

Changes to Queensland's adoption legislation

Information sheet 2

Eligibility criteria (same-sex couples)

Background

On 2 November 2016, Queensland Parliament passed the Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, making important changes to Queensland's adoption laws.

What are the changes to eligibility criteria?

Changes to *Adoption Act 2009* (the Act) commenced on Friday 11 November 2016

Changes made to the Act include expanding eligibility criteria to enable same-sex couples, single people and people undergoing fertility treatment to have their name entered or remain in the Expression of Interest Register.

I am in a same-sex relationship. What is the process to adopt a child in Queensland?

The process for same-sex couples seeking to adopt a child in Queensland is the same as for any person in Queensland who wishes to adopt.

Adoption Services keeps a register of people who have made an expression of interest and meet all relevant eligibility requirements under the Act.

Adoption Services will only select people for assessment if, based on their profile, they are likely to be able to meet the anticipated placement needs of a child requiring adoption.

In deciding whether a person is likely to meet these needs, the person's profile, including their characteristics and preferences, is considered.

Other factors considered in selecting a person to be assessed include the profiles of suitable adoptive parents already on the Suitable Adoptive Parents Register and the preferences of birth parents about the upbringing they would like for their child.

This may include the child's religious upbringing, characteristics of the adoptive parents and family, and the degree of openness they would like in the adoption arrangement.

Once a person is selected for assessment, a rigorous assessment process is undertaken.

For the Queensland adoption program, Adoption Services consider all people entered in the Suitable Adoptive Parents Register to determine who will best meet the needs of the particular child requiring adoptive parents.

I am in a same-sex relationship — can I adopt a child from another country?

Each country has its own eligibility and other requirements about who can adopt children.

For information about the intercountry adoption programs that Australia participates in, go to Intercountry Adoption Australia website www.intercountryadoption.gov.au

It is also important that you read information about intercountry adoption on the Attorney-General's Department website www.ag.gov.au

I am in a same-sex relationship and want to adopt my partner's child. Do the changes to the Act allow me to do this?

Yes. Changes to the Act allow same-sex couples to express interest to adopt a child.

This means someone in a same-sex relationship can pursue adoption of their partner's child through the step-parent adoption process.

A person in a same-sex relationship who wishes to adopt their partner's child will be required to undergo the same eligibility and assessment process for step-parent adoption as someone in a heterosexual relationship.

Where can I find more information?

For more information about the changes to Queensland's adoption laws, go to the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services:

Website:

www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety

Phone: Adoption Services on **3224 7415** or **1800 647 983** (free call within Queensland)

Email: **ads@communities.qld.gov.au**