

Child and Family Services PROGRAM STANDARDS MANUAL	Section: 550	Effective: Oct 1/88 Revised: Dec 1/99	Page: 1
Subject: NONAGENCY ADOPTION			

This section deals with all adoptions other than ward adoptions. The Act provides for five types of non-ward adoptions pertaining to:

- Division 2 – private adoptions
- Division 3 – intercountry adoptions
- Division 4 – de facto adoptions
- Division 5 – extended family adoptions
- Division 6 – adoption by person who has married child's parent
- Division 7 – adoption of an adult

For Division 2 to 6, legal services are usually provided by a lawyer and, depending on the type of adoption, agencies are required or are requested to conduct investigations and/or prepare home studies and/or supervise the placement until an order of adoption is made. When involved in non-ward adoptions, agencies should make available services that afford maximum protection for the child, birth parent and adoptive parent.

While the courts are ultimately responsible for ensuring that an adoption is in the best interests of the child and for safeguarding parental rights and responsibilities, the role of agencies may be critical in assisting the courts to make sound decisions.

STANDARDS

550.1 Agency involvement

Where an agency is involved in a non-ward adoption, the rights and responsibilities of the parents of the child are safeguarded by the agency and no action is taken by the agency to undermine those rights and responsibilities or to unduly influence the parents in their decision.

550.2 Court reports

Agency investigations are completed and reports forwarded to the court and the Director in accordance with requirements and time limits under the Act. Where circumstances clearly prevent completion of a report as required, the court is advised of the situation and the agency requests direction from the court.

550.3 Court report content

The content of a report upon investigation or court report includes an assessment of the placement and meets the legal requirements for the type of non-ward adoption as provided in the Act and the *Adoption Regulation*.

550.4 Child's welfare paramount

An agency aware of or involved in a non-ward adoption takes whatever action necessary under the Act to ensure that no child is placed or allowed to remain in an adoption home that may be unsuitable for the child or detrimental to the child's well-being and healthy development.