**How Does the Illinois Adoption Process Work?**

If you are thinking about [adoption in the Chicago](https://www.familylawadvocate.com/adoption/) area, we know that you probably have many questions about the Illinois adoption process. Adoptions in Chicago are governed by the Illinois Adoption Act ([750 ILCS 50/1](http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=2098&ChapterID=59)). To better understand how adoption works in Illinois, we will walk you through a number of questions about the process, including:

* Who is eligible to be adopted?;
* Am I eligible to adopt a child?;
* Are there different kinds of adoptions?; and
* How do I file for an adoption to make it legal?

If you have questions about adoption, you should always speak with an experienced Chicago family law attorney.

**Who is Eligible to Be Adopted?**

For anyone considering adoption, it is important to understand who can be adopted under Illinois law. To be clear, the law does not work in such a way that any child can be legally adopted regardless of his or her circumstances. Under the statute, the following people can be available for adoption:

* Child who has been surrendered for adoption to an adoption agency and the agency has consented;
* Person who is authorized to consent to the adoption has given consent;
* Biological parents of the child have placed the child with the prospective adoptive parents and given consent; or
* Child has been relinquished under the Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection Act.

In certain situations, an adult can also meet the conditions necessary under the law to be adopted.

**Am I Eligible to Adopt in Illinois?**

Generally speaking, an adult can be eligible to adopt under Illinois if the adult meets the following conditions:

* Does not have a legal disability;
* Has resided continuously in Illinois for at least six months (or for 90 days if the person is a member of the armed forces); and
* Is a reputable person.

Sometimes there is a good reason for a person under the age of 18 to adopt. The statute emphasizes that a minor can adopt by leave of the court (which simply means permission of the court).

**Are There Different Types of Adoptions?**

The Illinois Adoption Act specifies that there are different kinds of adoptions. It is important for a person planning to adopt to understand the distinction among them and to know what type of adoption she or he will be seeking:

* Related adoption: where one of the adopting parents is related to the person who is going to be adopted (this includes step-parent adoptions).
* Unrelated adoption: where neither of the adopting parents is related to the person who is going to be adopted.

Adoptions can go through an agency, or they can happen through a private adoption. It is important to know how these types of adoptions differ because they can affect the legal rights and responsibilities of the parties involved.

**Filing an Illinois Petition for Adoption**

Once you understand the foundational elements of the adoption process, it is important to learn more about the process for filing the adoption petition. In most cases, the adopting parent(s) will need to file an adoption petition within 30 days from the time that the adoptee became available for adoption. In certain situations, the court can extend this deadline. After the petition is filed, what should you expect? The next step is an interim order hearing. This is the period that will involve an investigation into the adoptive parents, as well as the court making decisions about temporary parental responsibilities for the child. After this step is complete and six months have passed, there will be a final hearing. At this point, the court can finalize the adoption.

**Speak with a Chicago Adoption Lawyer**

Do you have questions about adoption? A Chicago adoption lawyer can answer your questions today. [Contact M. Scott Gordon & Associates](https://www.familylawadvocate.com/contact-us/) to speak with an experienced family law attorney.

