



FAMILIES THRU INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION

(a state licensed not-for-profit child placement agency)

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STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING AND RISKS FOR RUSSIAN ADOPTIONS

Families Thru International Adoption, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as “FTIA”) and the undersigned Adopting Parent(s) enter into this Agreement, which supplements the Application and Adoption Services Agreement, with the intention of working toward an international adoption from Russia. By their signatures below, Adopting Parent(s) acknowledge their understanding of the risks that are part of international adoption and agree to the following:

1. All adoption placements have certain risks. These risks include but are not limited to: 1) an undiagnosed/misdiagnosed medical/developmental condition, 2) Russia suspending or stopping international adoptions, and 3) going through the entire adoption procedure only to have the judge in Russia not approve the adoption. The purpose of this document is to set forth several of the significant risks associated with entering into an adoption plan. There are others, but it is impossible to put in writing the risks of each individual adoption. You as (a) potential Adoptive Parent(s), are urged to review this document, and all documents we ask you to sign, with an attorney or anyone else you choose. Also, we want to emphasize that the adoption process is completely voluntary. You should not feel pressured, nor are you obligated or required to continue the adoption plan at any time up to the Court finalization of the adoption in Russia.
2. FTIA cannot predict an adopted child’s mental or physical development, emotional and/or personality characteristics, health, medical issues, learning disabilities, intellectual ability, hyperactivity, attention deficits, appearance or inherited characteristics. Information provided to the Adopting Parent(s) from the orphanage staff may be incorrect because any social, medical, or family history has been provided by birth parents or other contacts (e.g., orphanages, doctors) which are beyond FTIA’s control. Adopting Parent(s) understand and acknowledge that the medical/developmental/physiological/emotional information provided by adoption and/or orphanage representative(s) may be incomplete or erroneous. Adopting Parent(s) must consult with a medical doctor, and specifically recommended is a doctor with experience in reviewing Russian medicals for adoptions, and rely on the opinion, before accepting the referral of any child. Adopting Parent(s) understand that FTIA is not able to verify any of the medical or developmental information provided to the Adopting Parent(s) because it comes from government officials beyond the control of FTIA.
3. A child(ren) will be identified for the Adopting Parent(s) according to Russian law/regulations. Under current adoption practices, Adopting Parent(s) will receive referral information either prior to or during the first of two trips to Russia. FTIA cannot guarantee the accuracy of any information provided to you by the Russian adoption officials. In every country, including Russia, there is a chance of infectious diseases (i.e., AIDS, Hepatitis, etc.) and the possibility of false negative or false positive test results because of poor testing practices and/or other inaccurate or omitted information. Adopting Parent(s) agree to hold FTIA harmless and not pursue any legal action against FTIA for any undiagnosed or misdiagnosed medical/developmental/physiological/emotional condition of their adopted child(ren) whether the condition is discovered prior to completing the adoption in Russia or

after returning to the United States with their adopted child(ren). Adopting Parent(s) understand that FTIA requires Adopting Parent(s) to obtain an independent medical opinion as to the medical condition of the child they are to adopt and to base their decision on whether to accept the referral of any child on the independent medical opinion. If Adopting Parent(s) choose to not obtain the independent medical opinion, Adopting Parent(s) understand that it is a breach of FTIA policy and Adopting Parent(s) proceed with the adoption at their own risk and just as if they had obtained an independent medical opinion and relied upon that medical opinion.

4. On Adopting Parent(s) trip to Russia to finalize the adoption, Adopting Parent(s) will appear in court. The court could read out loud additional medical information about the child which was not previously provided to Adopting Parent(s) nor FTIA. The medical information provided in court may be consistent or inconsistent with the early medical information provided to Adopting Parent(s) during Adopting Parent(s) first trip. The prosecutor who represents the Russian government at the court hearing has access to more information, especially historical information, than orphanages in most cases.
5. FTIA will always stand by Adopting Parent(s) decision to accept or refuse a referral of a child given by the Russian adoption officials from the Regional Department of Education. FTIA does require all Adopting Parent(s) to obtain an independent medical opinion preferably from one of the doctors listed on our website or other doctors with experience reviewing medical information for Russian children based on the information provided by the Russian authorities and to base your decision on that opinion. Adopting Parent(s) are more than welcome to obtain another opinion from another doctor of their choice. We prefer Adopting Parent(s) to utilize one of several listed doctors because they all have substantial experience reviewing Russian medicals that are very different than US medical reports.
6. When a referral is declined, FTIA requires Adopting Parent(s) to obtain a written statement from the doctor to submit to the Russian adoption officials.
7. According to the Russian adoption officials, they always refer a child that they believe meets the expectations of adopting parents. If a child is declined, Adopting Parent(s) may or may not receive another referral while on the first trip. Or, Adopting Parent(s) may receive another referral but possibly refuse another referral. If you decide to decline a referral of a child or more than one referral during your first trip and the Russian Officials say they do not have another referral fitting the parameters of the child you want to adopt you may have to make another "first" trip for a referral.
8. If another first trip is required, Adopting Parent(s) will be required to pay expenses and fees of another first trip.
9. If Adopting Parent(s) refuse two referrals from the same region (sometimes even one), FTIA and/or Russia Adoption Officials may recommend/require your dossier to be submitted to another region. It is more likely that after declining two (maybe one) referrals, Adopting Parent(s) will stand a better opportunity in another region. Please note, when switching to another region Adopting Parent(s) will have to write a letter to regional officials requesting the return of their dossier. In addition, the new region selected in consultation with FTIA may require one or more additional dossier documents. Some of the regions have unique dossier requirements.
10. When transferring to another region your dossier will be registered with the Department of Education and you will receive your next referral according to that date, not the date submitted to the first Region.
11. If Adopting Parent(s) refuse one or two referrals in the second region, FTIA may recommend to Adopting Parent(s) to consider another country. All FTIA agency fees will apply to another country, but no international fees, translation fees, or travel expenses will be refunded or applied to another country. While we think it will be a very rare case where

Adopting Parent(s) refuse several children, we want Adopting Parent(s) to understand these policies at the beginning of Adopting Parent(s) adoption.

12. The undersigned Adopting Parent(s) agree that if they decide to dissolve their placement before their adoption of the child placed with them is completed in their state court, that Adopting Parent(s) will: 1) notify FTIA of their decision and allow FTIA to try to identify another family, 2) if foster care is necessary while FTIA identifies another family, Adopting Parent(s) will be responsible to pay for the foster care or reimburse FTIA if FTIA pays for the foster care, 3) Adopting Parent(s) will be responsible for their own legal expenses as Adopting Parent(s) will be required to prepare and sign legal documents necessary to place the minor with another family, and 4) if travel is necessary to transfer the minor from Adopting Parent(s) place of residence to the residence of the family identified by FTIA for the placement of the minor child, Adopting Parent(s) agree to pay for all the travel-related expenses.
13. The undersigned Adopting Parent(s) understands that Russia currently requires four (4) post placement reports after returning from Russia. The four post placement reports are due to be received at FTIA the following number of months after the date of the Adoptive Parent(s) court session in Russia to finalize the adoption: post placement report #1 due within 6 months, post placement #2 due within 12 months, post placement #3 due within 24 months, and post placement #4 due within 36 months. These post placement reports are to be performed by the agency and social worker who completed the Adoptive Parent(s) original home study, if possible. Each post placement requires 10-12 different photos of the child & parents/siblings. By our signature(s) below, the undersigned Adopting Parent(s) agree(s) to complete the post placement reports as required by Russia and submit these reports to FTIA by the requested time, although this will present additional cost after the adoption. The undersigned Adopting Parent(s) understand(s) and agree(s) that if Russia changes its current practice and requires additional post placement reports and pictures or actions, that the undersigned will provide the required post placement reports.
14. All Russian citizens living outside of Russia must register with the Russian government. Russian children adopted by citizens of the US are still Russian citizens until they are 18 years of age according to Russia. The undersigned Adoptive Parent(s) agree that this Registration will occur in Moscow with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after your child's visa is issued to enter the US. Adopting Parent(s) understand the registration may add two days to your stay in Moscow. Please note your child obtains US citizenship upon entry into the United States.
15. International adoptions are unpredictable. There can be no assurances or guarantees on the health of any child(ren) or of the successful completion of an adoption, and FTIA is not legally responsible to the Adopting Parent(s) if for any reason the Adopting Parent(s) do not complete the adoption after accepting a referral due to events, representatives, courts, or any other reason in Russia. For example, the possibility always exists that the adoption process could be delayed or discontinued by Russia. In addition, the adoption may be discontinued if the adoption is for any reason not approved by the local courts in Russia or other licensing or investigating body or bodies of Russia. In the event the adoption is not completed for any reason, the Adopting Parent(s) understand that the international fees and other expenses (e.g. travel, visas, etc.) already paid by the Adopting Parent(s) whether or not these fees are paid through FTIA, are not refundable. FTIA's refund policy for FTIA agency fees is explained in the Application and Adoption Service Agreement signed by the Adopting Parent(s).
16. According to Russian law/regulations, a birth parent/family member may notify the court of their desire to be reunited with a child they have previously abandoned up to the day before the Adoption Court Decree is issued by the Russian Court. For adopting parent(s) the Adoption Certificate is not issued for 10 days after the court hearing on the second trip.

Though very unlikely, Adopting Parent(s) understand that it is possible that a birth parent/family member can reclaim their child until the Adoption Court Decree is issued on their second adoption trip.

17. FTIA is not legally accountable to the Adopting Parent(s) for the action (or inaction) of any third party, such as any overseas agency, lawyer or representative, or any official of any overseas court, government body or any other organization or individual. Adopting Parent(s) agree to hold FTIA harmless for the actions of any third party.
18. FTIA will advocate for and work on behalf of the Adopting Parent(s). This Statement of Understanding and Risks for Russian Adoptions is to assure Adopting Parent(s) starting the adoption process are aware of the risks (financial, health, emotional, legal) of international adoption and that the Adopting Parent(s) voluntarily, knowingly, and willingly accept these risks.
19. Please note that while FTIA will not increase its FTIA agency fee (\$5800) during your adoption, other fees may change/increase. Because adoptions often take more than two years to complete, travel and Intercountry or international fees can increase for a number of reasons including but not limited to currency fluctuations (i.e. dollar value decreasing in value compared to the Russian ruble). Currency changes often lead to changes in labor costs, air fares, hotel costs, etc. As increases in international adoption fees happen we update the Dossier Guide with the new costs. Please remember to review the costs page in the Dossier Guide during your adoption process.
20. Adopting Parent(s) can decline to sign this Statement of Understanding and Risks for Russian Adoptions and discontinue their adoption plan with FTIA.

Families Thru International Adoption, Inc.

_____ Salome LaMarche Director of Programs	_____ Date
_____ ADOPTING PARENT	_____ Date
_____ ADOPTING PARENT	_____ Date