

The Liberian Adoption Process

The Application: Complete the JWM/AFAA application and send the original to JWM along with the application fee of \$400. Send a copy of your application to AFAA. When JWM receives and approves your application you will be sent our “Liberian Service and Policy Agreement Contract.”

Agreement: Return the signed Liberian Service and Policy Agreement Contract to JWM and a copy along with the Humanitarian donation of \$1,000 to AFAA. This is your commitment to the Liberia program.

Your homestudy: If you live in New Mexico, JWM will complete your home study. If you live outside of New Mexico, JWM will help you choose a Hague accredited agency and provide that agency with an interagency agreement. Twelve hours of Hague approved training is required, some of it will be provided by JWM.

Your Dossier: Some of the documents in your dossier overlap with documents you need for your homestudy. Your Liberia dossier includes the following:

_____ Hague approved Homestudy, *4 original signed and notarized.*

_____ A local, state and national and state criminal history clearance for each person in your home 18 years and older - *Original and 3 copies.*

_____ A child abuse clearance for everyone 18 years old and older in your home - *original and 3 copies.*

_____ A medical exam for each parent using the JWM/AFAA form - *original and 3 copies.*

_____ A typed, brief statement from your general practitioner on their letterhead for each parent, stating the parent is approved for an international adoption - *original and 3 copies.*

_____ The JWM/AFAA Financial application - *original and 1 copy.*

_____ A letter from your employer, on their letterhead verifying your employment – *original and one copy*

- _____ Birth certificate copies for each parent - *4 copies*.
- _____ Marriage certificate - *4 copies*.
- _____ Divorce decree or spouse death certificate for each parent, if applicable – *3 copies*.
- _____ Passport copies (in color) for each parent - *4 copies*.
- _____ Color, passport size photos of each parent - *3 original color each*.
- _____ Two years of your current Federal tax returns & W-2's - signed - *4 copies* - (NO state returns).
- _____ Casual photos of each person in your home - *color original & 2 color copies*
- _____ Autobiographies from each parent about important life experiences, signed, dated - *original and one copy*.
- _____ Six, typed, dated & signed reference letters - 3 from relatives & 3 from non-relatives - *originals & 3 copies of each letter*.
- _____ Verification of medical insurance for each person in your home, including your adopted child - *2 copies*.
- _____ A one page, dated, typed letter to the Liberian government, signed by both parents about why you want to adopt a Liberian child - *original & 3 copies*.

The children: When your approved homestudy is received. JWM and AFAA will send you a Confidentiality Statement, pictures and brief descriptions of waiting children that match your home study approval. We will provide you with all information available to us regarding the child, including pictures, medical reports and HIV, Hepatitis B & Sickle Cell test results. **This information is often very limited.** You will have two weeks to say yes or no to the referred child.

If there is not a waiting child you are able to accept, we will put you on our waiting parent list. *Because adoption is about finding families for children, and not children for families, we cannot predict when a child who meets your desires will come to us in need of a home.*

When you accept the referral of the child you will a signed Full-Disclosure Form and an Agreement to Accept Placement and pay the first half of the placement fee.

AFAA will Federal Express (or hand deliver if someone is traveling) your dossier to Liberia. The AFAA Liberian attorney and the Government of Liberia will begin the multiple steps in coordination with our AFAA House orphanage director. This will prepare your file for Liberian approval and then the Liberian High Court.

USCIS: You will need USICS pre-approval for an orphan Visa. Apply to USCIS with form I-600-A. www.uscis.gov. Use one form for your family, NOT one for each child.

- Please have AFAA or JWM review your I-600A before you send it.
- Attach your approved home study, all other required documents and the application fee to your I600-A. Mail it to the USCIS Lockbox on the form. USCIS will send you the time and place for everyone in your home, eighteen years and older, to be fingerprinted. Yes, they will fingerprint you again.

The Wait: Once you are matched with a child your dossier and the child's file will be processed with the GOL Ministry of Gender. There is no way to know how long this will take.

Court: There is no way to know when we will receive a court date. You may be required to be present in the Liberian High Court for your adoption to finalize. This appears to change without notice. We will notify you of the court date and whether you need to be there. All adoption fees must be paid to AFAA prior to traveling.

In country: One adopting parent **MUST** travel for an estimated two to three weeks (or longer if you are required to be there for the court hearing) Length of time you need to stay in Liberia may also change based on the Liberia governments request. Whil you are in Liberia you will process your child's US visa at the US Embassy with an I-600 form (one for each child), obtain a required health physical for your child and obtain an exit letter for your child from the Liberian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. You will be assisted during your time in Liberia by our AFAA House orphanage director. Your child can be with you during the time you are in Liberia.

Advice and support on travel and your stay will be provided.

Family Checklist

Checklist for the Liberia adoption process:

This is for your info only

- Application
 1. Date Mailed to JWM with \$400 application fee _____
 2. Date Copy Sent to AFAA _____

- Service Policy and Agreement
 1. Date Mailed to JWM with \$1000 Humanitarian Fee

- Your Hague agency, notarized, approved home study - **4 originals.**
 1. Home Study Agency Name _____
 2. Home Study Agency Address _____
 3. Home Study Agency Phone _____
 4. Home Study Agency Social Worker's Name _____
 5. Date Hague Home Study was mailed to JWM _____

- A local and state criminal history clearance for each person in your home 18+. **Original and 3 copies.**
 1. Date Local Police Clearances Mailed to AFAA _____
 2. Date Local Police Clearances Given to Your Home Study Agency

- A child abuse clearance for everyone 18+ in your home - **original and 3 copies.**
 1. Date Child Abuse Clearances Mailed to AFAA _____
 2. Date Child Abuse Clearance Given to Your Home Study Agency

- A medical exam for each parent using the JWM/AFAA form - **original and 3 copies (not more than six months old when submitted).**
 1. Date Medical Forms to AFAA _____
 2. Date Copy Given to Your Home Study Agency _____

- A typed, brief statement from your general practitioner for each parent, stating the parent is approved for an international adoption - ***original and 3 copies.***
 1. Date Doctor's Letter Mailed to AFAA _____
 2. Date Given to Your Home Study Agency _____

- The JWM/AFAA Financial Form - ***original and 1 copy.***
 1. Notarized Financial Form – Date Mailed to AFAA _____
 2. Date Bank Letter Mailed to AFAA _____
 3. Date Copies Given to Home Study Agency _____

- Birth certificate copies for each parent & all children in the family - ***4 copies.***
 1. Date Mailed to AFAA _____
 2. Date Copy Given to Your Home Study Agency _____

- Marriage certificate - ***4 copies.***
 1. Date Mailed to AFAA _____
 2. Date Copy Given to Your Home Study Agency _____

- Divorce decrees for each parent, if applicable - ***3 copies.***
 1. Date Mailed to AFAA _____
 2. Date Copy Given to Your Home Study Agency _____

- Passport copies (in color) for each parent - ***4 copies.***
 1. Date Color Passport Copies Mailed to AFAA _____

- Color, passport size photos of each parent - ***3 original color each.***
 1. Date Color Passport Photo Copies Mailed to AFAA _____

- Two years of your current Federal tax returns & W-2's - signed - ***4 copies - (NO state returns).***
 1. Date Mailed to AFAA _____
 2. Date Copy Given to Your Home Study Agency _____

- Casual photos of each person in your home - ***color original & 3 color copies (4 sets, 4x6, color photos of all family members (not animals) and inside & outside of home, of main rooms. Do not include bathrooms, hallways or unfinished basements).***

1. Date Family Photos Mailed to AFAA _____
- Autobiographies from each parent about important life experiences, signed, dated - ***original and one copy.***
 1. Date Bios of Each Parent Mailed to AFAA _____
- Employment verification letter for each adopting parent - dated, signed & written on company letterhead - ***original & 3 copies.***
 1. Date Mailed to AFAA _____
- Six, typed, dated & signed reference letters - 3 from relatives & 3 from non-relatives - ***originals & 3 copies of each letter.***
 1. Date Mailed to AFAA _____
 2. Date Copies Given to Your Home Study Agency _____
(*Originals are often sent directly to your home study agency.*)
- Child support or alimony paid or received, if applicable - ***a notarized statement from the parent about this - original & 3 copies.***
 1. Date Child Support Info Mailed to AFAA _____
 2. Date Copies Given to Your Home Study Agency _____
- A one page, dated, typed letter to the Liberian government, signed by both parents about why you want to adopt a Liberian child - ***original & 3 copies.***
 1. Date Family Letter Mailed to AFAA _____
- Verification of medical insurance for each person in your home, including your adopted child - ***2 copies.***
 1. Date Family Medical Insurance Information Mailed to AFAA _____
 2. Date Copies Given to Your Home Study Agency _____
- If a child was ever placed in your home for adoption & was removed, a typed, notarized letter explaining why the child was removed - ***original letter & 3 copies.***
 1. Date Information Mailed to AFAA _____
 2. Date Copies Given to Your Home Study Agency _____
- Power of Attorney form sent to you by AFAA - ***original & 3 copies.***
 1. Date Power of Attorney Received _____

- 2. Date Power of Attorney (*Notarized Originals & 3 copies*) Mailed to AFAA _____
- Full-Disclosure Confidentiality Agreement (when you are given information on a child.
 - 1. Date Signed and Mailed to JWM _____
- Child Preferred – Approximate Age on Arrival in U.S.

- Date You Notified AFAA of Interest in a Specific Child

- Date Agreement to Accept Placement Mailed to JWM _____
- Date First ½ Payment Sent to AFAA or JWM _____
- I-171 H – your I-600A approval from USCIS - **2 copies.** (at this time, your dossier can be sent to Liberia while we are waiting on this)
 - 1. Date USCIS I-600A Approved by USCIS _____
 - 2. Date USCIS I-600A Approval Expires _____
 - 3. Date USCIS Fingerprints Expire _____
 - 4. Date USCIS I-600A Approval Copy Mailed to AFAA

- Date Contract Mailed to AFAA (*mailed to family from AFAA after child(ren) chosen*) _____
- Date ½ Payment Sent to AFAA or JWM _____
- Date Post Placement Fees Sent to Home Study Agency _____
- Date Child Arrived in Your Home _____
- Date You Filed N-600 U.S. Citizenship Form _____
- Date You Had the Adoption Recognized By Your State _____

- Date You Mailed Pre-Adoption/Requirement Form to AFAA (*Michigan families only – form provided by home study agency*) _____
- Date Post Placement Report Sent to AFAA
 1. 3 Month Report _____
 2. 6 Month Report _____
 3. 1 Year Report _____
 4. Annual Reports _____

FOREIGN SERVICE AGENCY NAME:

Americans for African Adoptions, Inc. (AFAA)

ADDRESS: 8910 Timberwood Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46234-1952

PHONE #: office – 317-271-4567

E-MAIL: Cheryl – amfaaUS@gmail.com

HAGUE AGENCY:

Joyful World Ministries, Inc. (JWM), dba: All Age Adoptions Plus

ADDRESS: 11811 Menaul Blvd. NE, Suite 5, Albuquerque, NM 87112

PHONE #: office – 505-323-6002

EMAIL: Cathrine – Adopt@Adoptionsplus.org