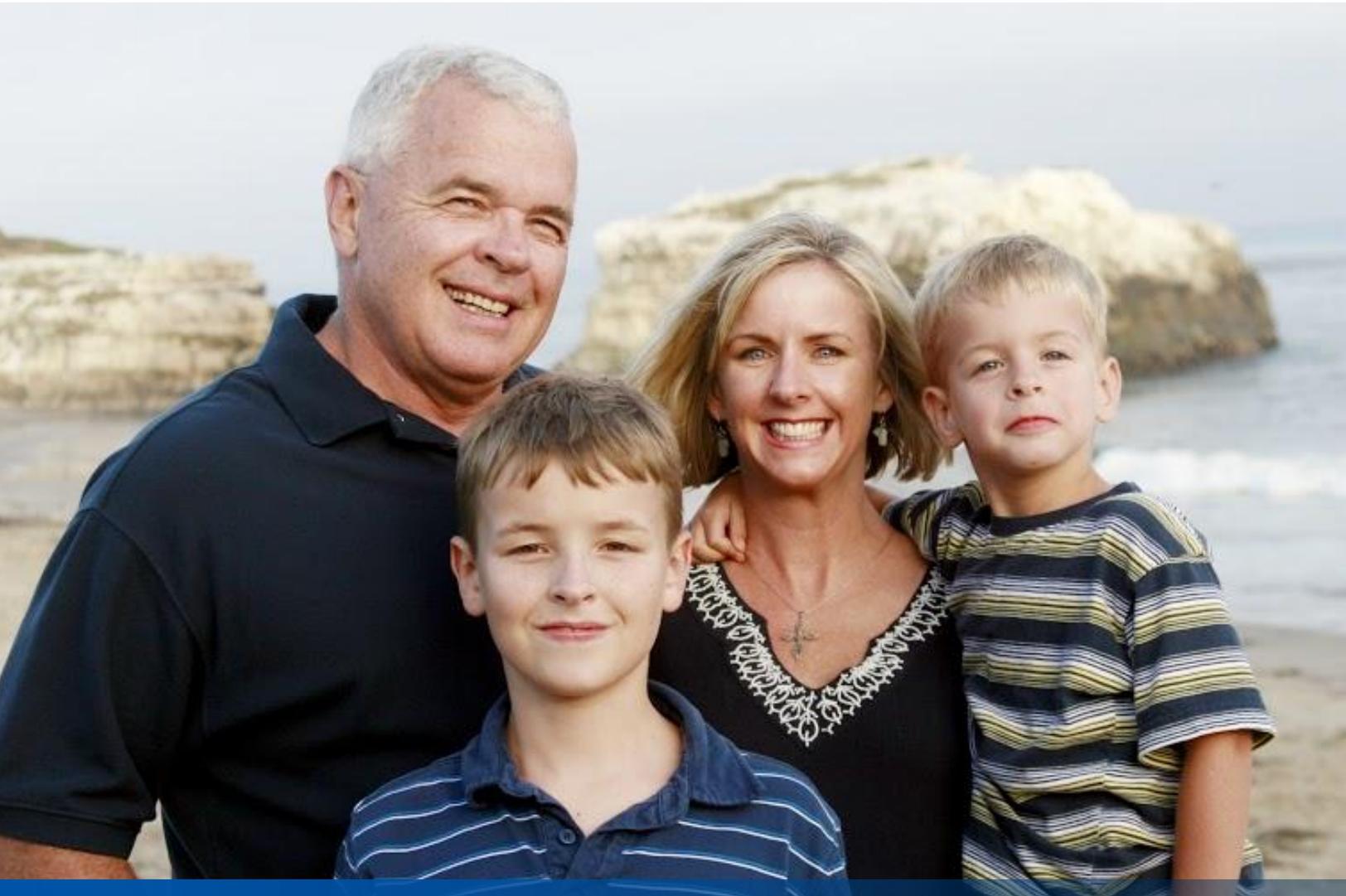


OKLAHOMA CITY ADOPTION ESSENTIALS PART -1

“When many couples or individuals first set out to adopt a child, they quickly realize that the process can be a daunting one.”



By Larry Parman

OKLAHOMA ESTATE PLANNING ATTORNEY

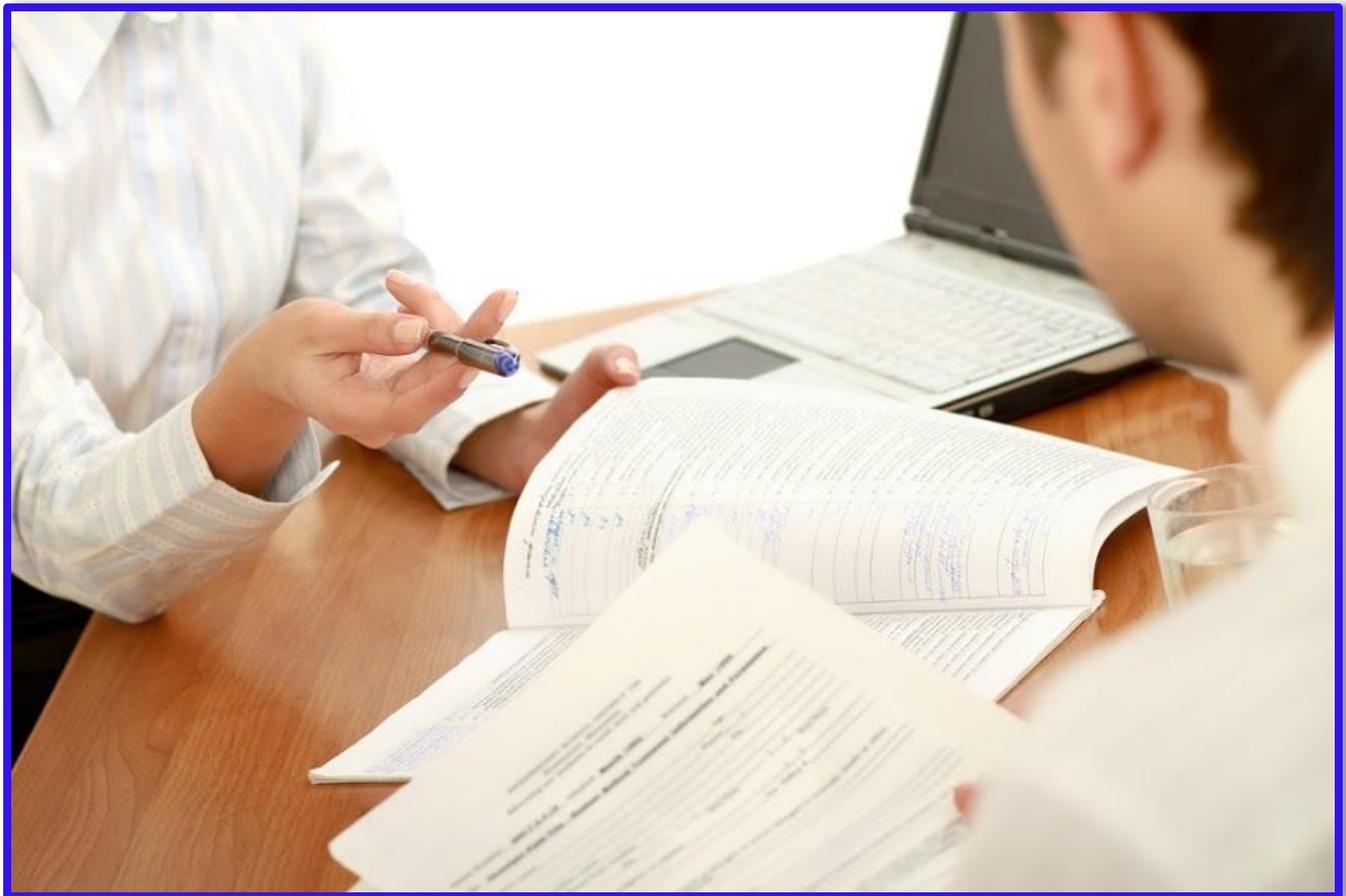


When many couples or individuals first set out to adopt a child, they quickly realize the process can be a daunting one. Successfully navigating the waters of the adoption process is something that takes time, patience, and a good deal of planning. It's also something with which an experienced adoption attorney can help you.

Adoptions are legal processes and like all such processes, you need to know what you must, can, and cannot do to make sure your adoption goes as smoothly as possible. Today in this first of a two-part discussion of essential adoption issues, we will look at some foundational concepts you need to understand before you decide to adopt.

THE ADOPTION PROCESS

The adoption process is one that is governed by various state, federal, and even international laws. While you and your attorney will discuss the specific laws that apply to you, it is important to understand that every state has slightly different laws when it comes to adoption. Further, in order for your adoption to be finalized, a state probate judge must approve the adoption, and the judge can only do so if you follow the correct procedures as outlined by state adoption laws. This is why talking to an attorney experienced with adoptions in your state is essential if you are considering adopting a child.



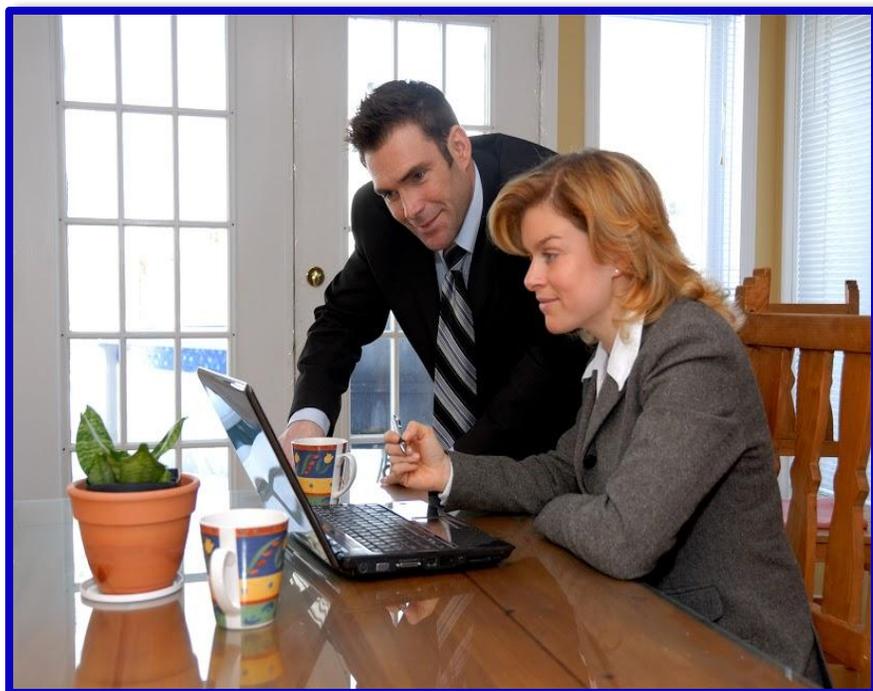
ONE DESTINATION, MANY PATHS



While the basic adoption process is similar regardless of where you live, significant differences exist between different types of adoptions. There is no single way to adopt a child and depending on where you live, your desires and individual circumstances, you might be able to add a child to your family through one or more adoption types. Though we'll discuss the different types and their requirements in more depth in our next discussion of this topic, understanding the basic options is important.

Most adoptions are known as agency adoptions. This is when would-be adoptive parents use a state or licensed private adoption agency to help them adopt their child. The agency is responsible for screening potential parents, matching them with available children and ensuring the child is protected during the process.

MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS



Even though each type of adoption is different from the others, all of them have specific requirements that must be met before you can successfully adopt a child. These require you to proceed through the adoption process in a series of steps or stages.

For example, if you choose to go through an adoption agency, one of the first steps is finding an appropriate agency, be it public or private. Next, you'll go through what's called a home study. During the home study, a licensed social worker or state official will come to your home to determine if it is a suitable place for a child. The investigator will look at a variety of factors, such as the stability of the marriage if a married couple is applying to adopt, the financial situation, the physical and mental health of the would-be adoptee(s) and other factors that might affect how a child would fare in the home.

After the home study the investigator will make a report and submit it to the court. The court will use this report as a factor in its decision about whether to approve the adoption.

TALK TO US FOR GUIDANCE

Some parents choose to adopt because they cannot otherwise have children, some choose to adopt because they want to add an adopted child to their family, while others choose to adopt for a variety of other reasons. But regardless of why you are considering adoption, you must be sure you're prepared for what the



process will require of you. You need to know what you should or shouldn't do to make the adoption process as easy and stress-free as possible.

If you're interested in adopting a child in Kansas, Missouri or Oklahoma, you need to

talk to us as soon as possible. The attorneys and staff at Parman & Easterday have assisted clients navigate the adoption process for over twenty years. We cannot assist you, though, until you contact us. If you are considering adoption, need advice about your options, or simply have questions, call us today at 405-843-6100.

About the Author

Larry Parman



After helping his own family deal with a lengthy probate and a battle with the IRS following his father's death in a farm accident, Larry made a decision to help families create effective estate plans designed to reduce taxes, and minimize legal interference with the transfer of assets to one's heirs, and protect his clients' assets from predators and creditors. Following a dozen years in the investment banking and financial services business, in the mid-1980s Mr. Parman formed a law firm that gives families the peace of mind that comes from having created a premier estate and financial plan.

After forming his law firm in 1984, he offered a series of public and private seminars to inform the public about using a Living Trust as the foundation of a family's estate plan. Today, Parman&Easterday is one of the leading business and estate planning law firms in the Midwest. The firm's primary focus is on business and estate planning, elder law, asset protection, and providing effective estate planning solutions for clients. Today, the firm's premier estate plan design is referred to as a Legacy Wealth Plan.

Mr. Parman is a frequent guest on the radio and can be seen on television talk shows explaining the importance of proper estate planning. Prosperity Productions selected Mr. Parman as a featured speaker in a nationally-recognized educational video on Living Trusts. He is the author of numerous published articles on financial and estate planning matters and the co-author of two books, *Estate Planning Basics: A Crash Course in Safeguarding Your Legacy* and *Guiding Those Left Behind in Oklahoma: Settling the Affairs of Your Loved Ones*.

Mr. Parman is a member and Fellow of the American Academy of Estate Planning Attorneys. He is also a member of the Oklahoma and Missouri Bar Associations, the American Bar Association, and the Oklahoma City Estate Planning Council.



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www.ParmanLaw.com

OVERLAND PARK, KS
10740 Nall Avenue, Suite 160
Overland Park, KS 66211
Phone: (913) 385-9400
Fax: (913) 385-9422

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK
13913-B Quail Pointe Drive
Oklahoma City, OK 73134
Phone: (405) 843-6100
Fax: (405) 917-7018