

Relinquished baby – Internal process for Hillingdon

Last updated August 2021.

- 1. Upon a referral for a mother considering relinquishing her baby for adoption;**
The frontline SW team must complete a family finding referral form (ICS) and place into the ICS family finding tray.
The Kinship Team Manager will review this referral and alert the court team to arrange SW allocation. The handover between frontline SW team and court SW and TM needs to take place at the soonest opportunity (after HARP discussion- see below). Frontline SW to start collecting all information from both parents and health from the earliest opportunity (life story/ photos/ child permanence report info). Also to give preliminary information to parents about the legal implications. (Section 20).
- 2. Prior to handover to court team, frontline SW to book into and present to Complex HARP for consideration of Legal planning meeting, and consideration of early permanence placement. Notify Coram to the relinquished baby referral (and that EP placement may be required) and send them an invite for the complex HARP (Adoptionteam@hillingdong.gov.uk)**

Considerations at HARP discussion:

If the mother does not wish to inform the father of the baby's birth, the LA Legal Department should be consulted and a Directive from the court may be sought. Issues the court will consider include the nature of the father's relationship with the mother and whether there might be safety issues for the mother or child. Are the wider family aware of the pregnancy? If not examine the reasons and how we could progress.

An *in-principle* decision will be given for the Legal Planning Meeting which will then be requested and held by the court team when the baby is born.

- 3. Court SW to ensure birth parent counselling has been offered at the earliest stage, CAFCASS and all relevant information has been passed to both parents re: Adoption. Also the legal information pertaining to signing a Section 20.**
This must all be carefully case noted on the ICS case file.
Ensure any information is translated for parents where needed.

Leaflets (CoramBAAF) on this are stored in the H:shared court team drive:
Hard copies of all leaflets (preferable to give to parents)- are on the wall by the Coram area on 2 South.

- Pregnant and thinking about adoption
- CAFCASS leaflet
- PAC UK counselling leaflet

- Section 20 information

Life story information and pregnancy/ birth history from parents to be gathered at early stage. Photos should try to be obtained. Coram can assist the SW with any adoption related information related to family finding and life story the SW may need.

Think about completion of the Child Permanence Report from an early stage and start to gather all the information especially should we lose contact with the parents post-birth.

4. The birth/ Registration/ CAFCASS and Best Interest Decision for Adoption

Birth parents are expected to name their baby and register the birth. This should be sensitively managed if there are reasons why a parent would not wish to do this. Try to get a birth parent to name the child as far as possible- even if they give suggestions of a few of their favourite names.

The court SW will need to register baby in the event of an absent birth parent:

<https://www.gov.uk/register-birth>.

Ensure the LA have several copies of the birth certificate.

The CAFCASS referral should be made at the point of a baby's birth registration (see shared drive). A copy of the birth certificate is required to be sent with the referral.

PANEL: the panel date will need to be booked in for a best; This will involve a discussion and recommendation for a best interest (adoption) decision, which will then go to the Agency Decision Maker for ratification. The panel to be booked is CORAM's adoption panel. Please advise adoptionteam@hillingdon.gov.uk

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N.B Parents are entitled to change their mind at any point during this process and should not be placed under any pressure/ treated with care.