

United Kingdom Eligibility Requirements



In addition to being found suitable and eligible to adopt by USCIS, prospective adoptive parents seeking to adopt a child from United Kingdom must meet the following requirements of United Kingdom:

- **Residency:** UK residency is not a requirement for adoptions where the UK is the state of origin. Prospective adoptive parents may apply for a Convention adoption order in the UK once they have lived with the child for a minimum of 10 weeks. If they intend to adopt in the United States, they should apply to a UK court for an order under section 84 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, which confers parental responsibility on the applicant and allows them to remove the child for the purposes of adoption.

The UK adoption law permits U.S. citizens resident in the UK for at least one year to apply to adopt from other countries through the UK intercountry adoption process. These prospective adoptive parents may contact the relevant city or county council that is the local child welfare authority for the area of their residence, or a registered voluntary adoption agency, in order to initiate the process. The UK Central Authority does not make habitual residence determinations to establish whether prospective adoptive parents may apply for a Hague Convention Adoption through the UK. We recommend that U.S. citizens adopting through the Hague Convention process in the UK seek private legal guidance regarding their habitual residence status in addition to reaching out to the local authorities in the UK.

- **Age of Adopting Parents:** Applicants must be at least 21 years old to adopt. The United Kingdom does not have a statutory upper age limit. However, in making decisions on adoptive placements, each council or local authority has the power to consider age as a factor in determining whether placement with a prospective adoptive parent is in the best interest of the child.
- **Marriage:** Married or single persons may apply to adopt. Married couples must adopt jointly unless one partner cannot be found, is incapable of making an application, or if a separation is likely to be permanent. Unmarried couples may not adopt jointly, although one partner of that couple may adopt as a single parent. Adoption by gay or lesbian married couples and/or single persons is permitted under U.K. law.
- **Income:** There are no specific income requirements related to adoption.
- **Other:** None.

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/Intercountry-Adoption/Intercountry-Adoption-Country-Information/UnitedKingdom.html>