

MISSION STATEMENT

Hands Across the Water is dedicated to building and supporting families, committed to the belief that every child deserves a home and loving family.

VISION STATEMENT

Hands Across the Water is committed to you and your family. We’re here to help you with your adoption decision and to guide you through the process and to support & assist your family formed by adoption. Hands Across the Water provides adoptive parents a “helping hand” through the intricate adoption process and prides itself on preparing adoptive parents for a family built by adoption.

We provide services which support the belief that …

♥ Every child has a right to a family.
♥ Children come first.
♥ Families need to be found for children, not children for families.
♥ Birth parents need the opportunity to explore their parenting options.
♥ Same-race and trans-racial/cultural adoptions are a great way to build a family.
♥ Education is the key to a positive adoptive placement.

The relationship we form with our families is one of understanding, respect, support, strength, concern, hope, and pride. We are dedicated to ensuring that each family built by adoption is created with the most information and educational opportunities. It is our understanding that adoption is a lifelong commitment not only by the adoptive parents, but also by the agency providing the “helping hand” along the way.

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION STAFF

Julie Roesch, LMSW-International Programs Coordinator
Hannah Saitta, LLMSW-International Adoption Specialist
Alanna Angell, LBSW-Adoption Specialist/Home Study Social Worker
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David Lloyd, MSW-Adoption Specialist/Home Study Social Worker
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734-477-0135 www.hatw.org 781 Avis Dr. Suite 200
734-477-0213 (fax) info@hatw.org Ann Arbor, MI 48108
HANDS ACROSS THE WATER

LIST OF AGENCY FEES FOR INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION SERVICES
(Effective January 1, 2014)

This is a list of all possible agency fees for an international adoption. This list is not specific to program or family. See “Detail of Fees” form which lists the fees for which you will be responsible specific to each country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SERVICE</th>
<th>FEE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>$ No Charge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This consultation is available to those interested in learning what their adoption options may be. A free consultation visit is limited to one.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Fee</td>
<td>$ 500 ($350 Reese’s Rainbow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This fee is due upon receipt of Application for Adoption Services and is non-refundable. This fee opens your HATW file, covers materials prepared for &amp; supplied to you, 24 hour/7 day connection to agency staff and support.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-placement Assessment</td>
<td>$2000 ($1800 for Reese’s Rainbow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fee includes up to 4 notarized original Assessments as needed and any supporting paperwork generated by HATW. Includes 3-4 visits with social worker. All families receive “Prepare for Referral” packet &amp; “Welcome Home” packet. Includes CIS coordination &amp; submitting of family’s documents to CIS. Assessment fee is non-refundable. Additional notarized original Assessments are $10 each. Plus mileage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-placement Assessment Brief Update (HATW)</td>
<td>$ 450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If a placement has not been made on the original Pre-Placement Assessment completed by HATW. This is an update of outdated information only and is not a stand-alone study. Fee is non-refundable. Fee includes up to 4 notarized original Assessments as needed and any supporting paperwork generated by HATW. Additional notarized original Assessments are $10 each. Plus mileage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-placement Assessment Brief Update (non-HATW)</td>
<td>$600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If a placement has not been made on the original Pre-Placement Assessment which was not completed by HATW. This is an update of outdated information only and is not a stand-alone study. Fee is non-refundable. Fee includes up to 4 notarized original Assessments as needed and any supporting paperwork generated by HATW. Additional notarized original Assessments are $10 each. Plus mileage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-placement Assessment Update</td>
<td>$1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is an update to a previously written Pre-placement Assessment.* Generally for a 2nd adoption. Fee includes up to 4 notarized original Assessments as needed and any supporting paperwork generated by HATW. All families receive “Prepare for Referral” packet &amp; “Welcome Home” packet. For HATW program families includes CIS coordination &amp; submitting of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| *if previous assessment was written by another agency, fee is
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Description</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-placement Assessment Amendment</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If an Amendment is needed to a current HATW Pre-placement Assessment and does not require a social worker visit. To be paid when billed. Fee is non-refundable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-placement Assessment Amendment</td>
<td>$450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If an Amendment is needed to a current Pre-placement Assessment written by HATW and requires a social worker visit. To be paid when billed. Fee is non-refundable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hague Processing Fee (non-HATW Program cases only)</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This fee covers the additional paperwork processing for Hague country adoptions. Should a family switch from a non-Hague to a Hague country this fee would also apply. Non-refundable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Material Fee</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This fee covers the HATW prepared, family specific education packet, CD’s &amp; mailing costs. Non-refundable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HATW Program Fee</td>
<td>$5700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This fee covers many aspects of the adoption including the maintenance of the int'l program, time &amp; costs communicating with foreign country, courier fees, preparation of family to receive referral &amp; to travel. Families receive an extensive “Dossier” &amp; “Travel” packet specific to their program. Can vary by country. If fee paid within 30 days of home study completion, fee is reduced by 10%. Fee is non-refundable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination Fee (Home Study Only Families)</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes CIS coordination &amp; submitting of family’s documents to CIS, contact with placing agency &amp; coordination of services &amp; preparation of placing agency documents. Fee is non-refundable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination Fee (HATW Program Only Families, Non-Hague Countries)</td>
<td>$1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families who are in an HATW program but receiving home study services from another agency. Includes contracting with local service agency, coordination of services, review of home study, etc. Fee is non-refundable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination Fee (HATW Program Only Families, Hague Countries)</td>
<td>$1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families who are in an HATW program but receiving home study services from another agency. Includes contracting with local service agency, coordination of services, review of home study, etc. Fee is non-refundable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dossier Review/Approval Fee</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance in preparation of dossier documents, review &amp; approval of documents, initial Fed Ex costs. Fee is non-refundable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian Aid Fund</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax deductible donation to support HATW Helping Hands Fund and Toby Jacobowitcz Memorial Fund. Fee is non-refundable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Description</td>
<td>Fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supervision/Post Placement/Adoption Service (non-HATW domestic, HATW domestic/international, &amp; Reese’s Rainbow cases)</strong></td>
<td>$250 each report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of reports needed times $250 is the amount to be paid when Assessment is complete. This fee is pre-paid and refundable only if HATW will not be able to provide this service. If 2 individual reports are needed for 2 children adopted at the same time, the 2nd report is $50 each. Plus mileage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supervision/Post Placement/Adoption Service (Non-HATW international cases)</strong></td>
<td>$300 each report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of reports needed times $300 is the amount to be paid when Assessment is complete. This fee is pre-paid and refundable only if HATW will not be able to provide this service. If 2 individual reports are needed for 2 children adopted at the same time, the 2nd report is $50 each. Plus mileage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supervision/Post Placement/Adoption Report Translation Fee</strong></td>
<td>$150 each report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of post-placement reports needed times $150 is the amount to be paid when Dossier is submitted to HATW. May vary by country. This fee is pre-paid and is not refundable. This fee is for HATW programs only.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation for Legal Placement</strong></td>
<td>$1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This fee is charged if HATW prepares and files for legal placement in Michigan. Fee due when documents are prepared, prior to filing. This fee is non-refundable after filing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interstate Compact</strong></td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This fee is charged when Interstate/Pre-adoption requirement approval is needed. Fee due prior to obtaining approval and is non-refundable after submission of forms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Helping Hands Dossier Service (Optional)</strong></td>
<td>$550/600 single/couple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HATW will complete your dossier for you. See Helping Hands Dossier Service handout for more information. Non-refundable. China dossier service is $800.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hourly rate</strong> when/if required. Non-refundable**</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraordinary circumstances requiring extra time may incur additional fees at an hourly rate. Extraordinary express mail charges may be additionally billed to client. Mileage will be charged at .55 per mile. Fees are due as indicated in Services Contract. Fees paid to HATW does not guarantee placement or approved assessment and fees are not recoverable if a plan changes or a placement does not occur or an approval is not received. Travel and accommodation expenses are additional charges not paid to this agency. All HATW international programs expect the family to make a monetary and/or goods donation to the orphanage in the foreign country to be used for improvements for children not adopted. This donation is in addition to above fees and is determined individual to each program. See individual country Detail of Fees for specific fees. All fees are reviewed periodically and are subject to change.
INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION LANGUAGE
THE ADOPTION PROCESS IS FULL OF NEW TERMS AND PHRASES THAT MAY BE UNKNOWN OR CONFUSING. REFER TO THIS LIST TO HELP YOU SORT THEM OUT!

- **Hague vs. non-Hague**: the Hague Adoption Convention is an international agreement to safeguard international adoptions. The Hague Convention works to ensure that intercountry adoptions are in the best interest of the child by aiming to prevent the abduction, sale, of, and trafficking of children. The Hague Convention recognizes the need of intercountry adoption once a suitable family has not been found in the child’s country of origin. If you choose to adopt from a Hague Convention country, it is ensured that your adoption service provider meets both **State requirements and Federal accreditation requirements**. The service contracts must contain information about the **Agency’s policies and itemized fees**. The Hague Convention mandates that adoptive parents receive a **minimum of 10 hours of Hague-compliant training. Hague countries must provide the parents with medical records, and determine that the child is truly adoptable. Hague countries preserve adoption records for 75 years**. If a country is listed as ‘Hague,’ this simply means they have ratified the convention and follow these regulations. If a country is ‘non-Hague,’ the adoption process is nearly the same but with different forms to complete.

- **Central Authority**: each Hague country has a Central Authority, which is the entity responsible for giving adoption referrals & monitoring a child’s status post-adoption. The U.S. Central Authority is the Department of State.

- **1-800A/1-600A**: these are the Federal forms an adoptive family completes to approve the family for adoption. The 1-800A is completed for Hague countries, and the 1-600A is completed for non-Hague countries.

- **1-800/1-600**: These Federal forms are completed to determine if a specific child is eligible for adoption.

- **National Benefits Center (NBC)**: Federal entity the mentioned Federal forms are sent and processed before being sent to the USCIS.

- **U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)**: Federal entity responsible for determining the eligibility and suitability of the prospective adoptive parents looking to adopt. Also responsible for determining the eligibility of the child to immigrate to the United States.

- **National Visa Center (NVC)**: Federal entity responsible for processing visas, including your child’s immigrant visa.

- **Referral/Match**: This is your child. Referrals are determined by the host-country based on the family’s preferences and child eligibility.
• **Home Study/Pre-Placement Assessment:** This is a detailed written report of your family compiled and prepared by a social worker. The home study must be completed by a licensed agency in your state of residence. The process length is determined by the family, but typically takes 2-3 months to finish. The home study requires the prospective adoptive family to gather different documents, answer several questions related to their family history, and explore their reasons for adopting. Through a series of visits and interviews, the social worker can get a complete picture of who you are and what life is like in your family. A home study includes information regarding:

  - Autobiography/family background
  - Neighborhood/community/schools
  - Physical and emotional health
  - Financial statements
  - Criminal clearances for current and past states of residence
  - References

• **Dossier:** The collection of documents, most of which are gathered during the home study, that is sent to the legal decision-making body in the child’s country of origin. It describes the family that would like to adopt and demonstrates that they are capable of being adequate parents and have met the requirements of that country sufficiently.

• **Pilot Program:** These programs are relatively new to HATW, which requires more patience and flexibility throughout the process as things change. A program is no longer pilot when a family has successfully brought home a child from the respective country.

• **Hold to New Families:** Due to the socio-political climate of certain countries, programs may be put on hold for a period of time as the country’s authorities resolve issues. This may be necessary for the safety and well-being of parents and children.

• **Needs/Special Needs:** Countries may describe children as having special needs. These needs can vary in severity, and may be medical, physical, emotional, developmental, psychological, social, and/or age-related. Multiple diagnosis are possible. Needs may be as a result from genetics, abuse/neglect, and/or from being in institutional care. It is important for families to discuss and consider what needs they are capable of parenting.

• **Post Adoption Reports:** These are the supervisory reports required under the Hague Convention after you bring your child home. The number of and schedule of reports is determined by the host country. If the country is non-Hague, HATW will still complete three regularly scheduled post adoption reports to ensure the family is adjusting appropriately and receiving any necessary services.

• **UAA:** The Universal Accreditation Act was signed into law in January 2013 and will take effect on July 14, 2014. The UAA extends Federal safeguards to any agency or
PERSON PROVIDING ADOPTION SERVICES IN INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION CASES INVOLVING ORPHAN CHILDREN AND HAGUE ADOPTEES. THESE AGENCIES MUST NOW BE ACCREDITED AND MONITORED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE’S ACCREDITING ENTITIES. THE UAA UNIVERSAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS APPLIES HAGUE POLICY TO BOTH HAGUE AND NON-HAGUE ADOPTION CASES IN THE UNITED STATES. HANDS ACROSS THE WATER IS INTERESTED IN ASSISTING FAMILIES AFFECTED BY THE UAA. IF YOU ARE ADOPTING INDEPENDENTLY OR ADOPTING A RELATIVE, HATW WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITY OF OUR ASSISTING YOU IN THIS PROCESS AS IT RELATES TO THE UAA. ADMITTEDLY, THIS MAY BECOME A MORE COMPLICATED PROCESS WITH AN AGENCY INVOLVED, BUT THE INTENT IS TO ASSURE SAFEGUARDS ARE IN PLACE FOR THE FAMILY AND CHILDREN.

- **RELATIVE ADOPTIONS:** WITH THE UAA, FAMILIES WHO WANT TO ADOPT A RELATIVE THAT RESIDES IN ANOTHER COUNTRY, MUST HAVE A “HAGUE COMPLIANT HOME STUDY” COMPLETED BY A HAGUE ACCREDITED AGENCY. IN ADDITION, THE HOME STUDY AGENCY MUST TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THAT ADOPTION PROCESS AND ALL THAT IS INVOLVED AND ACT AS THE PRIMARY PROVIDER. THE ADOPTION AGENCY WILL HAVE TO ENSURE THAT ALL ADOPTION SERVICES STATED WITHIN THE HAGUE CONVENTION REGULATIONS ARE PROFESSIONALLY DONE IN ADDITION TO THE HOME STUDY. A PRIMARY PROVIDER HELPS TO ENSURE THAT NON-CONVENTION ADOPTION SERVICES ARE PROVIDED WITH THE SAME STANDARDS OF PRACTICE AND ETHICAL CONDUCT AS CONVENTION CASES.

- **INDEPENDENT ADOPTIONS:** WITH THE UAA, FAMILIES WHO WANT TO ADOPT INDEPENDENTLY, IN OTHER WORDS YOU ARE ACTING ON YOUR OWN BEHALF, MAY STILL ACT ON YOUR OWN BEHALF IF PERMITTED UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE IN WHICH YOU RESIDE AND THE LAWS OF THE COUNTRY FROM WHICH YOU SEEK TO ADOPT. ALTHOUGH YOU DO NOT NEED ACCREDITATION OR APPROVAL, YOU WILL NEED TO WORK WITH AN ACCREDITED AGENCY TO ACT AS THE PRIMARY PROVIDER IN YOUR CASE. A PRIMARY PROVIDER HELPS TO ENSURE THAT NON-CONVENTION ADOPTION SERVICES ARE PROVIDED WITH THE SAME STANDARDS OF PRACTICE AND ETHICAL CONDUCT AS CONVENTION CASES.
THE INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION PROCESS

THE process for each country is slightly different, but these are the general guidelines. You must comply with the laws, requirements, and regulations of the United States, your child’s country, and the state in which you reside. Timelines vary with each case and country, so it is important to be patient and flexible throughout the process. The results will always be worth it!

1. **Inquire to HATW about the International adoption process (Check!)**

2. **Attend an information meeting or meet with the international staff for a one-on-one consultation in person or on the phone.**

3. **Send Hands Across The Water your completed application with the application fee.**

4. **Begin the Home Study process with HATW or your home study agency.**

5. **Decide on a country you wish to adopt from. Some people know before this point what country they are going to adopt from, but if you haven’t decided, we can help you choose and guide you through the process for that country.**

6. **Prepare the legal documents (dossier). The documents required by each country vary, but will include documents such as birth, marriage, and health certificates, financial status reports, local police clearance and USCIS approval.**

7. **Receive and accept a child referred to you.**

8. **Travel to your child’s birth country to bring your child home.**

Helpful Websites:

https://www.adoptionscouncil.org

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HATW INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION SERVICES

HATW provides a variety of services to assist our clients based on their unique needs.

HOME STUDY SERVICES/POST ADOPTION SERVICES: HATW is licensed to complete home studies and post adoption reports in the state of Michigan only. If you reside within Michigan, you can use HATW for your home study services, whether HATW is also your placing agency or not. If you choose to use HATW for one of our international programs, but do not reside in Michigan, you must work with a licensed agency in your state. Ask HATW about our collaborative relationships in various states for home study referrals.

PLACEMENT SERVICES: Michigan and non-Michigan residents may use HATW as their placing agency. This means you will choose from one of our international programs to bring your child home.

HOME STUDY AND PLACEMENT SERVICES: If you live in Michigan and desire to bring home a child from one of our international programs, then HATW can provide home study and placement services to you. This may make the process simpler as less entities are involved.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST:

* Number of adoption placements per year for the prior three calendar years,
* Number and percentage of placements that remain intact/are disrupted/have dissolved,
* Number of parents who apply to adopt on a yearly basis based on data for the prior three calendar years.
* Number of children eligible for adoption and awaiting an adoptive placement referral through Hands Across The Water.

HATW EDUCATION SERVICES

HATW believes in the importance of education and preparation in the adoption process.

All families seeking international home study services at Hands Across The Water will receive an Expectant Parent Preparation binder specific to their family with:

* Written material to read
* CD’s of PowerPoint presentations
* Articles to review prior to the completion of the home study.

Additionally, 3 training programs have been developed that all meet Hague Convention requirements. The family is to choose one program and complete that program in its entirety. If a two parent family, both parents must complete the program and receive a Certificate of Completion. The HATW training requirement is in addition to the education and counseling that is provided during the home study and must be completed prior to the referral of a child. HATW also provides free support groups and a library of books available for check-out.

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Information/Orientation Meeting Schedule 2016

- Information/Orientation meetings are opportunities for families to learn about all the services & programs offered by Hands Across The Water. These meetings are free of charge.
- PLEASE RSVP to reserve your space in the meeting of your choice.
- If the following times are not convenient to your schedule, we encourage you to contact us to set up an individual appointment to meet with our adoption specialists to discuss your options.

**January 2016**
Thursday, January 14, 2016 6-7pm EST (WEBINAR General Info)

**February 2016**
Thursday, February 4, 2016 6-7pm HATW Office (Explore Your Adoption Options)
Thursday, February 11, 2016 6-7pm EST (WEBINAR General Info)

**March 2016**
Thursday, March 3, 2016 6-7pm HATW Office (Explore Your Adoption Options)
Thursday, March 10, 2016 6-7pm EST (WEBINAR General Info)

**April 2016**
Thursday, April 12, 2016 12-1pm HATW Office (Explore Your Adoption Options)
Thursday, April 14, 2016 6-7pm EST (WEBINAR General Info)

**May 2016**
Thursday, May 11, 2016 3-4pm HATW Office (Explore Your Adoption Options)
Thursday, May 12, 2016 6-7pm EST (WEBINAR General Info)

**June 2016**
Thursday, June 2, 2016 6-7pm HATW Office (Explore Your Adoption Options)
Thursday, June 9, 2016 6-7pm EST (WEBINAR General Info)

**July 2016**
Thursday, July 14, 2016 6-7pm HATW Office (Explore Your Adoption Options)
Thursday, July 14, 2016 6-7pm EST (WEBINAR General Info)

**August 2016**
Thursday, August 11, 2016 6-7pm EST (WEBINAR General Info)

**September 2016**
Thursday, September 8, 2016 6-7pm EST (WEBINAR General Info)

**October 2016**
Thursday, October 13, 2016 6-7pm EST (WEBINAR General Info)

**November 2016**
Thursday, November 10, 2016 6-7pm EST (WEBINAR General Info)

**December 2016**
Thursday, December 8, 2016 6-7pm EST (WEBINAR General Info)
**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

HATW understands that adoptions are expensive, but well worth every dollar. Be sure to talk with your social worker to discuss options on lessening some of these costs. Below are a few options that may be of interest:

- **Attend an Information Meeting at HATW, and you will receive a coupon for up to $100 off your adoption fees.**

- **HATW’s Toby Jacobowicz Memorial Fund is available to help with the expenses of an adoption. Each family will be able to submit an application to the HATW Fund Committee requesting up to $5,000 in an interest free, long-term loan to assist with their adoption expenses.**

- **Federal Adoption Tax Credit: Visit** [http://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc607.html](http://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc607.html) **for detailed information.**

- **Ask your employer about potential assistance programs**

- **There are also many other grants, loans, and foundations which would like to help qualifying families adopt children. There are a few linked on our website, but you can also obtain a larger list from HATW.**

**HATW Humanitarian Aid Fund**

HATW asks for $100 from international adoption families to help support out humanitarian aid fund. HATW strives to create forever families, but also to help children and their caretakers around the world. Some of the projects supported by your donations are: new baby clothing taken to Guatemala for the children in the orphanage; Travinki Bed Fund was a project in which we raised money to purchase beds for an orphanage in Russia; money was given to an orphanage in Bolivia to purchase milk, food, and pay for caregiver’s wages; money was given to a humanitarian aid organization in Bolivia to provide medical services to a young man in need; money was given to a girl’s orphanage in Iran for school supplies; a washing machine was purchased for an orphanage in Guatemala; Russian language children’s books where collected for an orphanage in Russia; Spanish language children’s books purchased for orphanages in Guatemala and Bolivia; money given to an orphanage in Bolivia to repair their roof; new toys sent to orphanages through our annual Remember the Children toy drive; funds sent to hunger relief in Dogon Mali

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Hands Across The Water

Adoption Program Policies and Procedures

Mission Statement
Hands Across The Water, a licensed, non-profit child-placing agency, is dedicated to all persons touched by adoption and foster care, offering assistance and support. HATW is dedicated to the belief that every child deserves a home and loving family.

VISION Statement
Hands Across the Water is committed to you and your family. We’re here to help you with your adoption decision and to guide you through the process and to support & assist your family formed by adoption. Hands Across The Water provides adoptive parents a “helping hand” through the intricate adoption process and prides itself on preparing adoptive parents for a family built by adoption. We provide services which support the belief that …
♥ Every child has a right to a family.
♥ Children come first.
♥ Families need to be found for children, not children for families.
♥ Birth parents need the opportunity to explore their parenting options.
♥ Same-race and trans-racial/cultural adoptions are a great way to build a family.
♥ Education is the key to a positive adoptive placement.

The relationship we form with our families is one of understanding, respect, support, strength, concern, hope, and pride. We are dedicated to ensuring that each family built by adoption is created with the most information and educational opportunities. It is our understanding that adoption is a lifelong commitment not only by the adoptive parents, but also by the agency providing the “helping hand” along the way.

Program Statements
Building a family through adoption can be the most rewarding experience you will ever have, but it can also seem overwhelming, especially when you are just beginning the process. This handout will provide information about the adoption services offered at HATW and agency requirements. We look forward to sharing your adoption experience and helping you build your family through adoption. HATW offers monthly information meetings to discuss details of our adoption services and programs. You are welcome to attend this meeting or meet with our Program Coordinators, one-on-one, for a personal consultation regarding which adoption path to take.

Hands Across The Water is committed to actively recruit prospective adoptive/foster parents who are able to adopt or foster children served by this agency. HATW follows a non-discrimination practice and does not establish screening criteria based on race, creed, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or national origin. We work with those who are single, and both married and partnered couples.

Prospective adoptive parents must be at least 21 years of age and may be single, married, partnered, or divorced. They must have sufficient and stable financial means to support a family. At least one prospective adoptive parent must be a citizen of the United States for an international adoption.

It should be noted that in an intercountry adoption, foreign countries and other agencies might have additional requirements for families who may adopt from their programs. These may include marital status, length of

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marriage, religion, number of divorces, number of children already in the home, age of prospective adoptive parents, sexual orientation.

Hands Across The Water provides consultation, Assessment, Post-placement/adoption, process, education, court, and program services to Michigan families. HATW also provides international and domestic program services to families outside the state of Michigan wishing to adopt through one of our international or domestic programs. HATW can act as the Primary Provider in an international Universal Accreditation Act (UAA) case for Michigan and non-Michigan families. Families outside the state of Michigan must have a Pre-placement Assessment completed by a licensed child-placing agency in their state of residence. For international programs, the home study agency must be approved and supervised by HATW.

Hands Across The Water will disclose to clients and prospective clients, upon request, the following information: the number of adoption placements per year for the prior three calendar years, and the number and percentage of those placements that remain intact, are disrupted, or have been dissolved as of the time the information is provided; the number of parents who apply to adopt on a yearly basis, based on data for the prior three calendar years; and the number of children eligible for adoption and awaiting an adoptive placement referral via Hands Across The Water.

Program Services
The Hands Across The Water adoption program offers option exploration for the family considering adoption. These sessions will address the specific concerns and questions a family may have before committing to adoption as a way to build or add to a family. Prospective adoptive parents will be required to participate in a pre-adoption orientation at no cost to them. An orientation is designed to educate potential adoptive families in the areas of, but not limited to, the programs available/program statements, policies and procedures; characteristics and needs of children available for adoption; services and resources available; fees and charges; the legal/adoption process; training and other requirements; post adoption services available. Orientations are held at one of the HATW offices, by telephone or via a webinar.

Hands Across The Water provides education based Pre-Placement Assessments for prospective adoptive parents. Each family receives a Parent Preparation Education binder specific to their family and the type of adoption they are pursuing. A minimum of three visits will be held with the family. At least one visit is held in the home. All household members must meet with the assigned social worker. This assessment is designed to evaluate and help prepare a family for adoptive parenting. A document checklist and detailed instructions will be given to a family regarding the documents necessary to complete an Assessment. A written adoptive evaluation will be completed within 90 days of the family signing an adoption application, as long as family has submitted all necessary documentation, and prior to approving a family for adoption, per state of Michigan requirements.

Hands Across The Water is COA Hague Accredited which means we are able to process adoptions in Hague countries as well as act as the Primary Provider in non-Hague countries.

Hands Across The Water will work with families:
1) Choosing an HATW international adoption program.
2) Who are working with an international adoption program of another agency located within Michigan or out-of-state, or
3) Who are working independently or adopting relatives and need a Primary Provider.

If a family is out-of-state or having their home study completed by another agency, HATW will work closely with that agency to be sure the agency and the family are meeting all the requirements of HATW, Michigan, CIS, the Hague/UAA, and the country. The home study agency must be approved and supervised by HATW.

If a family is working with another program or source, and HATW is completing the home study, HATW will work closely with the primary agency to meet that agency/country's specific criteria as well as CIS, the Hague/UAA, and the State of Michigan's requirements.

1. Universal Accreditation Act (UAA)

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With the UAA, families who want to adopt a relative that resides in another country, must have a “Hague compliant home study” completed by a Hague accredited agency. In addition, the home study agency must take on the responsibility of that adoption process and all that is involved and act as the primary provider. The adoption agency will have to ensure that all adoption services stated within the Hague Convention regulations are professionally done in addition to the home study. A primary provider helps to ensure that non-Convention adoption services are provided with the same standards of practice and ethical conduct as Convention cases.

With the UAA, families who want to adopt independently, in other words you are acting on your own behalf, may still act on your own behalf if permitted under the laws of the state in which you reside and the laws of the country from which you seek to adopt. Although you do not need accreditation or approval, you will need to work with an accredited agency to act as the primary provider in your case. A primary provider helps to ensure that non-Convention adoption services are provided with the same standards of practice and ethical conduct as Convention cases.

If this type of assistance is needed, HATW will review the case and potentially work with as the primary provider. A number of documents about the case and Foreign Service Provider will be needed.

2. Assessment Process
When working with HATW, all families receive extensive instruction and preparation throughout the process. Assistance begins with Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) requirements and procedures. The agency keeps abreast of all new laws, procedures and requirements. Families receive “The CIS Process” packet explaining the process, forms, and documents required.

When the Pre-Placement Assessment is complete, families receive the “Waiting For Your Referral” packet. This packet assists families during the often-difficult waiting period with information and activities to help prepare themselves and their home for their child’s arrival.

Those families adopting a child through a HATW international program will receive a comprehensive “Dossier” packet. This packet gives complete, specific instruction on preparing the dossier. HATW will walk families through this process with the help of this packet. Additionally, if a family prefers, HATW offers the Helping Hands Dossier service, at an additional charge, and we will prepare your dossier for you.

All families will receive a “Welcome Home” packet which discusses a child’s transition into the home, post-adoption reports, Michigan birth certificates, social security cards, citizenship, registering with the foreign Embassy, etc.

All families seeking Pre-Placement Assessment services must fulfill the HATW Education Policy. HATW believes information is one key to a successful adoptive family and our intent is to further assist families in becoming as aware as possible to the issues of international adoption and adoptive parenting. We believe our focus should always be in the children’s best interests. We believe our education policy serves these interests. Our education policy meets Hague requirements.

3. Post-Placement/Adoption Services
Hands Across The Water provides post-placement/post-adoption supervision and reports for adoptive families as required by the foreign country and Court. Hands Across The Water also requires a minimum of three post adoption reports at the interval of 6 months, 12 months, and 18 months, unless otherwise indicated by a foreign country. If a foreign country requires a different schedule, or additional post adoption reports, Hands Across The Water will adhere to that schedule. If the foreign country does not require post adoption reports, the Hands Across The Water requirement will be adhered to. Should the adoption not be finalized in the foreign country, and needs to be finalized in the United States, Michigan requires a post-placement visit and report monthly until the adoption is finalized. Other post-adoption services include support groups, education classes, and referral services.

Hands Across The Water will make readily available to the adoptee and the adoptive parent(s) upon request all non-identifying information in its custody about the adoptee’s health history or background.

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Domestic – Adoptive Family – Infant Adoption
Hands Across The Water has an infant adoption program where our Pregnancy Options Counselor assists prospective birth parents with their parenting options. Should an adoption plan be chosen, HATW will assist them in choosing an adoptive family and complete the adoption process. Hands Across The Water will also work with families who are pursuing an infant domestic adoption with an out-of-state agency or attorney by providing Pre-placement Assessment and Post Placement services to these families. HATW will work closely with the placing agency/attorney to be sure the Assessment fits the criteria and type of adoption the agency/attorney handles, as well as Michigan law. HATW can process the Interstate Compact if needed, file legal court paperwork for custody and finalization, and provide post-placement supervision, as needed. Families living in-state or out-of-state are welcome into this program.

Each family adopting domestically will receive an open adoption workbook and Parent Preparation Binder prior to their first Assessment visit. Families are also required to read the book “Dear Birth Mother” and write a brief summary. The book and workbook are to be completed, typically, by the end of the Assessment visits but will need to be completed prior to the Assessment being written. HATW believes information is one key to a successful adoptive family and our intent is to further assist families in becoming as aware as possible to the issues of adoption and adoptive parenting. We believe our focus should always be in the children’s best interests who we believe would be better served through this education policy.

Families pursuing an infant domestic adoption through a source other than Hands Across The Water may also submit their birth parent materials into the HATW “Waiting Families” album/website. In the event that a birth mother counseled by HATW chooses an adoption plan for her baby, the families in the “Waiting Families” album will be available to her. Adopting parents have the right to independent legal representation throughout the adoption process.

Experience the joy of pregnancy and give birth to your child through embryo adoption. There are an estimated 500,000 human embryos in frozen storage in the U.S. Some families, who have completed their efforts to build a family, have decided to give another couple struggling with infertility a chance to build their own family through the adoption of these embryos. The actual process of embryo adoption is governed by contract law. Hands Across The Water will complete the adoption home study, handle the legal adoption process in the court, and complete “post placement” reports. We refer our families interested in embryo adoption to the Snowflakes Embryo Adoption Program through Nightlight Christian Adoptions, a licensed adoption agency, located in South Carolina. Nightlight will handle the actual matching of donating and adopting families.

Domestic – Foster Care
The General Foster Care Program is designed to provide temporary care for children in need of an out-of-home placement which provides a family-like setting. The purpose and primary goal of this program is to allow the child’s family the time and services necessary to develop an appropriate parenting plan for their child and to reunify the child with his/her biological family as soon as possible. This is accomplished by providing services to the biological family, the child and the foster family. Children enter the foster care program after being removed from their family of origin by order of the court based on the recommendation of the Department of Health and Human Services. The General Foster Care Program is committed to providing families, whether biological, foster, or adoptive, the education and support necessary to plan and nurture the children in their care. Foster families may or may not be interested in adopting children they have fostered who become available for adoption. There are no fees charged by HATW for becoming a foster family. The necessary training is also free.

Domestic – Supervised Independent Living (SIL/IL)
The Independent Living program empowers older teens in foster care to grow and develop through specialized programs that build on each person’s strengths. The purpose and primary goal of this program is designed to help them learn to live independently as adults. Independent Living provides these older adolescents with the necessary support systems during their transitional phase from a youth in placement to an independent productive member of society. Youth are taught skills that lead to increasing self-reliance and self-esteem.

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Domestic – Adoptive Family – Foster to Adopt
The domestic Foster to Adopt Program is designed to provide temporary care for children in need of an out-of-home placement, which provides a family-like setting by families licensed to provide foster care and are also interested in adopting. The purpose and primary goal of this program is to recruit, train and assess foster/adoptive families who wish to foster one or more of the many children who are awaiting permanency in foster care in the State of Michigan with the intention to adopt should this become an option. The purpose and primary goal of foster care is to allow the child’s family the time and services necessary to develop an appropriate parenting plan for their child and to reunify the child with his/her biological family as soon as possible. This is accomplished by providing services to the biological family, the child and the foster family. Should reunification not be possible, a foster family providing foster care to the child will have the opportunity to adopt. Foster families most often adopt the children who have been in their home, to which they have already developed a relationship, so these children never enter the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) system.

A licensed foster family is approved to foster/adopt a certain type and number of children. The child being fostered may become available for adoption although this cannot be guaranteed. Reunification is the plan for foster care but providing foster care has a few benefits for families seeking to adopt. Having provided foster care to children, this will be reflected in the home study and be viewed very favorably by adoption workers who need to find adoptive families for children. Foster families are seen as a parent who is knowledgeable of the issues foster children may have and are capable of providing for the needs of these children. Being a foster parent who has provided foster care is seen as an advantage. Another benefit is that a relationship with the children placed in the home has developed. Foster parents have gotten to know the children, been their parents, seen them when they are good as well as not so good, and even love them, so that when they do become available for adoption an informed decision about legally becoming that child’s parents can be made. There are no fees charged by HATW for becoming a foster family. The necessary training is also free. Should a family in the Foster to Adopt Program wish to search for children outside of Michigan for an adoption placement, this can be done through the Waiting Child Program, and can be done while providing foster care services to Michigan children.

Domestic – Adoptive Family – Waiting Child
The Domestic Waiting Child Adoption Program is designed to match children whose parents’ parental rights have been terminated due to abuse and/or neglect with a permanent family. The purpose and primary goal of this program is to recruit, train and assess adoptive families who wish to adopt one or more of the many children who are awaiting permanency in foster care as permanent wards in the United States. This is accomplished by assisting the family by inquiring about waiting children for whom they may be an adoptive resource, providing services to the adoptive family and waiting child prior to placement, during the transition to the adoptive home, during the supervision period of the placement as well as post-placement and adoption services. There are no fees for the adoption of Michigan state ward children; families in this program do pay for services initially. If fees are charged by HATW, reimbursement by HATW will occur after the Michigan adoption is finalized. HATW will ensure that all eligible non-reoccurring expenses are submitted for the family for reimbursement to the adopting family. Families adopting a state ward from a state other than Michigan will also be eligible for non-reoccurring expenses reimbursement although agency fees would not be reimbursed. Adopting parents have the right to independent legal representation throughout the adoption process.

Children enter the Domestic Waiting Child Adoption Program through a variety of referral sources. Children in this program are wards of the State or of the court in the county or State where they reside. The majority of the children are currently living in foster homes or with relatives who are unable or unwilling to provide a permanent adoptive placement for them. Some children are currently residing in group homes, residential treatment centers or hospitals and a social worker has determined that they are stable enough to be placed in an adoptive home. This program is capable of serving children between the ages of 0 and 18, although primarily children in this program will be over the age of 7, sibling groups, minority children, and children with physical, cognitive, developmental and/or emotional delays or special needs. Families accepted into this Program will be interested in adopting a child or children over the age of 7 years.

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The Domestic Waiting Child Adoption Program is committed to providing adoptive families the education and tools necessary to plan for and nurture the children in their care across their lifespan. Each family adopting a Waiting Child will be required to attend PRIDE adoptive parenting classes through HATW or another approved agency. These classes will need to be completed prior to the Assessment being written. HATW believes information is one key to a successful adoptive family and our intent is to further assist families in becoming as aware as possible to the issues of adoption and adoptive parenting. Additional education requirements may be asked of the family should the family present with a need for more education. We believe our focus should always be in the children’s best interests who we believe would be better served through this education policy.

Domestic – Adopting Family and Child - State Ward Adoption

The State Ward Adoption Program is designed to match children whose parents’ parental rights have been terminated due to abuse and/or neglect with a permanent family. The purpose and primary goals of this program are to prepare children for adoption by either their current foster parent, relative care provider or recruited family, and to prepare, assess and provide support to the prospective adoptive family, both pre and post-adoption. This is accomplished by providing adoption education to the adoptive family and state ward child, completing necessary assessments and paperwork to complete the legal requirements for adoption and providing post-adoption services and referrals to appropriate community resources.

Children enter the State Ward Adoption Program at Hands Across the Water through referrals from the Department of Health and Human Services from various counties throughout Michigan or through our own foster care program. Children in this program are wards of the State (MCI Wards) or Permanent Wards of the court. The majority of the children are currently living in foster homes or with relatives who have provided foster care placements for the children prior to the termination of the child’s parents’ parental rights. Some children are currently residing in group homes, residential treatment centers or hospitals and a social worker has determined that they are stable enough to be placed in an adoptive home. There are no fees charged for the services of this program by HATW. There are fees associated with the finalization of the adoption and new birth certificates (court costs) paid by the family to the court and State of Michigan. Should families be unable to pay these fees HATW will assist.

The State Ward Adoption Program is committed to supporting a child’s right to a permanent family and providing adoptive families the education and tools necessary to plan for and nurture the children in their care across their lifespan.

When contacted by a prospective birth parent(s), Hands Across The Water will provide the opportunity to explore the options available in the event of an unplanned pregnancy. All birth parent(s) services will be available free of charge to the birth parent(s) not conditional to the parenting option chosen. If parenting the child is chosen, HATW will assist the birth parent(s) in accessing all resources available to facilitate a positive, nurturing bond between child and parent and to assist in parenting a child as needed. If adoption is chosen, birth parent(s) will be given the opportunity to actively select a permanent adoptive family for their child. Birth parent(s) will have access to all families listed in the “Waiting Families” album. HATW helps support same race and cross-cultural/racial adoptive families.

Hands Across The Water will meet with prospective birth parents weekly and strongly encourage an active participation in exploration and preparation services. The agency will collect and compile a non-identifying Medical and Social history on birth parents as the information is available, to provide to the Court and adoptive family in accordance with Michigan law. Birth parents are given non-identifying information from the adoptive parent’s Pre-placement Assessment in accordance with Michigan law. Openness and sharing of identifying information is encouraged, supported, and assisted.

Hands Across The Water will meet with a family as required by the State, Court, or Country and provide post-adoption/placement support and services. Visits are made in the family’s home, documents and pictures of the family are obtained, a report is generated and submitted to the appropriate officials. The family’s specific needs are

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assessed and resources given, if needed, to ensure the family’s transition and acclamation to each other is a smooth as possible.

The state of Michigan requires monthly visits and reports until the adoption is finalized. Should an international adoption not be finalized in the foreign country, and needs to be finalized in the United States, Michigan requires a post-placement visit and report monthly until the adoption is finalized as well.

Hands Across The Water offers monthly education workshops which families are encouraged to attend. These workshops offer a variety of topics specific to adoptive parenting. Families will be supplied with information from the area support groups on upcoming meetings and events. Hands Across The Water is available to all our families to provide support, resources, education, and referral services to meet any and all needs they may have. Adoption is a lifelong journey. A family’s need’s will change as that family develops and grows. Hands Across The Water is committed to the family built by adoption.

POLICIES

Adoption Orientation
R 400.12604/R 400.12707
An orientation is designed to educate potential adoptive families in the areas of, but not limited to, the programs available/program statements, policies and procedures; characteristics and needs of children available for adoption; services and resources available; fees and charges; the legal/adoption process; training and other requirements; post adoption services available. Application for services will be given to all interested families. An application for services will be considered withdrawn after 90 days if the applicant(s) fail to cooperate with the completion of the evaluation process unless they have requested their case be put on hold.

Adoption Evaluation
R 400.12605/Hague 96.47
All families in an adoption program must complete an adoptive family evaluation (adoptive home study) per the requirements of Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing, Licensing Rules for Child Placing Agencies, R400.12605, and Hague requirements. Information on all documentation needed from families, which is needed to meet said requirement, will be given to them in the Document Checklist which has specific details related to each requirement. At least one visit with the family and all household members will be in the home. A written adoptive evaluation will be completed within 90 days of the family signing an adoption application, as long as family has submitted all necessary documentation, and prior to approving a family for adoption. If appropriate, the report will include information to meet any additional information required by CIS, the foreign country, and the placing agency.

Adoptive Family Evaluation (Intercountry)
R400.12804
All adoptive family evaluations (adoptive home studies) completed by Hands Across The Water will be prepared according to the requirements of Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing, Licensing Rules for Child Placing Agencies, R400.12604. Adoption home studies will also comply with regulations within the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Inter-Country Adoption (Hague Adoption Convention).
When adoption home studies are accepted from other states or agencies in this state, they will have been completed by an agency or social worker licensed to complete adoption home studies in the state where the evaluation was completed. A Cooperating Agency Agreement will also be in place. An adoption home study completed by an agency other than Hands Across The Water will be reviewed and approved by Hands Across The Water.
Information on all documentation needed from families, which is needed to meet said requirement, will be given to them in the Document Checklist which has specific details related to each requirement. At least one visit with the family and all household members will be in the home. A written adoptive evaluation will be completed within 90 days of the family signing an adoption application, as long as family has submitted all necessary documentation, and prior to approving a family for adoption.

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Agency Recommendation
R400.12607
Hands Across The Water will make a written recommendation based on the findings of the adoptive family evaluation. The recommendation will contain approval or denial of the applicants for adoption by the social service worker and supervisor of the program. If approved, the number, gender, age, race, ethnic background, and special characteristics of adoptive children who may be placed in the adoptive applicant’s home will be stated and will be in adherence with the MultiEthnic Placement Act (MEPA). If denied, the basis for the decision shall be specified in the recommendation. All applicants for adoption will receive a signed and dated copy of their evaluation and recommendation upon its completion.

Training Requirement
R400.12606
Each adoption program will have a specific, detailed training requirement tailored to the specific children available within that program. Each family will receive a family specific Family Preparation Binder with training material specific to their family, the type of adoption they are pursuing, and any requirements specific to the program they are in. In addition, training will also include training in all of the following areas: separation; attachment and bonding; child development, including safe sleep practices for children under 1 year of age; behavioral and emotional needs of adoptive children; impact of adoption on the family; and post adoption service availability.

Education Policy
Hague 96.48
Hands Across The Water believes information is one key to a successful adoptive family and our intent with this education policy is to further assist families in becoming as aware as possible to the issues of adoption and adoptive parenting. We believe our focus should always be in the children’s best interests. We believe our education policy serves these interests. Each prospective adoptive family working with Hands Across The Water for placement or home study only services, will be required to obtain a minimum of 12 hours of preparation and educational training independent of the counseling and preparation of the home study process. INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS - All families seeking international home study services at Hands Across The Water will receive an Expectant Parent Preparation binder specific to their family with written material to read and CD’s of PowerPoint presentations and articles to review prior to the completion of the home study. Additionally, 3 training programs have been developed that all meet Hague Convention requirements. The family is to choose one program and complete that program in its entirety. If a two parent family, both parents must complete the program. When the preparation program has been completed a Certificate of Completion must be included in the family’s file. The HATW training requirement is in addition to the education and counseling that is provided during the home study and must be completed prior to the referral of a child. INFANT DOMESTIC ADOPTIONS - Families who plan to adopt through the HATW infant domestic program or another agency’s infant program will be given a workbook prepared by HATW specific to open infant domestic adoption. Families will need to read the book “Dear Birth Mother” and write a brief summary. If there are two parents in the family, both should work on the workbook together and both need to read the book and write the summary. The material will be used to facilitate discussion of adoption and adoptive parenting and will need to be finished before the home study update can be completed. WAITING CHILD DOMESTIC ADOPTION/FOSTER CARE-Families planning to adopt an older child must attend Foster/Adopt training classes. These classes must be through the PRIDE curriculum as foster care licensing may be needed at some point. This curriculum is approximately 10-12 hours worth of training and provided free to families. HATW is a member of the Washtenaw Area Homes for Children Coalition and the training is provided by member agencies. HATW will provide the family with a schedule of the upcoming classes. These classes must be completed prior to the completion of the home study.

Safeguarding Rights
R 400.12704/Hague 96.42
Hands Across The Water has safeguards in place relating to the needs and rights of the birth parents who are considering release, or who have released, a child for adoption, the child who becomes available for adoption, and the adoptive parents who apply to adopt or adopt a child. All birth parents considering working with Hands Across

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The Water will be counseled to assist them in making a parenting or adoption plan that is best for them. This choice is the ultimate choice of the birth parent. Birth parents will receive all non-identifying information about adopting families. Birth parents are able to decline working with an adoptive parent that they consider not appropriate for her family. The best interests of the child are the first and foremost in all placement considerations and decisions. All adoptive parents are provided access to educational information and resources to assist them in making informative, educated adoption decisions. All available information on the children and families they are considering entering into an adoptive placement with will be given prior to placement. Adoptive parents are able to decline any referral of a child or being chosen by a birth parent that they consider not appropriate for their family. Birth parents and adopting parents will have separate social workers working on their behalf. Hands Across The Water will make readily available to the adoptee and the adoptive parent(s) upon request all non-identifying information in its custody about the adoptee’s health history or background.

Birth Parent Release
R 400.12705
Hands Across The Water will document that information has been provided for birth parents before the birth parents release their rights to a child unless the child is relinquished under the safe delivery of newborns act, 1939 PA 288, MCL 712.1 to 712.20. Information will include, but is not limited to, agency program statement, policies, and procedures; legal process for adoption; services and resources available; and meaning and consequences of a release.

Adoptive Family Recruitment
R 400.12706
Hands Across The Water is committed to recruit suitable adoptive parents so that children will be placed into an adoptive home in a timely manner. Hands Across The Water will recruit adoptive parents who can meet the needs of the children served by this agency. A child specific recruitment plan will be developed for any child this agency is responsible for who does not have an identified family. This plan will be based on the child evaluation and will be updated every 90 days. If no suitable adoptive parents are available at Hands Across The Water, any birth parent inquiring about services will be informed of this and referred to another appropriate facility if they so choose.

Child Evaluation
R400.12708
A Hands Across The Water social service worker shall complete a written assessment of each child available for adoption within 45 days of the child being referred for adoption in state ward children. The assessment shall include all information available in the foster care file from the date the child entered care and shall meet all requirements of section 27 of 1939 PA 288, MCL 710.27. Hands Across The Water will have on file a written adoptive family evaluation and agency recommendation as required under R 400.12605 and R 400.12607 before approving the adoptive parents for each adoptive placement and before referring a child to, or placing a child in, the home for purposes of adoption.

Placement Selections
R400.12709
Hands Across The Water will document on the Placement Approval form all the factors assessed in subrule 1 and 2 which is signed and approved by a supervisor and kept in the family’s and child’s files. The Pre-Placement Visit Approval form is used to address all factors listed in subrule 4. Hands Across The Water will only place a child in an unlicensed home for the purposes of adoption if all of the conditions listed in subrule 5 are met.

Adoptive Parent Information
R400.12710
Hands Across The Water will provide all adoptive parents with all the information listed in subrule 1 prior to the placement of a child. This is documented on the Verification of Info Provided to Adoptive Parents form (and the Copy of Referral Materials Receipt of Referral Verification form for international adoptions) whichever is specific to the appropriate program. Should information not be available, agency will document what information is not
available, why it is not available if known, and attempts made to secure the information. As new information is received, Hands Across The Water will provide adoptive parents with such information as soon as it becomes available to the agency.

**Adoptive Placements**
R 400.12711
Hands Across The Water will document on the Placement Approval form all the factors assessed in rule R400.12711 which is signed and approved by a supervisor and kept in the family’s and child’s files.

**Adoption Supervision/Post Placement/Post Adoption**
R 400.12712/ Hague 96.51
Hands Across The Water will provide post-placement supervision visits in the family’s home monthly until the adoption is finalized. Post-placement reports will be written for each visit and include, but not limited to, the following: an assessment of the child’s and adoptive family’s adjustment and, where needed, information about resources and services provided to assist child and family; health of child; adjustment of child to family; adjustment of family to child; development of child; cultural needs; legal status; and general assessment/recommendations.

For intercountry adoptions which are final in the foreign country, Hands Across The Water requires a minimum of three post adoption reports at the interval of 6 months, 12 months, and 18 months, unless otherwise indicated by a foreign country. If a foreign country requires a different schedule, or additional post adoption reports, Hands Across The Water will adhere to that schedule. If the foreign country does not require post adoption reports, the Hands Across The Water requirement will be adhered to. Hands Across The Water shall assess and record the child’s and adoptive family’s adjustment and, where needed, shall include plans to assist the child or adoptive family. Hands Across The Water shall keep the adoptive parents informed of the results of the agency’s continuing assessment of the placement at the conclusion of each visit.

Should a family prefer not to have post-adoption reports completed by HATW, written verification from a licensed agency who will be completing the reports is needed prior to completion of home study.

Hands Across The Water takes all appropriate measures to ensure that during the placement of a child, adoptive families experience placement and post-adoption services from only trained staff and providers on behalf of Hands Across The Water.

**Disruption Policy**
Hague 96.59(c)(d)(e)(f)
Hands Across The Water will monitor the post-placement period of an adoption according to the requirements of the child’s country and the State of Michigan and/or the adoptive parent’s State of residence. Should it be determined that there needs to be an interruption of the placement during the post-placement period, Hands Across The Water will provide family and child with support, assistance, services to maintain placement or to facilitate transfer of child to another placement. All efforts will be made to first maintain the placement with removal of child as the last resort, unless required by the laws of the child’s country of origin.

**Dissolution Policy**
Hague 96.51(h)
Hands Across The Water will take all measures to maintain a finalized adoptive placement if in the child’s best interest, but should it become necessary for the termination of the adoptive parent(s)’ parental rights after an adoption was made final in the child’s country of origin, Hands Across The Water will assist, plan, and provide services for the adoption dissolution.

**Adoptive Family Evaluation Record**
R 400.12608

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Hands Across The Water shall maintain a record for each applicant for adoption. All information as stated in this rule will be contained within each record. Hands Across The Water will retain said records at the agency’s main office for not less than 3 years after the termination of services to applicant. After 3 years, all records will be stored in a secure, off-site record storage facility. If a branch office of Hands Across The Water ceases to operate, all adoption evaluation records will be forwarded to the central office. If Hands Across The Water in its entirety ceases operation, the adoption evaluation records shall be forwarded to the State.

Adoption Placement Record
R 400.12713/Hague 96.33(e)
Hands Across The Water shall maintain a record for each adoption placement. All information as stated in this rule will be contained within each record. If a branch office of Hands Across The Water ceases to operate, all adoption records will be forwarded to the agency’s central office. If Hands Across The Water in its entirety ceases operation, all adoption records shall be forwarded to the State. All adoption records for children adopted from Michigan’s child welfare system will be sent to the State one year after finalization of the adoption.

Ongoing international cases will be transferred to an appropriate networking/partner agency specific to case. Cases and case files will be transferred via cooperation with the State DHHS, and in accordance with their procedures and in an organized manner. Hands Across The Water will reimburse all clients for payments received for services unredeemed. Determination of the extent of services rendered will rest with Hands Across The Water.

Inter-Country Adoption Record
R400.12808
Hands Across The Water will maintain an adoption record for each adoption family and child placed. Records will be maintained on site for not less than 3 years at which time they will be transferred to a secure document storage site. If a branch office ceases to operate, then the agency shall forward the branch’s adoption records to the primary office location. If Hands Across The Water ceases to operate, then the agency shall forward its child records to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. If Hands Across The Water ceases to operate, then the agency shall shred or return to the applicant family the family records if services were terminated 3 or more years before closure. Records shall be forwarded to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services central office all other records.

Record Management
R 400.12213/Hague 96.42
Hands Across The Water will permanently maintain and store all pertinent records and correspondences related to adoptions in safe, secure, locked files on the agency premises to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of the adoptees and adoptive/prospective adoptive families. Hands Across The Water shall do all of the following with respect to maintenance of required records:
(a) Protect each record against destruction and damage.
(b) Keep each record in a uniform fashion maintaining each record/file in order under consistent section headings within each record/file.
(c) Store and maintain each record in a manner to ensure confidentiality and to prevent unauthorized access.
(d) Retain or archive adoption records in a safe, secure, and retrievable manner for the period of time not less than 3 years after the agency’s termination of services to the applicant.
(e) Makes readily available to the adoptee and the adoptive parent(s) upon request all non-identifying information in its custody about the adoptee’s health history or background.
(f) Ensures that personal data gathered or transmitted in connection with an adoption is used only for the purposes for which the information was gathered and safeguards sensitive individual information.
(g) Will notify the accrediting entity and the (Hague) Secretary in writing within thirty days of the time it ceases to provide or is no longer permitted to provide adoption services and provides information about the transfer of its adoption records.
(h) Keep records/files in the office at all times.
(i) Keep records/files in file cabinets with locking capabilities.

Charitable Donations
Hague 96.33(f)
Hands Across The Water does accept charitable donations from families, staff, and the public but such donations do not and will not influence child placement and/or family assessment decisions in any way and may be cause for termination of services should such request be implied or stated.

Compensation
Hague 96.34
Hands Across The Water does not compensate any individual who provides intercountry adoption services with an incentive fee or contingent fee for each child located or placed for adoption. Hands Across The Water compensates its director, officers, employees, contract workers, and supervised providers who provide intercountry adoption services only for services actually rendered and only on a fee-for-service, hourly wage, or salary basis rather than a contingent fee basis. Hands Across The Water does not make payments, promise payment, or gives other consideration to any individual directly or indirectly involved in provision of adoption services in a particular case, except for salaries or fees-for-services actually rendered and reimbursement for costs incurred.

Prohibition of Preferential Treatment
Hague 96.39(c)
Hands Across The Water does not give preferential treatment to its board members, contributors, volunteers, employees, agents, consultants, or independent contractors, with respect to the placement of children for adoption.

Complaint/Grievance Policy And Service Delivery Improvement
Hague 96.41/R400.12202(h) per R400.12210
Hands Across The Water’s Grievance Policy is designed to permit any birth parent, foster parent, prospective adoptive parent or adoptive parent, foster child or adoptee to lodge a signed and dated complaint about any of the services or activities of this agency or persons involved with this agency including our supervised providers* that he or she believes raises an issue of compliance with the Convention*, the IAA*, or the regulations implementing the IAA, State of Michigan Licensing Compliance Regulations, the Act No. 116 of the Public Acts of 1973, as amended, being 722.11 et seq. of the Michigan Compiled Laws , House Bill No. 4649, or HATW written policy. This policy shall provide to safeguard the legal rights of children, their families, foster families, releasing parents, birth parents, and adoptive families served.

The grievance process begins with the communication process between person involved and case worker to find a solution. Should a solution not be found, or is unsatisfactory to person initiating complaint, the worker’s supervisor should receive communication regarding the unsatisfactory situation and to find resolution of grievance. Should the communication process not be effective in resolving the issue or grievance, or the person bringing the issue or grievance forward is dissatisfied with the response to their complaint, the following procedure should take place:

The person bringing forward the complaint should do so in a signed, dated and written format.

Written complaints should be submitted to the Agency Director. Should the complaint be directly related to the Agency Director, the written complaint should be directed to the Board of Directors’ President.

The Director or Board of Directors’ President will respond in writing to the person submitting the complaint within 5 business days of receiving the written complaint acknowledging receipt of complaint and process to be followed and steps to be taken.

The Agency Director, or Board of Directors’ President, must respond in writing to complaints received within thirty days of receipt, and provide expedited review of such complaints that are time-sensitive or that involve allegations of fraud. The written response will include the steps taken to investigate and outcome of investigation of the complaint.

After following the above procedure, if a family continues to have a complaint that involves: the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, the Intercountry Adoption Act, the Federal implementing regulations (22 CFR 96, 97,
98), or a Hague Convention adoption case, they should share this information with US Department of State Adoptions Complaint Registry at this website http://adoptionusca.state.gov/HCRWeb/WelcomeForm.aspx.

If the complaint does not involve the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, the Intercountry Adoption Act, the Federal implementing regulations (22 CFR 96, 97, 98), or a Hague Convention adoption case, a complaint can be filed with the State of Michigan’s Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing (BCAL) http://michigan.gov/documents/FIA-Licensing-Complaint_79110_7.pdf. If the grievance is not resolved by filing a complaint with BCAL, a hearing may be requested to be conducted under chapter 4 of the administrative procedures act of 1969. 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.271 to 24.287.

In accordance with the provisions set forth in section 5 of the Children’s Ombudsman Act, 1994 PA 204, MCL 722.925, a complaint may be filed with the Office of the Children’s Ombudsman to investigate the supervising agency’s alleged violation of law, rule, or policy.

Hands Across The Water will not take any action to discourage a client or prospective client from, or retaliate against a client or prospective client for: making a complaint; expressing a grievance; providing information in writing or interviews to an accrediting entity on the agency’s performance; or questioning the conduct of or expressing an opinion about the performance of Hands Across The Water.

Hands Across The Water would like to encourage our LGBT clients to share any concerns or issues that may arise while receiving services at Hands Across The Water. We welcome this information to help this agency identify and address discriminatory or insensitive treatment by staff or volunteers. This information should be brought to the agency’s attention by way of the process identified above.

Note: The above policy does not apply to any action taken by Hands Across The Water foster care licensing. A grievance procedure for foster care licensing is already in place and monitored by the State of Michigan.  *Supervised Providers – means any agency, person, or other non-governmental entity, including any foreign entity, regardless of whether it is called a facilitator, agent, attorney, or by any other name, that is providing one or more adoption services in a Convention case under the supervision and responsibility of an accredited agency, temporarily accredited agency, or approved person that is acting as the primary provider in the case. *Convention – means the Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption done at the Hague on May 29, 1993. *IAA – means the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000, Public Law 106-279 (2000) (42 U.S.C. 14901-14954), as amended from time to time. *Secretary – means the Secretary of State, the Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs, or any other Department of State official exercising the Secretary of State’s authority under the Convention, the IAA, or any regulations implementing the IAA, pursuant to a delegation of authority.

**Ethical Practice**
Hague 96.35
Hands Across The Water is committed to provide ethical adoption services in all aspects of our work and in accordance with the Hague Convention’s principles of: ensuring that intercountry adoptions take place in the best interests of children; and in preventing the abduction, exploitation, sale, or trafficking of children. All policies and procedures will be based on ethical practice and should it be discovered that a situation is taking place that is contrary to this policy, the appropriate authorities will be notified immediately.

**Prohibition on Child Buying**
Hague 96.36
The Agency prohibits its employees and agents from giving money or other consideration, directly or indirectly, to a child’s parent(s), other individual(s), or an entity as payment for the child or as an inducement to release the child. If permitted or required by the child’s country of origin, Hands Across The Water, with the permission of the Executive Director, may remit reasonable payments for activities related to the adoption proceedings, birth medical costs, the care of the child, the care of the birth mother while pregnant and immediately following birth of the child, or the provision of child welfare and child protection services generally. Permitted or required contributions shall not be remitted as payment for the child or as an inducement to release the child.

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Website Development and Maintenance
Hague 96.39(f)
Hands Across The Water does not photo-list children waiting for adoption via their internet website. All children listed on the website have already been placed into families and are not available for adoption. Hands Across The Water may in special family recruitment efforts, list a child in need of a family on specific child photo-listing websites as long as the listing is not prohibited by State and Federal law or the law of the child’s country of origin.

Disclosure of Adoption Records
Hague 96.42
All available information on children and their birth families will be provided to adoptive parent(s) prior to placement. Hands Across The Water will make readily available to the adoptee upon written request all non-identifying information in its custody about the adoptee’s health history or background. An adult adoptee, as defined as age 18 or older, may request in writing their identifying information, if available, per state law. An adult adoptee may request in writing that their identifying information be given to biological parents and/or adult siblings if requested, per state law.

Refund Policy
Hague 96.40(d)(b)
All fees paid to Hands Across The Water are non-refundable once paid except for as follows:

- HATW Program fee - If country closes or adoptions are no longer possible, HATW Program fee can be transferred to another Hands Across The Water program but will not be refunded;
- Post-Adoption Reports fees - If Family moves out-of-state & Hands Across The Water is no longer able to provide this service, unused fee is refundable when requested in writing;
- International Program fee - Should Family decide to discontinue the adoption process, no refund is available for paid portion. Should a problem arise with the referral/child resulting in inability for that child to be adopted, the portion of this fee paid would transfer to another referral.

Fees paid to an entity other than Hands Across The Water may or may not be refundable depending on that entity’s refund policy. Amount of fees paid to an entity other than Hands Across The Water are not regulated by or the responsibility of Hands Across The Water and are subject to any change determined by that entity. Hands Across The Water has no control over or responsibility for these fees. Hands Across The Water will return any funds to which the prospective adoptive parent(s) may be entitled within sixty days of the completion of the delivery of services.

Waivers
Hague 96.39(g)
Hands Across The Water will not require a client or prospective adoptive client to sign a blanket waiver of liability in connection with the provision of any adoption services. Any waiver required is limited and specific, based on risks that have been discussed and explained to the client in the adoption Services Contract.

Acting as Primary Provider (Placement Agency)
Hague 96.44
Hands Across The Water will act as Primary Provider in Convention County adoptions when

(i) providing all adoption services by itself or
(ii) is the sole accredited agency providing adoption services or
(iii) if more than one agency providing adoption services is accredited, Hands Across The Water is responsible for child placement.

Hands Across The Water is a licensed not-for-profit child placement agency, which develops, and implements a service plan for providing all adoption services and provides these services either directly or through arrangements with supervised providers, exempted providers, public domestic authorities, competent authorities, Central Authorities, public foreign authorities or other foreign providers. Hands Across The Water will perform as Primary Provider certain adoption services, including

(i) placement services
(ii) home study assessment reports

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Hands Across The Water will require the services of an Exempt Provider when possible or Supervised Provider if necessary, to perform certain services in the adoption cases of families from a state other than Michigan, who choose to adopt from Hague Convention countries such as:

(i) home study assessment reports and/or
(ii) post-adoPTION reports.

Hands Across The Water will require the services of a Supervised Provider to perform certain services in the adoption cases of families from a state other than Michigan, who choose to adopt from Hague Convention countries such as (i) post-placement reports.

Working with Foreign Supervised Providers
Hague 96.46

Hands Across The Water when acting as Primary Provider and utilizing a Foreign Supervised Provider (FSP) in a Convention country to provide adoption services, shall ensure that the Supervised Provider will meet the following standards:

- Shall be in compliance with Convention laws;
- Shall not engage in practices inconsistent with the child’s best interest and shall not be involved in the sale, abduction, exploitation, or trafficking of children;
- Shall disclose suitability in accordance with the Convention;
- Shall not have a pattern of licensing suspensions or other sanctions and has not lost the right to provide adoption services in any jurisdiction for reasons germane to the Convention;
- Shall be accredited to the extent that its country’s laws permits.

Provision of Medical/Social Information in Intercountry Adoptions
Hague 96.49

Hands Across The Water will provide its prospective adoptive families with any and all available medical and social information pertinent to the child as early as possible, but no later than two weeks prior to either the adoption or placement for adoption, or the date on which the prospective adoptive parent(s) travel to the country to complete all procedures in such country relating to the adoption or placement for adoption, whichever is earlier.

Withdrawal of Intercountry Referral
Hague 96.49(k)

Hands Across The Water will not withdraw a referral until the family has had two weeks to consider the needs of the child referred and their ability to meet those needs, unless otherwise designated by the Convention country government. The family will have the opportunity to obtain physician review of medical information and other descriptive information, including videotapes of the child if available. Should the family be unable to make a decision to accept or decline the child in the two week period, Hands Across The Water will withdraw the referral. If there are extenuating circumstances involving the child’s best interests which require a more expedited decision, the family will be informed of this at time of referral.
This International Adoption Services Contract is made and entered into by and between Hands Across The Water, Inc., a non-profit child-placement agency licensed in the State of Michigan, hereinafter sometimes referred to as (“HATW”) and the undersigned applicant, hereinafter sometimes referred to as “Family”.

WHEREAS, HATW provides adoption services to families who are seeking to adopt a child; and,

WHEREAS, Family signed an Application requesting that HATW provide Adoption Services and HATW is desirous of providing adoption services to the family under the terms hereinafter set out; and,

WHEREAS, the parties desire that the adoption services to be performed and the terms and conditions for performing said services be fully set forth in a written contract signed by each of the parties. For fee structure of services and program options specific to Family, refer to Attachment A of this Services Contract. For list of all possible agency fees, refer to List of Agency Fees for International Adoption Services in Information Packet.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the premises and the terms, conditions and covenants hereinafter set out, it is agreed by and between the parties as follows;

HATW agrees to provide an adoption home study assessment, adoption education, post placement/adoption supervision and any assistance, guidance, support during the adoption process as outlined in the inquiry packet and in full accordance with the laws of the state of Michigan, licensing regulations and our policy and procedure manual.

Family acknowledges that they have received, read, and understand the “HATW Information Packet” which describes the agency’s: Program Statement, policies and procedures including general family eligibility, adoption services and procedures at Hands Across The Water, education requirement, resources available, fees/charges for services, and fee payment schedule.

Adoption Services Fee Structure

Family agrees to pay HATW for adoption services in accordance with HATW’s fee schedule in effect at the time services are rendered. Family understands that when their file is on hold for 6 months or more, or closed for any reason, any subsequent services will be billed at the new current rate. Family understands that 3 months of no response to social worker/agency attempts to contact may result in closure of file.

Family agrees to pay all fees for adoption services in full at the time or times that the same become due and payable as set out in the fee schedule. HATW will have no obligation to provide any services that are not paid for in accordance with the fee schedule. Any service performed must be paid for regardless if Family or HATW chooses to discontinue service. A Service charge will be charged for all checks returned to HATW by Family’s bank. HATW has the option of seeking Court relief—specific performance, plus actual costs, and attorney’s fees – for any unpaid fees owed.

Funds paid into the HATW Humanitarian Aid Fund will be used towards Helping Hands Project activities and to re-supplement the Toby Jacobowitz Memorial Fund.

HATW will put mechanisms in place for transferring funds to the foreign country when the financial institutions of the foreign country so permit and for obtaining written receipts for such transfers, so that transaction costs for Family are minimized. Money transfers for payments will be done by HATW by appropriate procedures such as wire, mail, FedEx, DHL, or other methods the agency determines appropriate.

HATW will provide receipts for all monies paid directly to the agency. HATW’s representatives in the foreign country will provide receipts when money is paid in the foreign country.

Home Study & Post Placement/Adoption Supervision

Family agrees to provide in a prompt and timely manner, all documents and information requested by HATW in order to complete the Home Study or from time to time as needed. If Family fails to provide any documents or information then HATW may send Family a written letter identifying the documents or information required and advising Family that the adoption services will be terminated if Family does not provide the documents or information within the time deadline specified in the letter. If Family then refuses or neglects to provide the documents or information within the time granted in the letter, this International Adoption Services Contract shall terminate and HATW shall have no further obligation to provide a Home Study or any other adoption services to Family. All fees paid to HATW shall be deemed to have been earned by HATW and Family shall not be entitled to any refund. Any unpaid fees, costs or expenses for services rendered shall immediately become due and payable and shall be paid to HATW.

Family agrees that the following provisions shall apply to home study and post placement/adoption supervision services provided by HATW and to the finalization of adoption services.
1. Family acknowledges, understands and agrees that HATW cannot and does not under any circumstances guarantee in advance that Family will be approved by HATW or that HATW will recommend that a child be placed with or assigned to Family.

2. Family understands and agrees that the home study fee is 100% non-refundable.

3. A home study must be performed and a written home study report prepared before a child can be placed with Family. Home studies are valid for a period of one year from the Approval date. The home study must be updated prior to expiring. The family agrees to pay for any required home study updates and provide requested documentation. If the home study expires the agency reserves the right to disengage services or require a new home study be completed at the current rate.

4. Family understands there is an educational requirement for the completion of the home study and agree to fulfill this requirement. Not doing so will result in HATW’s inability to complete the home study or place a child into Family’s home.

5. Family understands and agrees that recommendation and approval of placement of a child with Family cannot be guaranteed when the home study is updated.

6. Family understands and agrees that HATW will not forward the home study to the court, to Family or to Family’s attorney/agency/coordinator for the purpose of finalization until all post placement supervision requirements have been completed.

7. Family understands and agrees that HATW has the right and obligation to withdraw or change its approval or recommendation set out in the home study for events or action which comes to the attention of HATW. Approvals or recommendations will be changed in the best interest of the child based upon information which comes to the attention of HATW after the home study is initially completed or refusal to cooperate with HATW’s adoption or post placement/adoption supervision requirements, criminal or legal action concerning the adoptive family, mental health issues of family or for any other matters which HATW determines will have a material impact of the best interests of the child. Before processing continues, HATW may require additional documentation, clearance, clarification, explanation, counseling, or evaluation as HATW in its professional opinion deems necessary or advisable. Refusal to reasonably comply may result in termination of adoption proceedings or such other actions as may be necessary or advisable to protect the best interests of the minor child.

8. Family further acknowledges that the approval and recommendation of Family for the placement of a child involves many different considerations, including, but not limited to the physical and mental health of the child and of the Family and the motivation, readiness, suitability and financial ability of the Family and the Family’s preparedness to parent a child with a different racial, cultural, or socioeconomic background. If any of these factors should change or if any other factor should change that HATW in its professional judgment considers being material in the placement of a child with Family, then it will be necessary to update the home study to take such factors into consideration.

9. Family can put the home study process on hold at any time for up to six months if done so in writing. Fees due up to that point are to be paid in full. If after 6 months of no activity, Family’s adoption file will be closed. Should Family not respond to social worker or agency attempts to contact for a period of 3 months, Family’s adoption file will be closed. Should Family’s file be closed, any fees paid are not refundable should Family begin the process and choose not to continue before completion of process, except post placement/adoption fees. If Family’s adoption file is closed, Family can start the adoption process again at any time but understands the process will begin from the beginning as if a new case and with fees according to current fee schedule.

10. Family must maintain contact with HATW and/or assigned social worker regarding any household changes such as moves, family members moving into or out of home, job changes, pregnancy, health changes, financial changes, or the placement of children into the home. Family must respond to social workers monthly contact or this will be considered inactivity of the case. If after three months of no response to social worker’s attempt to contact Family, the adoption file of Family will be closed according to #9 stipulations.

11. Family accepts the responsibility for obtaining and completing, with guidance and procedural assistance from HATW, all required documents in proper form for submission to Citizenship & Immigration Services (hereinafter referred to as CIS) and the foreign country of adoption. HATW will submit initial CIS forms and supporting documents (supplied to HATW by Family) on behalf of Family.

12. If HATW is acting as Family’s placing agency, HATW will submit all required documents to the foreign country of adoption and appropriate authorities in that country, directly or through their Coordinators. Although HATW will act in a timely manner, it is acknowledged that the time frame for this process by foreign officials cannot be predicted or controlled.

13. If HATW is not Family’s placing agency, HATW will submit all required documents to the identified placing agency as requested.

14. HATW will offer support and linkages with other families adopting internationally to Family throughout their adoption process and post-placement/adoption supervision.

15. HATW requires post placement/adoption supervision for all families that have a child placed with the Family. Family agrees to participate and comply with all post placement/adoption requirements of HATW, placing agency if not HATW, and the country adopting from. If Family’s placing agency/country does not have required post placement/adoption reports, Family agrees to follow the HATW agency requirement for post placement/adoption reports which is a minimum of 3 reports at 6 months, 12 months and 18 months upon arrival home. Family agrees to cooperate fully with post placement/adoption supervision requirements, including, but not limited to:
   a. Having the child examined by a licensed physician at least once during each post placement/adoption time period;
   b. Provide 8 to 10 color photos of the child and family for each report in whatever format required;

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c. Being available for post placement/adoPTION visits with the social worker even if this means rearranging the Family’s normal daily schedule or taking time off work;

d. Provide HATW with all required medical reports, documents, information, post placement/adoPTION reports, photos, and foreign country documents with translations. U.S./State documents such as birth certificate, passport, adoption decree if applicable, all other documents or information reasonably required by HATW during the post placement/adoPTION period.

16. Family agrees to file a petition of adoption and to finalize the adoption in their state of residency or other appropriate court, if applicable, at the earliest allowable date and Family agrees to send a copy of the final adoption decree to HATW upon entry of the adoption decree by the court. It is acknowledged that some States do not allow or require a “re-adoption” for international adoptions finalized in another country.

Family understands and agrees that some foreign countries, other states, judges or other governmental agencies may require additional post placement/adoPTION visits or services, additional doctor visits, additional medical reports and other documentation and reports. In such event, Family agrees to arrange for and pay for the same. It should be understood that should Family fail to comply with the post placement/adoPTION report requirements outlined above and in the signed Post Placement/Adoption Commitment form, HATW has the option of seeking Court relief—specific performance, plus actual costs, and attorney’s fees. Additionally, a report to Department of Human Services of the child’s state of residence, Child Protective Services may be made on the grounds of possible neglect.

Assumption of Risks
Family understands that there is risk in any adoption and that HATW in performing adoption services or any other services does not make any guarantees, representations or warranties concerning any aspect of the adoption process. Family understands that the completion of this International Adoption Services Contract does not assure the placement of a child with Family nor does it assure a successful outcome and Family assumes all such risks.

Legal Risk
A child referred internationally may be free for adoption although USA or foreign politics may interfere with the adoption process. Fees paid for international placement services are non-refundable in the event a country suspends or stops foreign adoption. International adoptions are in great part controlled by the foreign government, its political infrastructure and its relationship with the US. International adoptions are unpredictable and are often subject to changes in processing. Political situations may arise causing possible closing or suspension of adoptions. HATW cannot offer any guarantees that a particular country will not close or change its adoption policies or procedures. However, HATW will make every effort to keep Family informed of the status of adoption in the country and will focus on providing adoption programs which are considered stable. If a change should arise within the sending country which amounts to significant delays or closing, HATW will work with Family to determine if another program would be appropriate. In the event the adoption is not completed for any reason beyond the control of HATW, Family understands that the fees already paid to the foreign entities or other officials in the foreign country on their behalf are not recoverable. Family understands and assumes all such risks.

Medical & Social Risks
Every Family adopting, especially from a foreign country, must understand the medical and emotional risks involved. While HATW makes every effort to obtain all information on a child and all information made available to HATW is given to the Family, there continues to be a risk of the following, but not limited to: undetected health problems, no immunizations, immunizations with expired serums or lack of receipt of the series, no Hepatitis B, TB or HIV blood tests (or inaccuracies thereof), age and size discrepancies, malnutrition, unknown family background and social history, change of child’s health and no additional medical information following initial referral. Many medical tests for young children are unreliable at best; some tests may have a built-in time-delay factor or exhibit a false-negative or false-positive response; and the medical and/or social status of the child is based upon available information. Further complicating this issue is the problematic state of the various countries’ medical systems, in terms of both technical proficiency and education. Because of the wide variance and disparity throughout the world, the accuracy of medical information can be neither guaranteed nor discounted in any way. Family understands that the Family’s child could possibly arrive with undiagnosed physical, emotional and/or developmental problems. Family is to understand that the adoption of an older child holds the risk of an attachment or bonding disorder, and that while in most cases the children are able to attach appropriately, HATW cannot guarantee a given child’s ability to attach to a new parent nor in what the length of time. HATW strongly recommends that Family have all medical information reviewed by an International Medical Specialist. HATW will provide Family with such a list of Specialists and Family understands the cost of a review is at Family’s expense.

Informational Inaccuracies
In some adoptions, another entity or government authority may be providing the child’s referral information. Such child referral entity may furnish to Family medical and social information. HATW may also furnish to Family medical and social information (provided by entity) about an adoptive placement. When such information is provided, however, HATW does not guarantee the completeness or the accuracy of the information. Family understands and assumes all such risks.

HATW’s commitment is to disclose one hundred percent of the information obtained, as it is acquired, allowing Family to make the most informed decision possible. HATW will try to obtain as much information as possible but Family should understand that the information available may be very limited, incomplete or erroneous.

Family has the right to not accept any referral presented to them. A Decline Referral form will be completed and signed by Family indicating the reason(s) for decline. Family is expected to accept a referral within twenty-four hours if at all possible, pending any medical review in process.
If after two declines by Family for children meeting Family’s requirements, Family will need to meet with Director to discuss HATW’s understanding of Family’s requirements/expectations.

**Other Risks**
In an international adoption, typically, a child is matched with a family by the foreign government or the networking entity working in a particular country. All information received by HATW regarding the child’s eligibility for international placement is immediately given to the Family or comes directly to the Family from the other entity. In some instances, the referral may be lost or withdrawn prior to placement, due to a change or decline of health of the child, death of the child, changing government laws, change of mind of birth parent, or removal of the child from the orphanage by the government or extended birth family. In most cases the child matched or assigned to Family will be the Family’s child, but it is important to understand the risks and Family understands and agrees to assume such risks.

**Release of Liability**
Family hereby releases HATW and its directors, officers, employees and agents from all liability and all responsibility regarding the risks assumed by Family as above set out including the risk of an unsuccessful outcome of the adoption proceedings, all legal risks, all medical and social risks, all risks of informational inaccuracies and all other risks of any kind or nature. Family hereby releases HATW and its directors, officers, employees and agents from any claim or claims arising out of the actions, inaction, errors or omissions committed by other organizations or entities involved in the Family’s adoption process.

**Waiver of Claims**
Family hereby waives any and all claims, which Family may have now or have in the future against HATW and its directors, officers, employees and agents. Family agrees to hold harmless HATW and its above described directors, officers and employees against any claims known or unknown, now existing or which exist in the future, which may arise out of this International Adoption Services Contract or the receipt of services from, or adoption through HATW.

**Hands Across The Water, Inc. Independent from other Agents**
Family understands that HATW is a licensed, non-profit child-placing organization. The services provided by HATW are independent from the services of other child placement and referral agencies or organizations. Additionally child referral agencies utilize foreign country entities, which are also independent and separate, both from Hands Across The Water, Inc and any other entity referenced herein are acting independently, on behalf of Family and each acts independently of the other, each as an agent for Family. Family agrees in good faith, in advance, that all actions taken by each of the entities referenced herein shall be deemed to be taken at the request of Family and with Family’s authorization.

**Disruption/Dissolution of Adoptive Placement**
It is the right of any child in a disruption or dissolution situation to receive full protection and services and to be deemed as the primary client by HATW and the primary concern of the Family.

**Disruption** of an adoption means the interruption of a placement for adoption during the post-placement period prior to finalization. HATW and the adoptive parent(s) will seek to avoid disruption of their adoption if that is in the best interests of the child. Should it be determined that there needs to be an interruption of the placement during the post-placement period, HATW will provide family and child with support, assistance, services to maintain placement or to facilitate transfer of child to another placement. All efforts will be made to first maintain the placement with removal of child, if in the United States, as the last resort.

**Disruption while child is still in birth country.** In situations where an adoption has not been finalized, and the child is not in the United States, HATW will attempt to assist the Family in arranging for supportive services to the child and Family. The Family will need to express in writing to HATW that they want to disrupt the adoption. The Family will be responsible for any costs incurred as a result of their decision to disrupt including fees associated with the services HATW provides to Family and child. If there are fees due for services up to the point of disruption, Family is responsible for those fees. In those cases where it is in the best interest of the minor child, HATW will assist in locating and arranging for a new adoptive placement when possible. The agency or government authority holding legal custody of the child will be notified immediately by HATW. The agency or authority holding legal custody of the child will have full authority over the child to remove, place or return the child to their previous orphanage.

**Disruption when child is in the United States.** Should a child be in the United States during the post-placement period and Family decides to disrupt, HATW will attempt to assist the Family in arranging for supportive services to the child and Family. In the event that counseling or support services are not successful in resolving serious difficulties and the Family expresses in writing to HATW that they want to disrupt the placement of the child, HATW and Family will establish an agreed upon date not less than 1 week but within 30 days to effect a change in the custody and physical home of the child. While HATW will assist Family and child through this time, it is understood that HATW will not take physical or legal custody of the child as Family has this responsibility. Family will be responsible to find appropriate placement for child, which is in the child’s best interest, with the assistance of HATW. Family assumes all risks and financial and emotional obligations in the event of a disruption. Family is responsible and shall assume full financial responsibility for any such services and for placement of the child, promptly paying or arranging for payment of all expenses incurred meeting the child’s needs as well as placing the child in another adoptive home, or in foster care, and in following the requirements of the local state and foreign country regarding the care and disposition of the child. This financial responsibility extends to services provided by HATW to Family and/or child.

**Dissolution** of an adoption means the termination of the adoptive parent(s’) parental rights after an adoption is finalized. Finalization may occur in the child’s birth country or in the United States. Upon finalization of an adoption the adoptive child acquires all the rights, privileges and immunities of a child born to Family and Family has all the responsibilities, legal obligations and duties to the child the same as though the child were born to Family in childbirth. Should the Family determined they wish to dissolve their adoption, HATW will provide family and child with

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support, assistance, services to maintain the adoption or to facilitate transfer of child to another placement. All efforts will be made to first maintain the adoption with removal of child, if in the United States, as the last resort.

**Dissolution while child is still in birth country.** Family understands that in most international adoptions, finalization of the adoption occurs in the foreign country and all of the legal rights and duties of parent and child are created before leaving the foreign country. The Family will need to express in writing to HATW that they want to dissolve the adoption. The Family will be responsible for any costs incurred as a result of their decision to dissolve including fees associated with the services HATW provides to Family and child. If there are fees due for services up to the point of dissolution, Family is responsible for those fees. Family is financially responsible to bring their legally adopted child to the United States. Under no circumstances will Family abandon the child in the birth country. HATW will assist the Family in finding an appropriate adoptive placement to be ready when child arrives in the United States. Family will cooperate with all legal domestic adoption proceedings, they being the relinquishing parent. Family is responsible and shall assume full financial responsibility for any such services and for placement of the child, promptly paying or arranging for payment of all expenses incurred meeting the child’s needs as well as placing the child in another adoptive home, or in foster care, and in following the requirements of the local state and foreign country regarding the care and disposition of the child.

**Dissolution when child is in the United States.** Family will notify HATW promptly if there arises significant problems in the relationship of the Family and child prior to a crisis level. To the extent it has knowledge and resources, HATW will provide advise and offer information regarding available external assistance such as counseling and support services that the Family may engage at the Family’s expense. As warranted, HATW will visit with Family regarding the adoptive placement, difficulties being experienced, resources needed, child’s safety and well-being, etc. and monitor placement. In the event that counseling or support services are not successful in resolving serious difficulties and the Family expresses in writing to HATW that they want to dissolve the adoption of the child, HATW and Family will establish an agreed upon date not less than 1 week but within 30 days to effect a change in the custody and physical home of the child. While HATW will assist Family and child through this time, it is understood that HATW will not take physical or legal custody of the child as Family has this responsibility. Family will be responsible to find appropriate placement for child, which is in the child’s best interest, with the assistance of HATW. Family assumes all risks and financial and emotional obligations in the event of a dissolution. Family is responsible and shall assume full financial responsibility for any such services and for placement of the child, promptly paying or arranging for payment of all expenses incurred meeting the child’s needs as well as placing the child in another adoptive home, or in foster care, and in following the requirements of the local state and foreign country regarding the care and disposition of the child. This financial responsibility extends to services provided by HATW to Family and/or child.

**Travel Time / Expenses Estimates**

Estimates for length of travel and stay in a foreign country and estimates of costs and expenses when given by HATW are given to the best of HATW’s understanding based on previous experience. Travel time can be extended for a number of reasons such as strikes in the foreign governments, illness and schedules of government employees such as judges and social workers, holidays, requirements imposed by the courts, etc. The number of trips could be increased due to the foregoing or other unanticipated conditions. A Family’s financial resources should be sufficient to cover additional trips and extended stays if necessary. Family acknowledges that HATW is not responsible for any travel expenses of Family and Family assumes all risks and expenses of travel. It is understood that while traveling internationally, Family will act in a manner that would not be construed as discourteous, immoral or insulting towards the US or foreign authorities or foreign entities, coordinators, or those assisting Family in the completion of their adoption. Any such actions may terminate this contract without recourse. Family understands that under no circumstances will they contact the HATW country coordinators or government authorities/officials for the intent purposes of receiving and/or providing any adoption information or service not directly contracted by HATW. Any such action may terminate this contract without recourse.

**Client’s Financial Responsibility**

Family understands that all adoption expenses and all other expenses of any kind or nature incurred by Family or in Family’s behalf are the responsibility of the Family and not the responsibility of HATW. HATW does not customarily charge additional fees and expenses beyond those disclosed in this Services Contract and accompanying Attachment A. In the event that unforeseen additional fees and expenses are incurred in the country of adoption, HATW will charge such additional fees and expenses only when: fees and expenses are disclosed in writing to Family; consent of Family is obtained prior to expending any funds in excess of $1,000 for which HATW will hold Family responsible or Family waives this notice and consent requirement in advance; written receipts to Family for fees and expenses paid directly by HATW in country of adoption on Family’s behalf and copies are retained in Family file. Should HATW find it necessary to pursue court action of Family, HATW has the option of seeking Court relief—specific performance, plus actual costs, and attorney’s fees.

**Accuracy of Information Provided by Family**

Family states and warrants that all information and data heretofore provided by Family and all information to be provided during all aspects of the performance of this International Adoption Services Contract are and will be true, accurate and complete to the best of the knowledge of each member of the Family. Withholding criminal, mental health, physical health, financial, background information or lying to HATW representatives may result in immediate termination of services. Should any changes occur during the adoption process to the Family’s status as related to criminal, mental health, physical health, financial status, failure to provide HATW with that information may result in immediate termination of services.

**Disclosure of Information**

Family grants HATW permission to disclose to third parties such information provided by Family as HATW deems necessary for the performance of services to Family; and further grants as a release, waiver and indemnification, permission to third parties to disclose to HATW such information provided by Family to such third parties, as HATW deems necessary for the performance of its adoption services. Family agrees to sign the Release of Information form or similar disclosure form to be used in connection with disclosures of information by and to HATW.

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Authorization to Release Adoption Documents
Family authorizes HATW to release home study, supporting documents, dossier documents, post placement/adoption reports, or any other document, to USA and Foreign government offices, other child placing agencies or attorneys charged with assisting in the completion of the adoption, including US Citizenship and Immigration Services, Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), or any other official needing the aforementioned to complete or supervise the adoption. It is understood that the home study, supporting documents, dossier documents, post placement/adoption reports, or other related document may contain information related to HIV status, drug abuse/ use history, medical information, and/or criminal history.

Confidentiality
Family’s files are kept strictly confidential except when information is provided to referral agencies, foreign countries, and courts, to federal, state and local governmental agencies and as otherwise set out in this International Adoption Services Contract, HATW will keep Family’s files and information confidential except as required by law.

Termination of Contract
HATW has the right to terminate the adoption services for cause at any time, based upon HATW’s professional assessment. In the event of such termination by HATW, all fees then payable to HATW for services rendered and expenses incurred on Family’s behalf shall be promptly paid in full. HATW will make no refunds of any fees or expenses of any kind or nature incurred by Family.

Entire Contract/Merger
This contract constitutes the entire International Adoption Services Contract between the parties, and there are no representations, warranties or commitments except as set forth herein. This Contract supplements, merges and supersedes all prior or contemporaneous contracts, understandings, negotiations and discussions, whether written or oral, of the parties hereto, relating to the transactions contemplated by this International Adoption Services Contract.

Waiver/Subsequent enforcement
The failure to either party to enforce any provision of this Contract shall not be construed as a waiver or limitation of that party’s right to subsequently enforce and compel strict compliance with every provision of this contract.

No Non Party Beneficiary
None of the provisions of this Contract are intended to nor shall be construed to, confer upon or to give any person other than the parties hereto, or their heirs, successors or assigns, any rights or remedies under, or by reason of this Contract.

Modifications
This Contract may be supplemented, modified or amended, if the supplement, modification or amendment is made in writing, dated, and is signed by all parties.

Complaint Policy
Hands Across The Water’s Grievance Policy is designed to permit any birth parent, prospective adoptive parent or adoptive parent, or adoptee to lodge a signed and dated complaint about any of the services or activities of this agency or persons involved with this agency including our supervised providers* that he or she believes raises an issue of compliance with the Convention*, the IAA*, or the regulations implementing the IAA, State of Michigan Licensing Compliance Regulations, the Act No. 116 of the Public Acts of 1973, as amended, being 722.11 et seq. of the Michigan Compiled Laws .or HATW written policy. This policy shall provide to safeguard the legal rights of children, their families, foster families, releasing parents (birth parents), and adoptive families served. This Grievance Policy will be provided to clients at the time the adoption services contract is signed. The Grievance Process begins with the communication process between foster parent, foster child, biological parents, foster care worker, foster care supervisor, and foster care director or prospective parent, adoptive parent, adoptee, birth parents, adoption worker, adoption supervisor, and the adoption director should be followed to find resolution of any grievance. Should the communication process not be effective in resolving the issue or complaint, or the person bringing the issue or complaint forward is dissatisfied with the response to their complaint, the following procedure should take place:

7. The person bringing forward the complaint should do so in a signed, dated and written format.
8. Written complaints should be submitted to the Agency Director. Should the complaint be directly related to the Agency Director, the written complaint should be directed to the Board of Directors’ President.
9. All written complaints submitted to either the Agency Director, or the Board of Directors’ President, must be forwarded by the director or the president to the Board of Directors’ Personnel Committee within 3 business days of receiving the complaint to solicit their input. This committee must provide their input to the Director or President within 5 business days after receiving the complaint. They will determine if a full review by the Board of Directors is required prior to formalizing and sending a written response to the complaint.
10. The Agency Director, or Board of Directors’ President, must respond in writing to complaints received within thirty days of receipt, and provide expedited review of such complaints that are time-sensitive or that involve allegations of fraud.
11. The written response will include the steps taken to investigate and respond to the complaint.
12. All written complaints and responses will be reviewed at the next regularly scheduled Board of Directors’ meeting.

After following the above procedure, if a family continues to have a complaint that involves: the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, the Intercountry Adoption Act, the Federal implementing regulations (22 CFR 96, 97, 98), or a Hague Convention adoption case, they should share this information with US Department of State at this website http://adoptionusca.state.gov/HCRWeb/WelcomeForm.aspx.

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Hands Across The Water will not take any action to discourage a client or prospective client from, or retaliate against a client or prospective client for: making a complaint; expressing a grievance; providing information in writing or interviews to an accrediting entity on the agency’s performance; or questioning the conduct of or expressing an opinion about the performance of Hands Across The Water. Hands Across The Water will maintain a written record of each complaint received and the steps taken to investigate and respond to it and makes this record available to the Convention accrediting entity, the Secretary* upon their request. Hands Across The Water will provide to the Convention accrediting entity and the Secretary, on a semi-annual basis, a summary of all complaints received during the preceding six months (including the number of complaints received and how each complaint was resolved) and an assessment of any discernible patterns in complaints received against Hands Across The Water, along with information about what systemic changes, if any, were made or are planned in response to such patterns.

Hands Across The Water has a quality improvement program through which it makes systematic efforts to improve its adoption services as needed. The Quality Improvement Committee includes members of the staff both supervisory and non-supervisory and members of the Board of Director’s Personnel Committee. The Hands Across The Water’s Quality Improvement Committee uses quality improvement methods such as reviewing complaint data, using client satisfaction surveys, or comparing Hands Across The Water’s practices and performance against the data contained in the Secretary’s annual reports to Congress on intercountry adoptions.

Hands Across The Water would like to encourage our LGBT clients to share any concerns or issues that may arise while receiving services at Hands Across The Water. We welcome this information to help this agency identify and address discriminatory or insensitive treatment by staff or volunteers. This information should be brought to the agency’s attention by way of the process identified above.

Note: The above policy and procedure does not apply to any action taken by Hands Across The Water foster care licensing. A grievance procedure for foster care licensing is already in place and monitored by the State of Michigan. *Supervised Providers – means any agency, person, or other non-governmental entity, including any foreign entity, regardless of whether it is called a facilitator, agent, attorney, or by any other name, that is providing one or more adoption services in a Convention case under the supervision and responsibility of an accredited agency, temporarily accredited agency, or approved person that is acting as the primary provider in the case. *Convention – means the Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption done at the Hague on May 29, 1993. *IAA – means the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000, Public Law 106-279 (2000) (42 U.S.C. 14901-14954), as amended from time to time. *Secretary – means the Secretary of State, the Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs, or any other Department of State official exercising the Secretary of State’s authority under the Convention, the IAA, or any regulations implementing the IAA, pursuant to a delegation of authority.

**Michigan Law Applies to Contract**

This Contract and any addenda, or further terms essential to the performance of this contract are made and shall be performed and construed under the laws of the State of Michigan. Family is aware that HATW also has available the regulations issued by the US Federal Government regarding the procedures for US citizens adopting internationally, the regulations issued by each country for adoptions by foreigners, the Intercountry Adoption Act (IAA), Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), Hague Convention, State of Michigan Adoption Law, and State of Michigan Licensing Regulations for their review.

**Refunds**

All fees paid to HATW are non-refundable once paid except for as follows: HATW Program fee - If country closes or adoptions are no longer possible, HATW Program fee can be transferred to another HATW program but will not be refunded; Post-Adoption Reports fees - If Family moves out-of-state & HATW is no longer able to provide this service, unused fee is refundable when requested in writing; International Program fee - Should Family decide to discontinue the adoption process, no refund is available for paid portion. Should a problem arise with the referral/child resulting in an inability for that child to be adopted, the portion of this fee paid would transfer to another referral.

Fees paid to an entity other than HATW may or may not be refundable depending on that entity’s refund policy. Amount of fees paid to an entity other than HATW are not regulated by or the responsibility of HATW and are subject to any change determined by that entity. HATW has no control over or responsibility for these fees. Hands Across The Water will return any funds to which the prospective adoptive parent(s) may be entitled within sixty days of the completion of the delivery of services.

**Additional Fees And Expenses Waiver**

HATW does not itself customarily charge additional fees and expenses for its service beyond those agreed to in the adoption Services Contract and Attachment A. In the event that unforeseen additional fees and expenses are incurred in a foreign country, HATW charges additional fees and expenses only under the following conditions:

1. It discloses the fees and expenses in writing to the Family.
2. It obtains the specific consent of the Family prior to expending any funds in excess of $1,000 for which the agency will hold the prospective adoptive parent(s) responsible or gives them the opportunity to waive the notice and consent requirements in advance (which waiver shall be documented in the record of the Family).
3. It provides written receipts to the Family for fees and expenses paid in the foreign country and retains copies of such receipts.
This consent requirement does not apply to any costs (even if estimated on the schedule) that the client pays personally and directly to payees other than HATW, such as travel costs. Family should also be aware that a situation may occur during the adoption process that would warrant an unforeseen need to increase fees, change fees, or incur additional fees in the foreign country. HATW will try to keep this risk at a minimum.

I/We authorize HATW to approve any necessary unforeseen charges up to the amount of $1000. **(Please initial one only below)**

___ Should the situation be one that would warrant charges above $1000, I/We must first be notified of the need and must first consent to the expenditure. I/We understand that such notification/consent may incur a delay in the process depending on the need. I/We will expect a written receipt at the time the adoption is complete for such fees and expenses approved and paid.

___ Should the situation be one that would warrant charges above $1000, I/We waive the need for notice and consent prior to the expenses being paid on my/our behalf. It is understood that as soon as it is known that these charges have been paid that HATW will inform me/us of such charges, reason for such charges, and full cost of such charges that I/we are responsible for. I/We will expect a written receipt at the time the adoption is complete for such fees and expenses.

**PLEASE BE SURE TO INITIAL EACH PAGE OF THIS CONTRACT**

___________________________________________  ______________________________
Adoptive Parent                          Date

___________________________________________  ______________________________
Adoptive Parent                          Date

__________________________________________
Agency Representative

___ A copy of this Contract has been given to Family ______________________________

___________________________________________
Date