

PRE-STAGE 1 POLICY

ADOPTER RECRUITMENT

Adopter Enquiries / Pre Stage 1

Enquiries will be received by telephone, email or via the Adoption Counts website. The information pack will be emailed out or sent by post if specifically requested. Written information will be provided within 24 hours of enquiry.

If the enquiry comes via the website, an online enquiry form will be completed by the person making the enquiry and this will alert the recruitment and enquiry staff via an automated system. The form will automatically be populated to CHARMS. If the enquirer has asked for a telephone call, attempts will be made by recruitment staff in the hub within 24 hours (to the nearest working day) of receiving the enquiry. This will be an initial enquiry call (Appendix 1) during which brief information will be obtained in order to inform an initial decision about whether or not to invite the enquirer to an information event. The majority of initial enquiry calls will take place within office hours but where there are specific reasons why the enquirer cannot do this, a call will be offered in the early evening. Where an enquirer is not being invited further into the process advice and, where appropriate, signposting information will be given

Information events are the most effective means of providing information to enquirers. The decision to invite to an information event can be made by the recruitment & enquiry officer or manager. In rare circumstances where a potential adopter is not able to attend the event, the information will be offered either via a pre-arranged telephone call or an office meeting with the recruitment & enquiry manager or a social worker. The recruitment & enquiry manager will consult with the relevant Operations Manager at any stage in the process where enquiries contain complex issues.

Information events take place every 10 working days at agreed venues across the agency’s 3 spoke model. The specific details of the events will not be publicised on the open website and will be offered only after an initial conversation has taken place and decision made to progress to this stage. The next available event will be offered to the enquirer and if this is declined, in favour of waiting longer to attend one nearer to their home address, this will be recorded on the CHARMS adopter record along with the reason why.

Information events will follow the agreed consistent format (Appendix 2), with a DVD showing the experiences of adoptive families, and will be delivered by either social workers, recruitment & enquiry manager or team managers on a rota basis. People attending events will be asked to complete a questionnaire at the event or by email providing feedback on the information they have been given and their experience with Adoption Counts.

Where possible those attending events will be offered an opportunity to have a conversation with a member of staff at the event to answer any initial questions. If this is not possible due to time / staffing a telephone conversation will be arranged as soon as possible.

Following the information event potential adopters will be asked to contact recruitment staff at the hub by telephone or email to arrange for an initial assessment call to take place. This process will be explained at the event. This conversation will be to answer any further questions, take some further information, and enable a decision to be made about proceeding to the next stage .The conversation will follow the agreed criteria (Appendix 3). If the potential adopter has not made contact within ten working days of the information event the recruitment staff will contact the potential adopters to enquire about their decision, to offer to answer further questions and to request feedback. The outcome of this call and reason for not proceeding will be recorded on the Charms adopter record.

Following the initial assessment call, and where the individual or couple wish to proceed, the decision as to whether to proceed to initial assessment visit will be made by the recruitment & enquiry manager within 24 hours and the potential adopter informed. The majority will be informed the same day (or at the end of the call if the conversation was with the recruitment manager). Where the enquiry contains a complex practice issue referral to the Operations Manager will be made to assist with this decision.

The recruitment & enquiry officer or manager will contact the potential adopter within 24 hours to confirm the offer of an initial assessment visit.

The initial assessment visit will be undertaken by a recruitment and assessment social worker from the Hub or a Spoke office. Where the potential adopter lives in one of the five local authority areas, the team covering this area will usually take the enquiry. Where the potential adopter lives outside of the local authority areas the spoke office within the closest traveling time will be allocated the enquiry. Enquiries will also be allocated based on capacity and distribution of work across the agency but every effort will be made to avoid unnecessary additional travel for adopters or staff.

The recruitment worker will liaise with team managers for the visit to be allocated to a social worker. Adopters will be encouraged to be available for visits in normal office hours to keep evening working to a minimum. The initial assessment visit should take place within 2 weeks of the detailed conversation. The social worker will follow the areas contained in the initial assessment visit template (Appendix 4) and record the visit in this document. A decision as to whether to invite the enquirer to register their interest should be made within a timescale of 5 working days following the visit. This allows 3 days for worker to write report and 2 days for spoke team manager to make decision. The manager’s decision will be recorded in the initial assessment visit template.

The recruitment staff will be advised of decision by their manager and the social worker who undertook the visit will forward a copy of the initial visit report to the enquirer. Where the decision is negative the social worker will explain the reasons why and offer advice about next steps or signposting to other agencies if appropriate. If the decision is positive, the recruitment & enquiry manager / officer will be notified and they will then contact the enquirer to provisionally book the adopter onto a monthly rolling programme of preparation training and send out the ROI (Appendix) at an agreed time. The ROI will be returned to the hub staff by prospective adopters and recruitment staff will notify spoke manager within 24 hours.

The recruitment staff will monitor / track ROI decisions and timescales.

Appendices

1. Initial Enquiry call template
2. Information Event PowerPoint presentation
3. Initial Assessment call template
4. Initial Assessment Visit template
5. Registration of Interest