

FILING OF A PETITION FOR ADOPTION IN DANE COUNTY

All petitions for adoption are filed with the Clerk of Circuit Court Office, Probate Office, Room 1005. Petitions for adoptive *placement* are filed with the Juvenile Clerk in the Court Commissioner Center, Room 2000. These petitions are filed in the TPR case. There is no filing fee for filing a petition for adoption.

An adoption petition may be filed by a married couple, an unmarried adult, or a stepparent of the adoptee. The petitioners must reside in Dane County. A child or an adult may be adopted; however, a child is not available for adoption unless both parents are deceased or their rights have been terminated, except in the case of a stepparent adoption, only the non-custodial parent's rights must be terminated. Except in the case of relative or stepparent adoption, the child must have resided with the petitioner for at least six months.

The mandatory state forms are available online and can be downloaded from <http://wicourts.gov/forms1/circuit.htm>. Forms are also available at the Dane County Legal Resource Center, Room L1007, Dane County Courthouse, for a small fee. The court will need two (2) copies of the Order for Adoption and one (1) copy of all the other forms at the time of filing. The forms available are:

JC-1645	Petition for Adoption
JC-1641	Order for Hearing and Investigation
JC-1643	Order for Hearing and Screening (Stepparent Adoption)
JC-1646	Consent to Adoption
JC-1647	Order for Adoption

1. The petition must be complete and the petitioner's signatures notarized.
2. The Order for Hearing and Investigation (or Screening) must contain the name, address and phone number of the investigating agency. *In the case of stepparent adoptions only*, Dane County Department of Human Services will perform the screening if the petitioner's household income is less than \$25,000 per year. Here are some suggested agencies for stepparent screenings:

Adoption Advocates, Inc.
2317 International Ln. #119
Madison, WI 53704

Children & Families First, Inc.
583 D'Onofrio Dr. #220
Madison, WI 53719

Catholic Charities
30 South Franklin St
Madison, WI 53704

Children Service Society
2800 Royal Ave. #310
Madison, WI 53713

Lutheran Social Services
5 Odana Ct.
Madison, WI 53719

Pauquette Adoption Services
P.O. Box 162
Portage, WI 53901

3. An original and a copy of the Order Terminating Parental Rights (in the case of the adoption of a child) must either accompany the petition or be filed prior to the adoption hearing.
4. If the child was adopted or released for adoption in a foreign country, copies of all the relevant foreign documents, including the birth certificate, and English translations if necessary, must be provided prior to the adoption hearing.