



**Administrative Policies and Procedures: 15.8**

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Preparing Adoption Records for Archives</b>
<b>Authority:</b>	TCA 36-1-126, 37-4-201 et seq, TCA 37-5-105 (3), 37-5-106, TCA 71-3-501-527, 515-522 repealed. Chapter 0250-4-9 Standards for Child-Placing Agencies
<b>Standards:</b>	None
<b>Application:</b>	DCS, DCS Contract Provider Agency, Licensed or Chartered TN Child-Placing Agency, or Licensed TN Clinical Social Worker
<b>Policy Statement:</b>	
The Department of Children's Services (DCS), in conjunction with the Department of General Services and Contract Providers, is responsible for maintaining adoption records to preserve the history of each child/youth that was adopted from Tennessee foster care or children who were privately adopted in the State of Tennessee.	
<b>Purpose:</b>	
To provide guidelines for the preparation of preserving, sealing, registering, and maintaining adoption records to ensure compliance with maintenance and confidentiality guidelines, laws, and rules.	
<b>Procedures:</b>	
<b>A. Closure of Adoption Case Record of a Child/Youth in Foster Care</b>	<p>When an adoption is finalized for a child/youth in foster care, the DCS Regional Office, in conjunction with a DCS Contract Provider Agency, a Licensed or Chartered TN Child-Placing Agency, or a Licensed TN Clinical Social Worker prepares the record for closure within thirty (30) days and secures the record until it is officially sealed. If an adoption finalization is appealed, the DCS Regional Office, DCS Contract Provider Agency, the Licensed or Chartered TN child-placing agency, or the Licensed TN Clinical Social Worker is responsible for protecting and preserving the record, including any original documents, in a confidential, secure method until the appeal is complete. The following steps should be taken by regional staff to prepare the record:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Complete form <b>CS-0677, Adoption Records Face Sheet (Closed)</b> for each individual child/youth's adoption record. This will assist to identify any missing documents that need to be secured. Once the form is completed, upload the form into the child/youth's Electronic Case Record.</li> <li>b) Upload any missing documents, not already in the Electronic Case Record or listed on form <b>CS-0677</b>, to the child/youth's Electronic Case Record.</li> <li>c) Upload any documents that exist in hard copy format only to the Electronic Case Record.</li> </ol>

- d) Ensure all case recordings and other data entry has been completed by coordinating with assigned staff including, but not limited to, the FSW (Family Service Worker), Permanency Specialist, and Contract Provider staff.
- e) Documents that preserve the child/youth's history most appropriately in an original format, such as original birth certificate, cards, letters, photos should be collected and provided to Child Programs when the record is submitted for sealing. Copies of the original documents should also be uploaded in the Electronic Case Record.
- f) Regional staff responsible for restricting the closed adoption record will review form **CS-0677, Adoption Records Face Sheet (Closed)** to ensure the form is complete and uploaded and will restrict the Electronic Case Record to any further action.
- g) Within ninety (90) calendar days of the finalization of an adoption of a child/youth in foster care, or thirty (30) calendar days after the resolution of an appeal, the DCS Regional Office or Contract Agency Provider will submit the record for closure.
- h) The DCS Regional Office or the DCS Contract Provider Agency submits any original documents along with completed form **CS-0422 Transfer, Mail, and Acknowledgement of Case Records, Record Material, and Forms and CS-0677, Adoption Record Face Sheet (Closed)** to DCS Child Programs, 315 Deaderick Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, UBS Tower, Nashville, TN 37243 for sealing and maintaining of these documents.
- i) The DCS Regional Office or the DCS Contract Provider Agency will email the completed form **CS-0677, Adoption Records Face Sheet (Closed)** on each child/youth to [EI\\_DCS.PostAdoptionServices@tn.gov](mailto:EI_DCS.PostAdoptionServices@tn.gov) to notify DCS Child Programs that the record is ready for sealing. If form **CS-0677** indicates original documents will be sealed as part of the record, the DCS Child Programs Post Adoption Specialist will delay sealing until the original documents are received.
- j) Upon DCS Child Program's receipt of the emailed form and, if applicable, any original documents, a Child Programs representative will review form **CS-0677, Adoption Records Face Sheet (Closed)** to ensure the record is complete. If the record is complete and no original documents are to be sealed, the Post Adoption Records Unit Representative will notify the sender via email acknowledging receipt of the record for sealing. Once the record is complete and the original documents required for sealing have been received, the Post Adoption Records Unit Representative will sign and return DCS form **CS-0422, Transfer, Mail, and Acknowledgement of Case Records, Record Material, and Forms** to the DCS Regional Office, Licensed or Chartered TN Child-Placing Agency, or Licensed TN Clinical Social Worker representative acknowledging the receipt of the electronic record and original documents. If the record is incomplete, the Post Adoption Records Unit Representative will work with regional supervision to secure missing records.
- k) Upon receipt of the **CS-0422, Transfer, Mail, and Acknowledgement of Case Records, Record Material, and Forms** from a Child Programs representative, the DCS Regional Office is responsible to notify the DCS

	<p>Contract Provider Agency that the closed adoption record has been received in the DCS Post Adoption Records Unit. The DCS Regional Office/DCS Contract Provider Agency is authorized to appropriately dispose of (by shredding) duplicate documents or forms extraneous to the specific closed adoption record that remains in the region or with the DCS Contract Provider Agency.</p> <p>l) Post Adoption Records Unit staff register and seal the record for preservation.</p>
<p><b>B. Closure of Private Adoption Records</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Private adoption records received by a Regional Office will be maintained in a secure location pending submission to DCS Child Programs. Private adoption records received directly by DCS Child Programs will be stored in a secure location until the record is sealed.</li> <li>2. Within ninety (90) calendar days of the finalization of a private adoption, or thirty (30) calendar days after the resolution of an appeal, the Licensed or Chartered TN Child-Placing Agency or the Licensed TN Clinical Social Worker is responsible for completing <b>CS-0422, Transfer, Mail, and Acknowledgement of Case Records, Record Material</b>, and form <b>CS-0677, Adoption Records Face Sheet (Closed)</b> for each individual child/youth's adoption record and submitting the closed adoption records to DCS Child Programs, 315 Deaderick Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, UBS Tower, Nashville, TN 37243 for sealing and preserving the adoption record.</li> <li>3. A DCS Child Programs representative signs and returns DCS form <b>CS-0422, Transfer, Mail, and Acknowledgement of Case Records, Record Material, and Forms</b> to the DCS Regional Office, Licensed or Chartered TN Child-Placing Agency, or Licensed TN Clinical Social Worker representative acknowledging receipt.</li> <li>4. Upon receipt of the <b>CS-0422, Transfer, Mail, and Acknowledgement of Case Records, Record Material, and Forms</b> from a Child Programs representative, the Licensed or Chartered TN Child-Placing Agency or Licensed TN Clinical Social Worker may establish their limited record pursuant to TCA 36-1-126 (b) (2-3). Any remaining duplicate documents, forms extraneous to the limited record, or sealed record are to be appropriately disposed of per licensing or departmental standards.</li> <li>5. The DCS Child Programs Post Adoption Records Unit prepares and seals all private adoption records.</li> </ol> <p><b>Note:</b> Currently, Licensed or Chartered TN Child-Placing Agencies or Licensed TN Clinical Social Workers are not authorized by DCS licensing standards to establish an electronic adoption case record in TFACTS or in any other electronic media.</p>

<p><b>Forms:</b></p>	<p><a href="#"><u>CS- 0677, Adoption Record Face Sheet (Closed)</u></a>  <a href="#"><u>CS- 0422, Transfer, Mail, and Acknowledgement of Case Records, Record</u></a></p>
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	<a href="#"><u>Material, and Forms</u></a>
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<b>Collateral documents:</b>	<a href="#"><u>Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children Procedures Manual (ICPC)</u></a>
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<b>Glossary:</b>	
<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Chartered Tennessee Child-Placing Agency</b>	An agency that had received a charter from the State of Tennessee through legislative action or by incorporation for the operation of an entity or a program of any type that engaged in the placement of children for foster care or residential care as a part of a plan or program for which those children were or could have been made available for adoptive placement and that may have, at sometime during its existence, become subject to any licensing requirements by the department or its predecessors.
<b>Licensed Child-Placing Agency</b>	Any agency operating under a license to place children for adoption issued by the department, or operating under a license from any governmental authority from another state or territory or the District of Columbia, or any agency that operates under the authority of another country with the right to make placement for children for adoption and that has, in the department sole determination, been authorized to place children for adoption in this state.
<b>Licensed Clinical Social Worker</b>	An individual who holds a license as an independent practitioner from the board of social work certification and licensure pursuant to title 63, chapter 23, and, in addition is licensed by the department to provide adoption placement services.
<b>Private Adoption</b>	The adoption of any child that was not in the Department of Children’s Services custody when he/she was adopted.