



Urgent Update: Ethiopia: Latest Information Regarding Adoptions

Ethiopian officials have informed the Department of State that as of **November 8, 2017**, the **ONLY** adoption cases that the government of Ethiopia will allow to proceed to completion under Ethiopia's current law are cases with a completed Form I-604 determination **OR** cases that have a Form I-604 determination that is currently pending with the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa. If an adoption case has not reached this point as of November 8, 2017, the government of Ethiopia will not allow the case to proceed to completion. This means that families who have been matched with a child but have not progressed to the Form I-604 stage may not proceed with the adoption in Ethiopia. If you are uncertain if your case has progressed to the Form I-604 stage, please contact the Department of State-Office of Children's Issues at adoption@state.gov. In light of this information, adoption agencies **should not** refer new Ethiopian adoption cases for U.S. prospective adoptive parents because the government of Ethiopia will not allow any new cases to be processed.

If you filed a Form I-600 Petition to Classify Orphan as an Immediate Relative, with the National Benefits Center (NBC) before November 8 for a child in Ethiopia, please send us an email adoption@state.gov with your name, the child's name, and where you are in the process.

The Department will continue to engage the government of Ethiopia to address its concerns about intercountry adoption. We have highlighted the hardship children will face if they have already been matched with a family but their adoption won't be allowed to be finalized. We will continue to advocate on the benefits of intercountry adoption as an option for Ethiopian children in need of permanent homes.

We encourage you to speak with your adoption service provider (ASP) about the fees that may be refunded if your case is not allowed to proceed. Please be aware that the Department of State does not have a role in facilitating the transfer or refund of fees; however, an adoption service provider's failure return any funds to which clients are entitled within 60 days of the completion of the delivery of services may negatively impact its accreditation or approval (see 22 CFR 96.40(h)). Specific information about the terms of an ASP's refund should be found in the ASP-client contract and the fee schedule provided at the time of the agreement.

If you have questions about the status of your intercountry adoption, please consult with your ASP.

Please continue to monitor adoption.state.gov for updated information on intercountry adoption in Ethiopia. You may review previous notices from the Office of Children's Issues concerning Ethiopia on our website. For questions about this notice or adoption-related visa processing, please contact the Office of Children's Issues at Adoption@state.gov.

