

International Family Services, Inc.
Friendswood, Texas
Board Meeting Minutes
October 19, 2007
(IFS CA Office)

Board Members: Robert L. Mardock, Jennifer Lusk, Kelleigh Ratzlaff,
Robert M. Mardock, Richard Price (Directors not physically present.
Meeting held online.)

On September 13, 2007, it was reported to the IFS board that the U.S. Department of State is in the process of accrediting adoption agencies so that they can be approved to conduct international adoptions under what is commonly called the Hague treaty. DOS has issued a set of standards that IFS must meet. The Council on Accreditation is evaluating IFS as to how IFS is meeting those standards.

In minute 091307.3 the board was presented with the following documents:

IFS Policy, SpecServices.doc
IFS Policy, CAComm.doc
IFS Policy, EthicalPract.doc
IFS Policy, ChildBuying.doc
IFS Policy, AdoptRecord.doc
IFS Policy, Compensation.doc
IFS Policy, HS_CS Return.doc
IFS Policy, Child Return.doc
HG Board Policies Rpt 0907.pdf
IFS Policy, Donations.doc
IFS Policy, SocServ CEUs.doc
IFS Policy, Refunds in 60.doc
IFS Policy, ReferralWDraw.doc
IFS Bylaws, BoardComp.doc
IFS Policy, PrefTreat.doc
RestatedBylawsIFS091307.pdf

These documents were reviewed and approved. However, upon further review it was determined by Board Director Richard Price, IFS Executive Director Carol Mardock and Board President Bob Mardock that these policies should receive further editing.

The content of the above policies, including edits, are now included in the body of this document for the board's new approval.

101907-1 – Disclosure of Adoption Records

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that

- 1) Upon the request of the either the adoptee(s) or the adoptive parent(s) IFS shall make readily available to the adoptee and the adoptive parent(s) all non-identifying information in its custody about the adoptee's health history or background; and
- 2) IFS shall ensure that personal data gathered or transmitted in connection with an adoption is used only for the purposes for which the information was gathered and safeguards sensitive individual information. – *Ref: 22CFR96.42(b),(c)*

101907-2 – Amendment to Bylaws

This amendment remains unchanged from the amendment made in board action 091307.3 which states:

“Any compensation paid to IFS’s directors or members of its governing body is not unreasonably high in relation to the services rendered, taking into account the country in which the adoption services are provided and norms for compensation within the intercountry adoption community in that country, to the extent that such norms are known to the accrediting entity; the location, number, and qualifications of staff; workload requirements; budget; and size of the agency or person, and its nonprofit status.” – *Ref: 22CFR96.(e)*.

101907-3 – Charitable Donations - Non-influence on Placement Decisions

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that decisions concerning the placement of a child shall not be based in any way upon any charitable donation received by IFS.

Further,

- 1) No board or staff member shall offer to make, or allow a prospective donor to reasonably assume that IFS will make a placement decision based in any way upon a charitable donation to IFS,
- 2) No board member shall seek to influence a staff member to make a placement decision based in any way upon a charitable donation to IFS, and
- 3) Staff members shall not in fact make a placement decision based in any way upon a charitable donation to IFS. – *Ref: 22CFR96.33(f)*

101907-4 – Special Services Disclosure

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that when IFS uses part of its fees to provide special services, such as cultural programs for adoptee(s),

scholarships or other services, that IFS discloses this policy to the prospective adoptive parent(s) in advance of providing any adoption services and gives the prospective adoptive parent(s) a general description of the programs supported by such funds. – *Ref: 22CFR96.49(e)*

101907-5 – Employee Continuing Education

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that

- 1) IFS shall ensure that employees who provide adoption-related social services that involve the application of clinical skills and judgment (home studies, child background studies, counseling services, parent preparation, post-placement and other similar services) also receive, in addition to orientation and initial training, no less than thirty (30) hours of training every two (2) years, or more if required by State law, on current and emerging adoption practice issues through participation in seminars, conferences, documented distance learning courses, and other similar programs;
- 2) and Continuing education hours required under State law may count toward the thirty (30) hours of training as long as the training is related to current and emerging adoption practice issues. – *Ref: 22CFR96.38(c)*

101907-6 – Refunds

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that when IFS determines that the prospective adoptive parent(s) is entitled to a refund of fees paid, according to the adoption services contract, IFS will return the funds within sixty days of the completion of the delivery of services. – *Ref: 22CFR96.40(h)*

101907-7 – Preferential Treatment

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that IFS shall not give preferential treatment to its board members, contributors, volunteers, employees, agents, consultants, or independent contractors with respect to the placement of children for adoption. – *Ref: 22CFR96.39(c)*

101907-8 – Return of Home or Child Study

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that IFS shall return, in cases where the transfer of the child does not take place, the home study on the prospective adoptive parent(s) and/or the background study on the child(ren) to the authorities that forwarded them. – *Ref: 22CFR96.52(d)*

101907-9 – Ethical Practice

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that IFS shall provide adoption services ethically and in accordance with the Convention's principles of:

- 1) ensuring that intercountry adoptions take place in the best interests of children; and
- 2) preventing the abduction, exploitation, sale, or trafficking of children. – *Ref: 22CFR96.35(a).*

101907-10 – Compensation Policy

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that

- 1) No person who provides any of the 6 adoption services defined by 22CFR96.2 (see list) shall be compensated with an incentive fee or contingent fee for each child located or placed for adoption. – *Ref: 22CFR96.34(a)*

Six Adoption Services referred to in 22CFR96.2:

- identifying a child for adoption and arranging an adoption;
 - securing the necessary consent to termination of parental rights and to adoption;
 - performing a background study on a child or a home study on a prospective adoptive parent(s), and reporting on such a study;
 - making non-judicial determinations of the best interests of a child and the appropriateness of an adoptive placement for the child;
 - monitoring a case after a child has been placed with prospective adoptive parent(s) until final adoption; or
 - when necessary because of disruption before final adoption, assuming custody and providing (including facilitating the provision of) child care or any other social service pending an alternative placement.
- 2) IFS shall compensate its directors, officers, employees, and supervised providers who provide intercountry adoption services only for services actually rendered and only on a fee-for-service, hourly wage, or salary basis rather than a contingent fee basis. – *Ref: 22CFR96.34(b)*
 - 3) IFS shall not make any payments, promise payment, or give other consideration to any individual directly or indirectly involved in provision of adoption services in a particular case, except for salaries or fees for services actually rendered and reimbursement for costs incurred. IFS recognizes that this does not prohibit IFS nor a person from providing in-kind or other donations to IFS not intended to influence or affect a particular adoption. – *Ref: 22CFR96.34(c).*

101907-11 – Prohibition Against Child Buying

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that

- 1) IFS will prohibit its employees and agents from giving money or other consideration, directly or indirectly, to a child's parent(s), other individual(s), or an entity as payment for the child or as an inducement to release the child;
- 2) If permitted or required by the child's country of origin, IFS may remit reasonable payments for activities related to the adoption proceedings, pre-birth and birth medical costs, the care of the child, the care of the birth mother while pregnant and immediately following birth of the child, or the provision of child welfare and child protection services generally; and
- 3) Permitted or required contributions shall not be remitted as payment for the child or as an inducement to release the child. – *Ref: 22CFR96.36(b)*

101907-12 – Return of Child to Country of Origin

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that IFS not return from the United States an adopted child whose adoption has been dissolved unless the Central Authority of the country of origin and the Secretary have approved the return in writing. – *Ref: 22CFR96.51(d)*

101907-13 – Convention Central Authority Communication

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that IFS shall keep the Central Authority of the Convention country and the U.S. Secretary of State informed as necessary about the adoption process and the measures taken to complete it, as well as about the progress of the placement if a probationary period is required. – *Ref: 22CFR96.52(a)*


101907-14 – Referral Withdrawal

It shall be the policy of International Family Services that IFS shall not withdraw a referral until the prospective adoptive parent(s) have had two (2) weeks (unless extenuating circumstances involving the child's best interests require a more expedited decision) to consider the needs of the child and their ability to meet those needs, and to obtain physician review of medical information and other descriptive information, including videotapes of the child if available. – *Ref: 22CFR96.49(k)*

101907-15 – Restated Bylaws IFS091307 to stand as previously submitted and approved in minute 091307.3.

The above policies and minutes were accepted and approved by the Board of Directors.

The meeting was adjourned to the call of the President.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Lusk", written in a cursive style.

Jennifer Lusk
Secretary