

DOMESTIC DUAL ADOPTION INFO PACKET

THE BARKER ADOPTION FOUNDATION



WELCOME

Hi There!

WELCOME TO BARKER ADOPTION FOUNDATION!

Here at Barker, we truly believe that every child deserves a safe and loving family. Founded in 1945, Barker is licensed in Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Virginia. For 78 years Barker has had a reputation for ethical adoption services and increasingly, we are becoming nationally known as a model agency and the place to turn to learn about how best to serve the adoption community. Barker's commitment to lifelong services is what distinguishes us and is what many refer to as "the Barker difference."

To date, Barker has placed more than 8,000 children into the welcoming arms of adoptive parents and provided counseling and related support services to more than 30,000 women and their families who are considering placing a child for adoption. Barker welcomes adoption applications from couples and individuals of all ages, all religious and ethnic backgrounds, and all sexual orientations and gender expressions.

Every adoption is different. Our staff will be happy to work with you in determining which of our programs is best suited for you and your family. At each step, Barker will be there with the information and support you need.

[DOMESTIC DUAL
PROGRAM](#)

[POST ADOPTION
PROGRAM](#)

[APPLY NOW](#)



DEAR ADOPTIVE PARENT

Dear adoptive parent,

Thank you for your interest in The Barker Adoption Foundation. We are a non-profit adoption agency licensed in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia since 1945. Over the years, we have placed over 8,000 children with loving families, serving all participants in the adoption circle such as birth parents, adoptive parents, and persons who have been adopted.

We offer comprehensive adoption services, including domestic adoption and pregnancy counseling, as well as strong international programs. One key aspect of our services is the lifelong support we provide through counseling, support groups, educational and social activities, and informal discussion groups.

We welcome adoption applications from couples and individuals of all ages, religious and ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations and gender expressions. However, each US state has its own specific adoption regulations, and each country has its own eligibility requirements that The Barker Adoption Foundation and the families we serve must abide by.

We appreciate your interest in The Barker Adoption Foundation and its mission, and we would be privileged to assist you as you seek to begin or enlarge your family. At each step, Barker will be there with the information and support you need. Our very best wishes as you consider this important life decision.



SUSAN HOLLAR LCSW-C, LICSW
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CEO

FREE GENERAL & SPECIFIC INFORMATION MEETINGS EACH MONTH

We realize that adoption is a complex process, and we also know the tremendous joy it brings. While this is a time filled with many decisions and challenges, it may also be filled with hope and excitement. Becoming knowledgeable about adoption will help you make decisions that feel right for your family. To help you begin the process, we offer free monthly information sessions on both general and specific adoption issues. For those who desire a more in depth exploration of adoption paths in a one on one setting, we also offer paid pre-adoption consultations with our Program Directors and Staff.

Enclosed you will find additional information about all of our programs, including the free information seminars; estimated adoption-related fees, an application form; a bibliography with excellent resources about adoption; and a sample of Barker's key policies.

[VIEW OUR
CALENDAR](#)

[SIGN UP FOR A
ONE-ON-ONE
CONSULT](#)



OUR MISSION & VALUES

The Barker Adoption Foundation provides life-long services for all in the adoption triad and advocates for ethical, respectful, and child-centered adoption practices.

Our Values

Our mission is accomplished by practicing according to our core values, of which the following are key:

- **Child-centered focus:** While we serve all members in the constellation of adoption relationships, our primary client is the child, who has no voice and often no advocate. We understand that the child's needs lie at the intersection of birth parent and adoptive parent needs. The litmus test for all we do is whether we are acting in the child's best interest.
- **Integrity:** Barker strives to uphold the highest ethical standards of practice, acting with honesty and understanding and respecting the rights of all parties.
- **Inclusiveness:** Barker values diversity of perspective, culture, race, ethnicity, religion, economic circumstances, age, sexual orientation, gender expression, and marital status. We strive to remove barriers for clients who seek our programs and services, and we value and seek diversity in our board governance structure and staff composition.
- **Compassion:** Our expression of concern for clients extends beyond empathy to true compassion. Compassion moves us to actions that put resources in place that make a difference in the lives of our clients.
- **Innovation:** Although Barker is one of the oldest adoption agencies in the country, we value innovation that expands opportunities for our clients. We endeavor to anticipate challenges and be creative and proactive in our solutions. We initiate new programs where the need is compelling, and we use the latest social service research and new technologies to guide our practice.

**[VIEW OUR
POLICIES HERE](#)**

History

78 YEARS OF TRADITION AND GROWTH

The Barker Adoption Foundation has provided counseling to over 30,000 birth parents considering adoption and has placed over 8,000 children with adoptive parents during its 78 years of service.

- Barker was the first cooperative adoption agency in the United States. Its Board of Trustees is comprised of adoptive parents, birth parents, adopted persons, and members of the communities served by Barker.
- Barker has long been a leader in adoption education and in the promotion of sound adoption policies and practices. Barker's annual conferences have been a tradition for thirty years.
- Barker's international program, established in the mid-70s, has placed children from numerous countries, including Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Chile, El Salvador, Vietnam, the Philippines, Guatemala, Nepal, and Paraguay. Current programs include China, India, and South Korea.
- Barker is an independent, nonprofit agency. The agency's financial support comes from adoption fees, fundraising events, individual donations, the Friends of Barker quasi-endowment, and foundation and corporate grants.

1945

Barker's story begins at the end of WWII, when founders Ruth and Richard Barker were approached by the US Army to support Women in Active Volunteer Service (WAVES) who were experiencing an unplanned pregnancy. Together, they worked to improve adoption practices, ensuring early placement of babies with their adoptive families and better protection for adopted children's legal rights.

1951

Barker structure was formalized and incorporated as the nation's first cooperative adoption agency.

Policies and practices are overseen by a 24 member Board of Trustees comprised of parents who have adopted through the agency, birth parents, adoptees, and other community members.

1976

Barker endeavored to adapt and diversify its services over the years to reflect the growing understanding of adoption, as well as to meet the needs of children. Barker began its first international program in Colombia and has supported the adoption of children from many countries including South Korea, Vietnam, China, Philippines, Brazil, Paraguay, Chile, Guatemala, India & Bulgaria.



1994

Barker hosts its inaugural Annual Adoption and foster care conference

1998

Barker acquired the American Adoption Agency

2001

Barker established a formal post-adoption department providing life-long services for birth parents, adoptive parents and adoptees

2006

Project Wait No Longer (PWNL) is launched to place older children living in foster care with permanent, loving, & stable adoptive families

2015

Barker added the option to use health insurance for qualifying post-adoption services

2019

Barker expanded pre-adoption and post-adoption services

2021

Barker expanded adult adoption services and counseling services while increasing community engagement



DOMESTIC DUAL PROGRAM



BARKER'S DOMESTIC DUAL WAITING PROGRAM



This adoption path allows families to actively wait In Area or Out-of-Area for an infant adoption while simultaneously waiting with our older child adoption from foster care program to be matched with children who are toddler-to-elementary-age (at least up to the age of 8 or older). This program allows for a broader range of visibility as families will be considered in infant cases as well as older child cases from foster care.

Who are the children?

Infants

Barker's Pregnancy Counselor provides compassionate counseling to expectant parents who are experiencing an unplanned pregnancy and who are exploring adoption as a parenting option for their baby. Families in the dual waiting program can be considered for newborns in these cases through Barker's In Area Program (by availability and eligibility) or Out of Area program.

Older children waiting in foster care

Barker's Searching and Matching Specialist inquires on waiting children in the US foster care system where there are currently over 100,000 children who are legally free for adoption. Children in foster care from all over the US, up to the age of 18, need a loving and stable home. Children placed through PWNL are on average 9-10 years old. However, children as young as 2 and as old as 19 have found homes through this program. We ask that families considering this option be open to being matched with children who are toddler-to-elementary-age (at least up to the age of 8).

What are their needs?

Many children have suffered abuse, neglect, and complex trauma, where the support and stability of family can aid them in their recovery and improve their trajectory. Younger children in foster care tend to have higher levels of specialized needs that exceed the capacity of their foster parents, or they might be a part of a large sibling group. Families interested in younger children (newborn to elementary age) would need to be open to mostly medical/developmental needs that require specialized interventions or specialist support a few times each month.

[OLDER CHILD ADOPTION](#)
[SUGGESTED RESOURCES](#)

DOMESTIC DUAL PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Marital Status

Single individuals and married couples are welcome to apply. If married, you must be married for a minimum of one year at the time of application. For couples who are more recently married (less than one year), you are welcome to apply if you have lived together for at least one year. Please note that unmarried couples are not eligible to adopt through this program and that any couple living together must apply for adoption together.

Age of Parents

Must be older than 25 years old. Applicants over 50 who are considering waiting in the Infant program must identify a placing agency prior to application.

Openness of Parents

Must be open to adopting a child or children with higher levels of medical/specialized needs (e.g., Cerebral palsy, neurological conditions, speech/language impairment, limited mobility, heart defects, or other conditions requiring some level of specialist or therapeutic support).

Training Requirements

Must complete Pre- Adoption Training (NTDC) and attend both older child and infant breakout groups before starting the home study.

Income

Must be financially able to incur the costs associated with infant adoption, including medical and legal expenses for expectant parents.

Criminal and Medical History

Must meet state and agency guidelines for criminal history, medical, and other eligibility standards. Please click [here](#) to view Barker's non-discrimination agreement.

DOMESTIC DUAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Q: Can I be matched in both the infant program and the PWNL program at the same time?

- **No.** Families cannot be matched with more than one child where there is no biological relation. Our adoption specialists are actively involved with families to know when a match has occurred or when a family is being considered in a case. Once a family has accepted a match with an expectant/birth mother or an older child, the case file will be closed in the other program, and the family will proceed through the program –process and fees- in which they are matched.

Q: Will I need to complete two home studies for both programs?

- **No.** Families will have one comprehensive home study that will accommodate the full range of ages, needs, and considerations that are needed for program eligibility and assessment.

Q: What if I decide that I no longer want to wait in both programs?

- Families can decide at any time that they would like to focus on one program – Infant or PWNL. Families are encouraged to speak with their adoption social worker or specialist if they would like to consider alternate options for waiting/searching. Depending on program availability, or requirements, families can have updates made to their searching parameters in a home study update or an addendum.

Q: Can I join the dual program if I already have an approved home study through a different program with Barker?

- Families in either Domestic program (Infant or PWNL), can join the dual program after completing a program assessment. Eligibility requirements must be met for both programs, and any necessary trainings must be completed. Families are welcomed to contact program staff to explore whether they might be a good fit for the dual waiting program.

APPROXIMATE DOMESTIC DUAL ADOPTION FEES



DOMESTIC DUAL

Fees and Esimated
Expenses

[View more information](#)

Why should you consider Domestic Dual Waiting?



At The Barker Adoption Foundation, we understand that domestic dual adoption allows for a broader range of visibility as families will be considered in infant cases as well as older child cases from foster care. There are several compelling reasons why families may consider this domestic dual waiting option.:

1. FULFILLMENT OF DIFFERENT PARENTING DESIRES

Domestic dual waiting allows prospective parents to fulfill their desire to be considered for infants as well as older children from foster care. This flexibility can accommodate varying parenting preferences and the willingness to provide homes for children of different age groups.



2. REDUCED WAITING TIME

By pursuing both infant adoption and older child adoption concurrently, families may potentially reduce their overall waiting time to be matched with a child. This approach acknowledges that waiting periods can vary significantly, and increased openness in any area can have positive impacts on wait times.

3. WIDER RANGE OF CHILDREN

Prospective parents open to both infant and older child adoption are positioned to provide a home for a wider and more diverse scope of children who need a family. Being cognizant of the broad range of needs overall leaves families more prepared and better equipped for all types of adoption.



4. OPENNESS TO SATISFYING DIFFERENT NEEDS

Infants and older children have different needs and are at different developmental stages. Our Dual Waiting program allows families the opportunity to meet both sets of needs and provide love and support to children at different life stages.

5. FLEXIBLE APPROACH

families in this Dual Waiting program tend to be more flexible, having the capacity to accommodate a wider range of need. They can be better suited to take on challenges that might arise, which tends to be a transferable skill for all adoptions.



POST ADOPTION SUPPORT SERVICES

- **After finalization. Support for a lifetime**
 - Individual counseling
 - Facilitated support groups for adoptees and adoptive parents
 - Intermediary services for birth parents and adoptive parents in open and semi-open adoption arrangements
 - Non-identifying social and medical history reports
 - Search and reunion services for birth parents and adults adopted through Barker
 - A highly respected annual adoption and foster care conference that is open to adoptees, adoptive parents, birth parents, professionals, and anyone else touched by adoption
 - Community and school education programs to build greater awareness and understanding of adoption-related issues
 - Homeland tours geared toward teens and young adult adoptees traveling together with their parents
- Another support we can offer is identifying a Barker parent/mentor who may be able to answer some of your questions – parent to parent.





CONNECT WITH US

Contact us:

Domestic Dual Adoption:

info@barkerfoundation.org

Follow us:



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[@barkeradoptions](https://twitter.com/barkeradoptions)



[@thebarkeradoptionfoundation](https://www.linkedin.com/company/thebarkeradoptionfoundation)

Office location:

7979 Old Georgetown Road, FL 1
Bethesda, MD 20814

Quick Links

[Register for an information session](#)

[Register for a 1:1 pre-adoption consultation](#)

[Register for our next Pre-Adoption Training Series](#)

[Complete an adoption application](#)