

Legal Notes . . .

In continuation of our monthly service to our existing clients, below is a short synopsis of Adoption Law. It is our hope that you will find this informative. Please feel free to share this with family or friends who you think would be interested in the topic.

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Adoption Law

At Stebelton, Aranda & Snider, one of our many practice areas is adoption law.

Clients of the Firm may access this practice area in several ways:

- Step-parent Adoption.
- Grandparent Adoption.
- Private Placement Adoption.
- Foreign Adoption.

Step-parent adoption arises out of a married couple having a child and then terminating their marriage. A divorced man or woman may remarry and then his or her new spouse may then desire to adopt their "step-child." The Firm offers services to the Petitioner spouse. A home study is performed. The biological parent of the child, whose rights will be terminated, must be notified of the adoption hearing. A Court may find that the right to consent of the biological parent has been lost and hold that the biological parent's consent is unnecessary. A Court must find that it is in the best interest of the child to grant the petition. The step-parent then becomes "parent" for all purposes.

A grandparent may adopt a grandchild following the death of a parent or following a birth out of wedlock. The placement hearing required by R.C. 5103.16 is dispensed with when the Petitioner is a grandparent.

Private placement adoption means that no agency is involved on behalf of the child or birthmother. The biological mother can place the child with the approval of the Court after meeting with an Assessor who advises the mother of her rights. The biological mother must also consent to the adoption. Stebelton, Aranda & Snider may represent the biological mother in this kind of matter, and also will frequently represent the adoptive parents. The Firm counsels interested adoptive parents to get "pre-approved" by the Fairfield County Probate Court as a step in the adoption process.

When a child born in Ohio will be placed with parents in another state (Kentucky, for example), the adoption is governed by the Interstate Compact. No child born in Ohio and going to Kentucky for a final hearing may cross the state line until permission has been granted from the Interstate Compact Commission.

Stebelton, Aranda & Snider also offers services to clients who have received a child from a foreign country where adoption proceedings may have already occurred. For example, Guatemala. The adoption parents may wish to have the foreign adoption proceedings sanctioned by the American court system. This enables the parents to get a new Birth Certificate and then a Social Security Card for their child.

If you have an adoption question, we suggest that you contact Stebelton, Aranda & Snider and speak with Jim Aranda, Sandra Davis or Megan Peters. (740) 654-4141.