

Adopter Case Records

1. Security of Case Recording of Prospective and Approved Adopter Information

All recording by Adopt North East in relation to a prospective and/or approved adopters must be stored securely.

The Agency is required by AAR 39 and AIR 5 to ensure that adoption case records, and all their contents, are kept in secure conditions at all times. In particular, the Agency is required by AAR 39 and AIR 5 to ensure that it takes all appropriate measures to prevent the theft, unauthorised disclosure, loss or destruction of, or damage to, case records or their contents.

The primary system for the secure storing of case recording relating to a prospective and/or approved adopters is the Liquid Logic Case Management System. The system is only accessible to approved users and access is password protected. Where necessary, individual records can be further restricted. All access is fully audited, enabling all users who access a record to be easily identified. The system is supported by Information Systems Team of North Tyneside Council, including the backup of records in the event of a system failure.

2. Information to be held by the Agency

All information obtained by the Agency in relation to an application to adopt must be retained and recorded as part of an Adopter Case Record, including:

- a. Contact Information
- b. Core Biographical Information
- c. Information required under Schedule 4 Adoption Agency Regulations
- d. Photographs
- e. Correspondence and communication with the Agency
- f. Assessment work, including visits

All information obtained by the Agency in relation to approval must be retained and recorded as part of an Adopter Case Record, including:

- g. All relevant Panel minutes and the Agency Decision-Maker's decisions in relation to the suitability of the adopters
- h. Correspondence and communication with the Agency

All information obtained by the Agency in relation to post-adoption support must be retained and recorded as part of an Adopter Case Record:

- i. PAS Assessment of Need
- j. Application to the Adoption Support Fund
- k. Record of Specialist Assessment or Therapeutic Intervention
- l. Correspondence and communication with the Agency

Other information obtained by the Agency in relation to adopters deemed relevant by the Agency requiring retention as part of an Adopter Case Record.

3. Document Storage

The Liquid Logic Case Management System has an Electronic Document Management function, enabling scanned documents and attachments to be uploaded directly onto the Adopter Case Record.

All documents in relation to a prospective and/or approved adopters must be uploaded onto Liquid Logic.

4. Retention of Case Recording, including Documents and Attachments

AAR 40 provides that the agency must keep a prospective adopter's case record for as long as it considers appropriate. In considering how long to retain prospective adopters' case records the agency is mindful that one of the principles of the Data Protection Act is that personal data should only be kept for as long as is necessary.

End Point of Adopter Journey	Retention Period
Contact with the Agency	3 years
Registration of Interest	5 years
Withdrawal during Stage 1	5 years
Completion of Stage 1	5 years
Withdrawal during Stage 2	10 years
Agency Decision as to Suitability	25 years
Post Adoption Support Contact	3 years
Post Adoption Support Assessment	10 years
Post Adoption Support Intervention	10 years

5. Disclosure of Records

- a) To another Adoption Agency

Adopt North East is permitted under AAR 43 to transfer a copy of a case record, or part of that record, to another adoption agency when it considers this to be in the

interests of the child or prospective adopter to whom the record relates. The Agency is required to keep a written record of any such transfer.

b) To a Local Authority for a child

Adopt North East is permitted under AAR 42.2 to use its discretion to allow access to its case records and disclose the information from a local Authority as it thinks fit for the purposes of carrying out its functions as an adoption agency. For example, this includes disclosing information when the child's Local Authority needs information from the Agency for Linking, Matching and Placement processes.

c) To those entitled to the information

AAR 42.1 sets out organisations and circumstances where the agency is required to provide access to information upon request, including:

- The Children's Commissioner
- Courts
- CAFCASS
- Ofsted
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
- Independent Review Mechanism
- Complaints
- Fostering Agency

Where the Agency intentionally discloses information contained within an Adopter Case, it will keep a written record of access and disclosure, including:

- a description of the information disclosed;
- the date on which the disclosure was made;
- the person to whom the information was disclosed; and
- the reason for the disclosure.