

Domestic Infant Adoption at Barker

All of Barker's Domestic Infant Adoption Program options provide prospective parents guidance and training in addition to clinical and administrative support from the first information session through finalization of the adoption.

We encourage all families who are interested in adopting to attend one of our monthly general information sessions. Following that session you can contact a member of the Domestic Infant team by phone or email if you have questions.

If you decide Barker Adoption Foundation is a good fit for your adoption plans, the next step is to submit an application. Our clinical team meets weekly to review all applications received. The program director will contact you within a few days to explore additional questions or to arrange for an initial meeting.

All adoptive parents participate in intake meetings, which are both clinical and administrative in nature. During these meetings, Barker staff will share information about Barker's comprehensive process, the needs of the children available for adoption, guidance on whether local placement, out of area placement or both are a better fit for the family, and the paperwork requirements for the home study. We will also explore the adoptive parents' motivation and initial preparedness to become an adoptive parent.

Domestic Adoption Options

There are three broad paths that Barker families pursue in infant adoption: 1) working in our in-area program where Barker counselors are supporting local expectant parents, 2) working with an agency or adoption law firm that serves birth parents in another part of the country, or 3) working independently with an attorney for a private adoption.

Regardless of the options pursued, Barker provides education, home study and support services to all of our families. Some families know immediately what option they will pursue when applying and many others begin exploring what option(s) is a best fit for them during their initial meetings. Most families decide which option(s) to pursue by the time their home study meetings begin.

At intake you will be introduced to the various members of our staff who will support you along the way. You will also be introduced to your Program Assistant who will work with you throughout the process, often from behind the scenes, all the way through the adoption's finalization. During the first month or two, you will collect materials required for a home study as required by your state of residence and attend or engage in required adoptive parent training. We encourage you to attend the waiting parent support meetings we offer bimonthly. These meetings cover a variety of topics, many of which are requested by waiting parents. These meetings offer a way to stay connected with our staff, learn about various parenting or adoption specific topics and hear about recent trends and experiences in our domestic program.

When you have completed the required training and documentation for a home study, you will be assigned a social worker who will meet with you to explore questions or concerns you have, learn more about your hopes in adoption and discuss topics to help prepare you for parenting in general and

through adoption. Following these meetings the official home study report is prepared that permits a parent(s) to receive a child into their home. In most cases, this same social worker will work with you during the post placement time when we continue to provide support and visits, generally for six months following placement.

After finalization we encourage families to stay in contact with Barker and to participate in our many Post Adoption workshops or social activities or to offer support to incoming adoptive parents who may seek guidance. Our Department of Family and Post Adoption Services has robust offerings to support individuals and families over time. You may contact the department for information on fees for services.

Another support we offer is guidance from our Family Specialist. Barker's Family Specialist assists families from their earliest stages through placement. Examples include assisting adoptive parents in considering which placement agencies may be appropriate for your specific family situation and timing, assistance with developing a family profile or scrapbook, and providing guidance when preparing for an initial match telephone call or meeting with a birth parent. Another support we can offer is identifying a Barker parent/mentor who may be able to answer some of your questions – parent to parent.

In-Area Plan (formerly referred to as Comprehensive Program)

Those prospective adoptive parents who join our In-area program will join a pool of waiting parents who will be presented to local expectant parents working with Barker. Barker Pregnancy Counselors work with expectant birth parents from any point in their pregnancy, or may meet a birth parent at the hospital upon delivery to make an adoption plan for their child. Our counselors work closely with birth parents to identify circumstances of their pregnancy and to identify their core priorities in selecting an adoptive family.

At some point during the counseling, the counselor will present scrapbooks of families to the client and share information about the family as the client(s) consider and choose an adoptive family. Often birth parents want to meet adoptive families either before delivery or soon after. Because local birth parents are provided a period of time to reconsider their decision to make an adoption plan (known as the revocation period) many birth parents will wait until after this revocation period is over before meeting the adoptive parents. Frequently, adoptive parents may be invited to join birth parents in the hospital upon delivery or shortly after.

Following delivery most often babies are placed in care with Barker Cradle Care families for the duration of the revocation period (30 days in Maryland, 10 days in Virginia, 14 days in Washington, D.C.). Cradle Care provides an important period where qualified and loving families care for the newborn during the period when birth parents are able to resolve some of their grief and confirm their decision.

Following placement, adoptive families begin the six month Post Placement Supervision and Support period as required in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia, or longer if required by another state or agency. Beyond fulfilling a requirement, this period provides a helpful time to continue receiving support and information from your social worker about various resources or needs that most new parents face.

At the end of post placement period, adoptive parents can begin the process of finalization. Barker can refer parents to one of several local attorneys who specialize in adoption to represent them in their finalization.

In-Area Plan Fees	Amount	Paid To:
Application	\$550	Barker Adoption Foundation
Pre-Adoption Training	\$275 (\$150 single)	Barker Adoption Foundation
Online Trainings	\$80	Adoption Learning Partners
Birth Parent Expense Fund	\$500	Barker Adoption Foundation BPE Fund
Placement Fees (based on income)	Sliding Scale Fee	Barker Adoption Foundation
< \$75,000	\$17,000	
\$75,001-\$125,000	\$21,000	
\$125,001-\$175,000	\$25,000	
\$175,001-\$225,000	\$29,000	
\$225,001+	\$33,000	
Pass Through Expenses (for medical, cradle care and legal expenses etc.)	\$2,000-\$6,000	Held In Reserves by Barker and paid to vendors on behalf of adoptive family
Additional Expenses to Consider		
Annual Home Study Update	\$1500	Barker Adoption Foundation (Year 1-2)
Annual Home Study Update	\$500	Barker Adoption Foundation (Year 3+)
Finalization	\$1,500 (approx.)	Attorney Retained for Finalization
State Required Reports	Varies	Only for VA and DC
Lodging During ICPC Period	Varies	

Timing of Payments

Application, Training, Birth Parent Expense Fund and Home Study Update fees are due when applying or registering for service.

Placement fees are paid in installments as services are provided.

- \$2,000 at Phase I
- \$3,000 at Phase II
- \$500 Birth Parent Expense Fund upon Home Study approval
- \$1,000 in addition to the \$500 Home Study Update Fee for the first two years
- Remaining balance due at placement

Reserve funds for estimated allowable pass through expenses are due at placement.

There will be an additional fee for staffing post adoption meetings between adoptive and birth parents after 2 years, and any time a meeting is scheduled after regular business hours or on a weekend.

Working with a Placement Agency or Adoption Attorney in another part of the country (Out-of-Area Program)

In recent years, many families have adopted a child by working with agencies or attorneys from another part of the country. A main reason for this shift is that in many parts of the country there are more birth parents seeking to place a child and fewer adoptive families seeking to adopt in other areas of the country, and because some local birth parents choose to place in another state.

There are many things that contribute to a family deciding to pursue or expand their adoption efforts to another part of the country. Such things as family composition, age of adoptive parents, race of adoptive parents, ability to travel, faith orientation, extended family that live in another state, or state laws regarding adoption, among others, are all factors in making this decision.

The main process difference is that these families will identify another agency or attorney who works with birth parents in a part of the country where the differences fit with the needs and resources of the adoptive family. This agency or attorney then becomes the family's **Placement Agency**. When a match occurs with a birth parent the family will often travel to visit to meet the prospective birthparent. When the baby is born, the adoptive family travels to take custody and await permission to return home with the baby.

Once a family has decided that working with an out of area agency or attorney **for placement** is the best path, our Family Specialist will help identify agencies or attorneys we are familiar with to refer to them. Families can also identify an agency or attorney themselves.

As with all Barker families, those choosing the Out-of-Area Program will participate in an information meeting, a clinical intake, all required trainings, and receive the support from a designated Program Assistant from application to finalization. They will also receive support from our Family Specialist when presented with a potential match or preparing for their first meeting with prospective birth parents. And, as with all Barker families, they will have a designated social worker during the home study period and the Post Placement Supervision period.

Once the child is born your Program Assistant at Barker will work with you to obtain ICPC approval to bring the baby home. As your **Receiving Agency**, Barker and your Social Worker will provide Post Placement Support and ongoing support until finalization.

At the end the post placement period, adoptive parents can begin the process of finalization. Barker can refer parents to several licensed adoption qualified attorneys in the area to represent them in their finalization.

Out-of-Area Program Fees	Amount	Paid To:
Application	\$550	Barker Adoption Foundation
Pre-Adoption Training	\$250 (\$175 single)	Barker Adoption Foundation
Online Trainings	\$80	Adoption Learning Partners
Phase I (Intake, Program Support, Document Collection)	\$1,000	Barker Adoption Foundation
Phase II (Home Study Meetings and Report, plus ongoing Clinical and Admin Support)	\$3,000	Barker Adoption Foundation
Placement Fees	Varies	Other Agency/Attorney
Phase III (Three Post-Placement Meetings and Reports)	\$1,000	Barker Adoption Foundation
Additional Post-Placement Meetings and Reports (if necessary)	\$350 each	Barker Adoption Foundation
Additional Expenses to Consider		
Annual Home Study Update	\$500	Barker Adoption Foundation
Finalization	\$1,500 (approx.)	Attorney Retained for Finalization
State Required Reports	Varies	Only for VA and DC
Lodging During ICPC Period	Varies	

Working directly with birth parents with support of an attorney

More and more prospective adoptive parents feel comfortable engaging in direct outreach with potential birth parents. Outreach may include informing extended family members, friends in other areas of the country, home town physicians, and more recently some online portals that are geared specifically to introducing birth parents to adoptive parents. Other adoptive parents feel comfortable engaging a local adoption attorney to represent them and utilize the attorney's outreach efforts with birth parents.

Parents who pursue this path in adoption generally feel more comfortable engaging with people and talking about their adoption plans. They speak directly to birth parents as they get to know one another and decide if a match is mutually beneficial. In all cases, the adoptive family will engage an attorney to represent them and to guide them through the specific state regulations involved in this kind of private adoption.

As with all Barker families, those choosing to work independently will participate in an information meeting, a clinical intake, all required trainings, and receive the support from a designated Program Assistant from application to finalization. They may also seek support from our Family Specialist when presented with a potential match or preparing for their first meeting with prospective birth parents. And, as with all Barker families, they will have a designated social worker during the home study period and the Post Placement Supervision period.

The main process difference is that these families will work independently to engage with potential birth parents and will engage an attorney earlier in the process to represent them. When a match occurs with a birthparent often the family will travel to visit and meet the prospective birthparent. When the baby is born, the adoptive family travels to take custody and await permission from ICPC to take the baby home.

Once the child is born your Program Assistant at Barker will work with you to obtain ICPC approval to bring the baby home. As your **Receiving Agency**, Barker and your Social Worker will provide Post Placement Support and ongoing support until finalization.

Private Adoption Fees	Amount	Paid To:
Application	\$550	Barker Adoption Foundation
Pre-Adoption Training	\$250 (\$175 single)	Barker Adoption Foundation
Online Trainings	\$80	Adoption Learning Partners
Phase I (Intake, Program Support, Document Collection)	\$1,000	Barker Adoption Foundation
Phase II (Home Study Meetings and Report, plus ongoing Clinical and Admin Support)	\$3,000	Barker Adoption Foundation
Placement Fees	Varies	Attorney Fees
Phase III (Three Post-Placement Meetings and Reports)	\$1,000	Barker Adoption Foundation
Additional Post-Placement Meetings and Reports (if necessary)	\$350 each	Barker Adoption Foundation
Additional Expenses to Consider		
Annual Home Study Update	\$500	Barker Adoption Foundation
Finalization	\$1,500 (approx.)	Attorney Retained for Finalization
State Required Reports	Varies	Only for VA and DC
Lodging During ICPC Period	Varies	

Adoption Tax Credit Information

On January 2, 2013 Congress signed a bill to make the Adoption Tax Credit permanent. This tax credit is the amount that can be subtracted from the taxes you owe for expenses incurred in the adoption of a child. The credit makes adoption a viable option for many families who might otherwise be unable to afford adoption.

An example of the tax credit when applied to the local In-area plan and its costs:

Estimated Adoption Costs	Maximum Tax Credit	Estimated Total Cost of Adoption
\$21,405	\$13,190	\$8,215
\$25,405	\$13,190	\$12,215
\$29,405	\$13,190	\$16,215
\$33,405	\$13,190	\$20,215
\$37,405	Income Dependent	Income Dependent