

Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019

S. 1554
H.R. 2731

Through no fault of their own, some people adopted internationally lack citizenship, because the Child Citizenship Act of 2000 granted automatic citizenship to most foreign-born adopted people, but not all.

Their family, their friends, their schools, and their careers are all here. Their citizenship should be, too.

Who Doesn't Get Automatic Citizenship?

- » Adopted children who travel on some visa types (IR-4 or IH-4) do not receive automatic citizenship. These visas are issued to children whose adoptions are finalized in the United States.
- » Adopted people who were 18 or older on February 27, 2001.

35 years

People born before February 27, 1983 (who are now 36 years old or older) were not granted automatic citizenship.

How Do They Find Out?

Adopted people can be shocked to discover they lack U.S. citizenship when they...

- » Fill out FAFSA
- » Apply to college
- » Join the Armed Services
- » Apply for a passport
- » Commit a minor crime

The Current Process

- » If a child isn't automatically granted citizenship because of their visa type, adoptive parents must take extra steps to ensure that their child receives citizenship. Only 9% of intercountry adoptions in FY2017 were to be finalized in the U.S. and would therefore require IR-4 or IH-4 visas.
- » People who were adopted internationally who have discovered later in life that they lack citizenship can take the necessary steps to finalize their citizenship as an adult, but the process is harder.

89k

people were adopted between 1953 (the earliest federal record) and 1982. None of these people received automatic citizenship.

How Can We Make a Change?

The *Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019* helps rectify this frustrating loophole. It amends the *Child Citizenship Act of 2000* in order to:

- » Correct the unintended consequences of past legislation and give citizenship to individuals brought to live in the U.S. through intercountry adoption who were excluded under the current law.
- » Ensure automatic citizenship for every full and final adoption by a U.S. citizen.

IH vs. IR

Both IH-4 and IR-4 visas are issued to children traveling to the U.S. to be adopted. IH-4 visas pertain to adoptions from Hague Convention countries, while IR-4 visas are for non-Hague adoptions.

Source: Historical International Adoption Statistics, United States and World, Johnston's Archive, 2017



National Council
For Adoption

Passionately committed to the belief that every child deserves to thrive in a nurturing, permanent family, National Council For Adoption's mission is to meet the diverse needs of children, birth parents, adopted individuals, adoptive families, and all those touched by adoption through global advocacy, education, research, legislative action, and collaboration.

adoptioncouncil.org | ncfa@adoptioncouncil.org | (703) 299-6633

Founded in 1980, National Council For Adoption is a non-profit organization.