



Benefits of Working with A Licensed Agency

A Licensed Agency Versus A “Privately” Arranged Adoption...

State licensing is a regulatory process of the government designed to provide a measure of protection for its citizens. State Legislatures enact laws to accomplish this and appoint state agencies to create policies and procedures and then to enforce these through mandatory oversight. Being licensed by a state agency means that adoption agencies establish and follow policies and practices that conform to the rules and regulations the state regulatory agency develops. This brings some level of accountability to agencies to provide the right kind of services.

Being licensed by a state regulatory agency guards against unethical, illegal and unprofessional adoption practices. In Georgia, only licensed agencies are authorized to do adoption placement services. However, there are many other kinds of “services” who are involved in the facilitation of adoptions that aren’t licensed. The only way to tell which is which is to ask! Licensing does make a difference!

For adoption placement occurring outside of licensed agencies, everyone still must obey the law. However, there is no other objective standard or required guidelines which make providers follow best practices for these services. Licensed agencies provide the highest quality services. Why risk doing adoptions any other way?

Licensing regulations relate to the following criteria

- Agency organization – Board of Directors, personnel, administration, policy and procedural requirements, etc.
- Experience, education and continuing training for social workers.
- Services to birth families (birth mothers and fathers): guidelines for proper services, respect and non-pressure, understandings and agreements guided by what is best for clients, etc.
- Compliance with legal provisions and professional standards.
- Screening, orientation, assessing and approval of prospective adoptive families.
- Maintenance and permanent handling of confidential records.
- Accountability - undergoing a yearly review of the agency by the regulatory body which looks into agency files and practices, and much more.

Why would an adoption service avoid being licensed?

Unfortunately, service organizations and facilitators involved in adoption have varying degrees of commitment to ethical, professional and quality practices. Many are guided and motivated by money. Money in adoptions is poisoning the industry. What is the best and right way to handle situations is now often influenced and controlled by the opportunity for financial gain. This is not so with licensed agencies.

At Georgia Agape, you will find the highest level of caring, compassionate, professional and ethical services. We’ve been providing this kind of service for over 48 years now.