

Release of information about unacknowledged birth fathers in NSW

In past adoption practice, it was unusual for one's birth father to be named on the birth certificate and subsequently on the Supply Authority.

Adoptees wanting to trace their birth fathers should try to obtain his details from their birth mothers. If this is not possible for any reason, it may be possible to find out if his full name appears in the file held by the Adoption Service Provider; the Adoption Service Provider may be the Department of Community Services or it might be one of the private adoption agencies - Anglicare Adoption Services or Catholic Care Adoption Services (previously the Catholic Adoption Agency) depending on which agency organised your adoption.

Even if there is a name on the Adoption Service Provider's file, it is not considered to be an acknowledged source of information and the name may only be released to an agency, such as PARC, on a non-disclosure basis. This means that until the information has been confirmed and your birth father has given permission to do so, his name may not be disclosed to you.

If the adopted person wishes to pursue this option, s/he will have to apply in writing to the Adoption Service Provider requesting his name be released (please see letter on the back of this form). Names will be released after PARC and the adoptee have applied to Adoption Service Provider and approval has been given from the manager. The adopted person will also have to join the Reunion and Information register held by DoCs.

The Adoption Service Provider will consider releasing this information to PARC under the following circumstances.

- If your birth mother has died
- If your birth mother can't be located (you will need to explain what steps you have taken to locate her)
- If you are subject to a contact veto from your birth mother
- If your birth mother does not want contact or is unable to name your birth father for some reason

All the relevant information about your attempt to contact your birth mother and your search outcomes should be outlined in your letter.

Once you have approval and PARC obtains his name, your counsellor will make every attempt to locate him and confirm that he is your birth father. Your counsellor will then have to get his permission to release his name to you. Only once he has agreed, will you be given his name. The fee for this service is \$50.00.

Sample Letter to the Adoption Service Provider

I _____ (name) _____ of: _____ (address) _____, date of birth: _____

would like to apply to have my birthfather's name released to PARC on a non-disclosure basis.

- I have joined the Reunion and Information register.
- I am unable to obtain this information from my birth mother for the following reasons (*provide details outlining the steps you have taken to date*):

Yours sincerely

(Name)

The above letter needs to be sent to the Adoption Service Provider **after discussion with a PARC counsellor. Addresses are as follows:**

Adoption Information Unit
Adoption and Permanent Care Services,
NSW Department of Community Services
Tel: 02 9716 3002 / 1300 799 023
Locked Bag 4028, Ashfield NSW 2131

Anglicare Adoption Services
19A Gibbons Street, Telopea NSW 2117
Tel: 02 9890 6855

Catholic Care Adoption Services
Level 1, 8 Jacobs Street
Bankstown, NSW 2200
Tel: 02 9793 7522

Please phone us if you wish to talk further about any issues raised in this information sheet.

Post Adoption Resource Centre
PO Box 239
Bondi NSW 2026
T 02 9365 3444
F 02 9365 3666
E parc@bensoc.org.au
www.bensoc.org.au