Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019

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.

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

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

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.

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