

A new adoption system for Aotearoa New Zealand

Summary document



MINISTRY OF
JUSTICE
Tāhū o te Tūre



Although all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this document, Te Tāhū o te Ture - Ministry of Justice disclaims any and all responsibility for any inaccuracy, error, omission, or any other kind of inadequacy, deficiency, or flaw in, or in relation to, the information; and fully excludes any and all liability of any kind to any person or entity that chooses to rely upon the information.

ISBN 978-0-478-32495-2

Published by the Ministry of Justice

June 2022 © Crown Copyright

Ministry of Justice

The Justice Centre, 19 Aitken Street

DX SX10088, Wellington

New Zealand

T +64 4 918 8800

F +64 4 918 8820

E info@justice.govt.nz

W www.justice.govt.nz

We want to hear from you

We want to hear your views on the options for reform we're considering and any other ideas you might have for what adoption law could look like. Your views will be used to help us come up with final adoption policy and proposals.

How to have your say

This summary document outlines the full discussion document and the reform options we're considering. A copy of the full discussion document can be found on the Adoption Law Reform webpage: www.justice.govt.nz/adoption-law-reform.



You can share your views online by completing the submission form available at consultations.justice.govt.nz



You can also write your own submission and email it to adoptionlaw@justice.govt.nz or post it to:



Adoption Law Reform
Ministry of Justice
Free Post 113
PO Box 180
Wellington 6140



If you have any questions about this summary document or the Adoption Law Reform project, please contact adoptionlaw@justice.govt.nz

Translated and accessible versions of this document, including a Te Reo Māori version, are available on the Adoption Law Reform webpage above.

Closing date to share your views

The closing date for all submissions is **5pm Sunday, 7 August 2022**. Submissions received after this time will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Targeted engagement with Māori

Many options in the discussion document will be of interest to Māori. We are planning targeted engagement with Māori during the engagement period, consistent with the Crown's obligations to actively protect tino rangatiratanga under Article 2, and to enable Māori to participate in legislative change under Article 3 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

If you identify as Māori and would like to be involved in that engagement, please let us know by contacting us at adoptionlaw@justice.govt.nz.

Privacy and Official Information

Please note that your submission may be subject to a request to te Tāhū o te Ture - Ministry of Justice for information under the Official Information Act 1982. Personal details can be withheld under the Act, including your name and address. If you do not want any information you provide to be released, please state this clearly and explain why. For example, you may wish for some information to be kept confidential because it is sensitive personal information. Te Tāhū o te Ture - Ministry of Justice will take your views into account when responding to such requests.

The Privacy Act 2020 governs how the Ministry collects, holds, uses, and shares personal information about you and the information you provide. You have the right to be given and correct this personal information.

Te Tāhū o te Ture - Ministry of Justice's full privacy policy can be found here: https://consultations.justice.govt.nz/privacy_policy/

What this document doesn't cover

Past adoption practice

This discussion document doesn't have options that directly address the harms of past adoption practice. Past adoption practice is being considered by the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-Based Institutions ('the Royal Commission').

Whāngai

This document doesn't have any options relating to whāngai. Instead, the Government will be separately engaging with Māori on whether there should be any changes to the way the law treats whāngai and, if so, how those changes should be progressed. If you're interested in being a part of that process, please contact us at adoptionlaw@justice.govt.nz.

Surrogacy

We don't include any options on surrogacy and the adoption process in this document. The Law Commission has recently released its report, Te Kōpū Whāngai: He Arotake | Review of Surrogacy. The Government will consider the recommendations in that report separately. If a Bill is created as a result, you will have opportunities to comment on the content of it when it reaches Select Committee stage.

Introduction

In June 2021 we released a discussion document asking people to share their thoughts about current adoption laws and some ideas for change. We heard from over 270 people and organisations from a range of different backgrounds and experiences. We're very grateful for the time, effort and emotional energy people put into engaging with us. We hope that people can see their feedback reflected in the options set out in this document.

Almost everyone we heard from agreed our adoption laws need changing and that more needs be done to protect adopted people's rights. People told us that adoption shouldn't cut the legal ties between the adopted person and their birth family. They said it's important for people who have been adopted, their parents, and their wider family and whānau, including their descendants, to be able to access information.

This document summarises the discussion document which sets out options we're considering for a new adoption system. The options are forward-looking, and have been developed based on what we heard last year and our own research. Together, the options could create a new adoption system that is child-centred and has practical measures that place importance on the voices of children and safeguard their rights, best interests, and welfare. Adoptive parents would have a legal status to support a permanent and enduring parent-child relationship, while the adopted person's legal and whakapapa connections to birth family and whānau would be preserved.

We want to hear your thoughts on the options in this document. Some options you may agree with; some you may disagree with; and with some you may think we've missed something. We want to hear your views on all of these matters.

The options in this document are not final. Your views will be used to help work out what the final proposals should look like. The Government will then decide whether to progress reform and what changes to make. This might result in new adoption laws.

Ngā mihi nui ki a koe - thank you again for sharing your views with us.

Purpose and principles

Purpose of adoption

We think that the law should set out a purpose for adoption. This purpose will help guide decision-making and reflects good practice for creating laws.

We want to hear your views on the purpose of adoption we are considering, which is that adoption:

- is a service for a child, and is in their best interests
- will create a stable, enduring and loving family relationship, and
- is for a child whose parents cannot or will not provide care for them.

Principles for adoption

We think that the law should include a set of principles to guide adoption decisions and make the underlying values of the system clear:

- that the long-term well-being and best interests of the child or young person are the first and paramount consideration
- that a child is encouraged and supported to participate and give their views in adoption processes, and that their views are considered
- the preservation of, and connection to, culture and identity
- the protection of whakapapa
- recognition of the whanaungatanga responsibilities of family, whānau, hapū, iwi and family group
- recognition that primary responsibility for caring for a child lies with their family, whānau, hapū, iwi and family group
- that family and whānau should have an opportunity to participate and have their views taken into consideration, and
- openness and transparency.

We want to hear what you think of the guiding principles for adoption we are considering. We also want to know if you think there are any principles missing or whether we need a specific te Tiriti principle.

Who can be adopted?

We think that adoption should focus on the care needs of children and shouldn't allow adults to be adopted. This is consistent with other family law and the purpose for adoption we have suggested. It also matches our international agreements, for example the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ('the Children's Convention').

We want to hear your views on whether the age limit for people to be adopted should be 16 or 18 years old.

Who can adopt?

Who can adopt?

We've suggested that a person should be at least 18 years old to apply to adopt a child. This matches other laws with age restrictions based on a person's maturity.

We don't think people should be stopped from applying to adopt because of their sex or relationship status. We think it's more important to check they're suitable to adopt the child. We also think that step-parents should be able to adopt step-children if it's in the child's best interests.

We want to hear your views on whether a person should be 18 years old before they can apply to adopt. We also want to know whether you think there should be any other criteria.

Adoptions involving different cultures

We are thinking about whether the law should assume that it is normally in a child's best interests to be adopted by people from the same culture. This would recognise that it can be hard to for adopted people to stay connected to their culture if they are adopted by parents from another culture, but it wouldn't stop cross-cultural adoptions from happening altogether.

We want to hear your views on whether the law should encourage children to be adopted within their own culture.

What happens if a child is placed for adoption?

Social worker to represent the child

We have suggested that a dedicated social worker should be appointed for the child in adoption cases. The social worker should be matched to the child because of their similar characteristics, such as their personality, cultural background, training or experience. This could help the child to relate to the social worker more easily.

The social worker's job would be to support the child through the adoption process. Support would include helping the child to share their views, where they can do so. It would also include making sure the child has age-appropriate information about the adoption, its effect, and their rights. This option would help to protect the child's right to participate.

We want to hear your views on whether the child should have a dedicated social worker.

Placement of children before an adoption order is made

We think that the social worker should be able to approve a child's placement with the adoptive applicants before the adoption is finalised. Placement could be approved if the birth parents have given their informed consent and the social worker is satisfied that the adoptive applicants are suitable.

We want to hear your views on whether you think the child should be able to be placed with the adoptive applicants before an adoption order is made.

Other care options

We think the social worker should have to tell the birth parents about other less permanent care options that may be available for the child, and let them know the judge will look at whether other care options were considered before making an adoption order.

Adoption permanently changes a child's legal status. Because of this, we think it's important that the birth parents are made aware of other potential care options. For example, parenting or guardianship orders under the Care of Children Act might be more appropriate.

We want to hear your views on whether you think the social worker should have to tell the parents about other care options available when they ask about adoption.

Who can have a say?

Children being adopted

We've suggested that the dedicated social worker for the child should encourage them to participate and record their participation and views in their report to the Court. We also think that a lawyer should be able to be appointed to represent the child, and that the child should be able to attend and speak during adoption proceedings.

These options will make sure the Court can hear the child's views, either through a lawyer or to the Court directly. Hearing from the child can help the Court make better decisions. It also makes sure the child feels involved in the decision.

We don't think children should have to consent to their own adoption. Research shows children want to be involved, but often don't want to be making the decisions. The options we're looking at would allow the child to participate in the adoption process, without putting pressure on them to be the decision-maker.

We want to hear your views on these options we are considering for enabling children to participate in the adoption process.

Parents placing their child for adoption

Agreeing to the adoption

We think that both parents should need to agree to their child's adoption, regardless of their relationship or guardianship status. Requiring both parents to consent recognises that primary responsibility for the child's care lies with their family and whānau. It also supports decision-making on whether an adoption is in the child's best interests.

We've suggested that a parent can't agree to the adoption until at least 30 days after the child is born. This gives the parents space and time to fully consider the adoption. We've also suggested that parents can take back their consent up until a final adoption order is made. This will protect parents who might change their mind about the adoption.

We've also suggested that a birth parent's agreement shouldn't be needed if they pose a risk to the child or other parent's wellbeing, or if they haven't met their duty of care toward the child.

The current law allows a person's agreement to be dispensed because they have a mental or physical incapacity. We think this should not be included in a new adoption system as those grounds are discriminatory and don't meet our human rights obligations, particularly towards people with disabilities.

We think that birth parents should be able to participate when the adoption case gets to court. This would mean the Court could hear from birth parents directly, which can help it decide if an adoption is in a child's best interests.

We want to hear your views on whether both birth parents should be required to consent to the adoption, when consent can be given for adoption after the child is born, and when birth parents' consent to adoption should not be required.

Wider family and whānau

We've suggested that the views of the child's family and whānau about the adoption should be included in the social worker's report. This will mean the family and whānau can be involved early in the process and means family or whānau-based care options can be explored. We also think that family and whānau should be able to share their views in their own words to the Court.

We think there are situations where it might not be appropriate for family and whānau to be involved. We've suggested that family and whānau won't need to be involved if it would cause unwarranted distress, which might include serious harm. We think that either a government department, the Court, or a combination of both, could make the decision about whether unwarranted distress might occur.

We want to hear your views on the options we're considering for involving family and whānau in the adoption process. We also want to hear your views on who you think should decide if involving the family and whānau would cause unwarranted distress.

Hapū and iwi

Some other countries require consultation with indigenous groups where an indigenous child is to be adopted. For example, New South Wales in Australia requires a relevant indigenous community organisation to be consulted before an indigenous child is adopted.

Consulting with a child's hapū and iwi when tamariki Māori are placed for adoption would honour the Tiriti partnership and support Māori collective decision-making processes. It would also recognise the distinct rights of hapū and iwi to exercise rangatiratanga in the care and protection of tamariki who whakapapa to them.

We want to hear your views on whether a child's hapū and iwi should have to be consulted when tamariki Māori are placed for adoption.

Who makes the decisions?

Government, the Court, and accredited bodies

We think that it's appropriate for the Family Court to keep making domestic adoption decisions. The Court is an impartial decision-maker that is experienced in making other family law orders, such as parenting and guardianship orders. Most people see the Court as a legitimate decision-making body.

We also think assessments and other administrative processes are best managed by government agencies. Government agencies are held publicly accountable and are subject to rigorous reporting requirements. Agencies currently involved in the adoption process work hard to ensure children's best interests are upheld, despite issues with the current law.

We want to hear your views on whether the Court should continue to be responsible for decision-making in the adoption process, and whether government agencies should continue to be responsible for assessments in the adoption process.

Adoption support from Oranga Tamariki

We think that all adoptive applicants should have to engage with Oranga Tamariki before making an application to the Court. This means Oranga Tamariki can check the adoptive applicant's suitability and the child's safety and best interests early in the process. It would also mean that applicants can access support and education from Oranga Tamariki and may provide some protection to birth parents from being pressured to agree to an adoption.

We want to hear your views on whether adoptive applicants should be required to engage with Oranga Tamariki before making an adoption application.

How are adoption decisions made?

Suitability of adoptive applicants

We think a judge should have to be satisfied that the applicants are suitable to adopt before making an adoption order. We don't think any specific suitability criteria should be set out in law. Instead, we think the social worker report and any other relevant information should inform the Court's decision on whether applicants are suitable to adopt.

We want to hear your views on whether a judge should have to determine that applicants are suitable to adopt before making an adoption order, and whether this decision should be informed by the social worker report and any other relevant information.

Social worker reports

We think that the law should set out some of the things that need to be included in the social worker report. This would make sure the judge understands the circumstances of the adoption and help them to make an informed decision. We think the report should include:

- how the child participated, including any views shared by the child
- the suitability of the adoptive parents
- views of the child's family and whānau
- the child's cultural information.

We think the assessment of the suitability of adoptive parents should be left to professional discretion, rather than being set out in law. This would make the assessment more flexible and allow for case-by-case decision-making.

We want to hear your views on whether the law should set out some of the things to be included in the social worker report.

Access to other information

We think the Court should be able to order extra reports. It's important that the Court has all relevant information available when it's deciding about an adoption. We've suggested the Court should be able to order cultural, medical, psychiatric or psychologist reports if it thinks they are needed to support its decision-making. This matches the powers the Court has in other family law cases.

We want to hear your views on what report-ordering powers the Court should have in adoption cases.

Alternative care options

We think that judges should need to be satisfied that other care options have been considered before making an adoption order. This would help the judge decide whether adoption is the most suitable care option and is in the child's best interests. This option links in with the other option on page 4, which would require a social worker to tell the birth parents about other care options available.

We want to hear your views on whether judges should be satisfied that other care arrangements have been considered before making an adoption order.

What is the legal effect of adoption?

Final adoption orders

We think that a judge should always make a final adoption order, unless they think an interim order is desirable in the circumstances. This would provide certainty for everyone involved, which could help the child and adoptive parents' relationship develop.

We want to hear your views on whether there are any circumstances where interim orders should be used. For example, to provide time for contact agreements to be made.

Legal effect

We think the adopted person should be able to keep a legal connection to their birth parents, as well as have a new connection to their adoptive parents. This would protect their right to identity and family connection, while also providing certainty and security for their new family relationship. It also aligns with the practice of open adoption which has developed over the last 30 years, and is more consistent with tikanga Māori, where childcare duties may be shared but connections to family and whānau never change.

We think that guardianship responsibilities should be transferred from birth parents to adoptive parents. These responsibilities include having day-to-day care of the child and determining for, or with, the child important matters affecting them, for example, where they live, medical treatment and education choices. Transferring guardianship responsibilities provides certainty for those involved and reflects the purpose of adoption we've suggested (see page 3).

Consistent with the current law, we've suggested that adoptive parents should be financially responsible for the child and that adopted children should be able to inherit citizenship from both sets of parents.

We want to hear your views on the options we're considering relating to adoptive children's legal connections to their birth parents and adoptive parents. We also want to hear your thoughts on who should have guardianship responsibilities, and how financial responsibility and citizenship rights should be determined.

Inheriting property

Currently, adopted people have to be specifically mentioned in a will to inherit property from their birth parents, as they aren't counted as their children. Birth parents also can't inherit from the adopted person in a similar way.

We are not looking at changing the rules for how adopted people inherit property as part of adoption law reform. Te Aka Matua o te Ture | The Law Commission recently reviewed New Zealand's succession law (inheritance, or what happens to property after a person dies). The Government response to the Law Commission report accepts that reforms in succession law is required, but this would be a significant programme of longer term work.

We are interested in your views on what the inheritance rules should be for adopted people.

Adopted people's birth certificates

We've suggested that adopted people should have two birth certificates:

- one birth certificate with only their adoptive parents listed, and
- one birth certificate with both their birth and adoptive parents listed.

This approach would mean adopted people can choose which birth certificate to use day-to-day. It recognises that some adopted people might want to keep their adoption status private, and some may not. This flexible approach also recognises that what an adopted person wants on their birth certificate may change as they get older.

We want to hear your views on whether adopted people should have access to two birth certificates.

Changing children's names in adoption

We think that a judge should be able to consider changing an adopted person's surname at the time of the adoption, where they deem it appropriate. Surnames are important to a person's identity and connection to their birth family, family history and whakapapa. This option balances the importance of a person's name, while also recognising that sharing a surname with the adoptive family may give a sense of connection and belonging.

We are looking at two options relating to changing an adopted person's first name. Either:

- first name changes shouldn't be allowed as part of the adoption process; or
- first name changes should be allowed only when it's in the child's best interests.

Preventing a child's first name being changed as part of the adoption process could help to protect their identity. However, flexibility may allow for situations where a change may be in the child's best interests, for example, if the child is named after an abusive family member.

We want to hear your views on the options we are considering for changing children's names in an adoption. Specifically, we want to know if you think an adopted child's first name and surname should be able to be changed and, if so, when.

What ongoing contact can adopted children and birth parents have?

Post-adoption contact

We suggest that families should have to think about making a contact agreement before an adoption is finalised. Maintaining contact with birth family and whānau after an adoption can protect an adopted person's best interests, family connections, and reflects the principle of openness. Agreements could set out how the adopted person would stay in contact with their family, and could be referred to and changed over time. We think that family and whānau should be able to be involved in making the agreement, where appropriate.

We've also suggested that the adoptive parents should need to talk to the birth parents about how they can stay in contact if they (and the child) are moving away. It could result in a contact agreement being changed.

We want to hear your views on whether families should have to think about making a contact arrangement before an adoption is finalised. We also want to know if you think adoptive parents should have to consult the birth parents on how contact can be maintained if the adoptive parents and child move away.

Enforceability of contact agreements

We're thinking about whether contact agreements should be enforceable. If they were, people could have the agreement enforced in court if it wasn't being followed. However, enforcing the agreements may be harmful to the child if disputes over contact are escalated to court. The court process could also challenge good-faith relationships.

We want to hear your views on whether you think contact agreements should be enforceable.

Post-adoption culture plans

We're also thinking about whether post-adoption culture plans should be required if the adoptive applicants are from a different culture to the child. The plan could form part of the contact agreement. A culture plan would reinforce the child's right to culture. It would also make sure that adoptive parents know the child's cultural needs and record how they intend to maintain the child's connection to their culture.

However, culture plans may be inflexible and not responsive to the changing needs and interests of the child. They might set out unrealistic expectations. There's also no guarantee that the plan would be followed after the adoption.

We want to hear your views on whether you think post-adoption culture plans should be required.

What support can people access?

We think it's important that the new adoption system provide appropriate support for people impacted by adoption. Everyone impacted by adoption will have different support needs. Common types of adoption support used around the world include:

- Counselling or therapy, such as for birth parents before they place their child for adoption or give their consent to the adoption
- Support groups
- Education (before and after an adoption)
- Reunification services

There are likely other types of support that would be helpful that we haven't listed above.

We want to hear your views on what support should be available for people impacted by an adoption and when it should be available.

Who can access adoption information and when?

Access to adoption information

We've suggested removing age restrictions for accessing adoption information. This means adopted people would be able to apply to access information whenever they're ready. We've also suggested that adopted people can access information on their original birth record automatically, in the same way people who are not adopted can.

We think the law should make it faster and easier for adopted people to access their information. For example, we don't think people should have to undergo counselling when applying for information on an original birth record. We also don't think people should need to provide an original birth certificate to access information held by Oranga Tamariki.

We want to hear your views on whether age restrictions on accessing adoption information should be removed, and whether the law should make it faster and easier for adopted people to access their information.

Other people's access to original birth records

Access to pre-adoption records is currently extremely limited. An adopted person's original birth record is one of the exceptions to the general rule of open birth registers. If anyone orders an adopted person's birth certificate, it will only show their post-adoption information. That means the adoptive parents are recorded as if they were their birth parents unless they've chosen to be recorded as adoptive parent.

Options could include having records open by default, limiting access to the adopted person, their parents, and their family and whānau, or allowing anyone to access the records who has a good reason to.

We want to hear your views on who else should be able to access an adopted person's original birth record, other than the adopted person and their birth parents.

Information protected by vetoes

We're thinking about whether the current veto system needs to change. The veto system applies to some adoptions that happened before 1986. It allows some people to block others from accessing their identifying information on the original birth record. In many cases, it is birth parents who have vetoes in place which stop adopted people from accessing their original birth record. Vetoes last for 10 years and can be renewed.

The veto system creates tensions between the right to privacy (of the veto holder) and the right to identity and information (of the person seeking the information). Currently, the balance leans towards the rights of veto holder.

In particular, we're looking for feedback on the following options:

- Keeping the current veto system, so people who have one in place can continue to renew them every 10 years indefinitely; or
- Changing the current veto system so that all vetoes have one final renewal available that lasts for 1-2 years. After that time, the veto would end, and the information could be accessed by the other party. People who would experience unwarranted distress by having their veto expire could apply to have the veto extended further.

The second option would change the current balance and prioritise the rights of the person seeking the information, most of whom are adopted people. This would be more consistent with the objectives for reform. However, it would likely cause harm to those who still have a veto, many of whom are likely to be elderly and may be vulnerable.

We want to hear your views on whether the current veto system should continue, or whether it should end but allow people who would experience unwarranted distress to have a further extension.

What if things go wrong?

Varying an adoption order

We're thinking about whether the law needs to allow the Court to vary (or change) as it's currently unclear when and why an adoption order might be varied. There may need to be a power to vary an adoption order in case the Court makes a mistake when the order is made. For example, if details are recorded incorrectly on the adoption order.

We want to hear your views on whether there needs to be a power to vary an adoption order.

Discharging an adoption order

We think there should be changes to when an adoption order can be discharged (or reversed). When an adoption order is discharged, the birth parents return to being the adopted person's legal parents. The law should balance flexibility against the need for an appropriate level of scrutiny.

If the adopted person is a child (depending on what age is agreed for who may be adopted as outlined on page 3), we think that the birth parents or the adoptive parents should be able to apply to reverse the adoption order. If the adopted person is an adult, we think that only they should be able to apply to have the adoption order reversed. We're also thinking about whether 16- and 17-year-olds should be able to apply on their own behalf.

We've suggested changing the test for reversing an adoption order. We think the Court should have to be satisfied that reversing the order would be in the adopted person's interests. We've also suggested expanding the grounds for reversing an order to include where there is mutual consent of the birth and adoptive parents, or if there is an 'irretrievable breakdown' in the adoptive relationship. An order could still be reversed on the grounds of material mistake or misrepresentation.

We don't think that birth or adoptive parents should need to consent (or agree) to an adoption order being reversed. However, we do think both sets of parents should be able to share their views with the Court, if they wish.

If the adopted person is a child, the Court will need to consider who will care for the child if the birth parents don't want to. We've suggested that the Court should also consider whether other orders under the Care of Children Act or the Oranga Tamariki Act need to be made.

We want to hear your views on who can apply to reverse an adoption order when the adopted person is a child or adult, and in what circumstances an adoption order can be reversed. We also want to hear your views on whether the birth or adoptive parents should be required to consent to an adoption order for an adult being reversed, and whether the Court should have to consider making other care orders.

What happens in overseas and intercountry adoptions?

Recognition of overseas and intercountry adoptions

We think we should continue to recognise overseas adoptions so that families who move to New Zealand can have their relationships recognised. We also think there's still a place for intercountry adoption in New Zealand, but we need to ensure children's rights are protected.

We have suggested that the law could clarify the two pathways using the following definitions:

- Overseas adoptions are ones where both the child and adoptive applicant(s) don't live in New Zealand.
- Intercountry adoptions are ones where the adoptive applicant(s) live in New Zealand and the child lives overseas.

We haven't yet identified specific options for what the processes for each pathway should look like. However, we think there will need to be:

- criteria for when New Zealand recognises an overseas adoption; and
- new protections for intercountry adoptions to make sure they are in the child's best interests and match more closely to the Hague Convention adoption process.

Once the new pathway is set up, we think it's important for overseas adoptions to continue to be recognised through an administrative process rather than through the Court. This would mean families moving to New Zealand won't need to go through an extra step to have the adoption recognised.

We want to hear your views on the options we're considering relating to overseas and intercountry adoptions, and what the new pathways should look like.

Hague Convention intercountry adoptions

We think it's appropriate to continue to allow Hague Convention intercountry adoptions. The Hague Convention reflects international best practice and during engagement we heard support for the process. People agreed that all children adopted under the Hague Convention should have the same citizenship rights, no matter where they're adopted. We're currently looking at how to ensure this happens.

We want to hear your views on whether we should continue to facilitate intercountry adoptions via the established Hague Convention process.

**Ministry of Justice
Te Tāhū o te Ture**

justice.govt.nz

info@justice.govt.nz

0800 COURTS
0800 268 787

National Office
Justice Centre | 19 Aitken St
DX SX10088 | Wellington | New Zealand



New Zealand Government