



LUND PRIVATE ADOPTION PROGRAM INFORMATION PACKET

Thank you for inquiring about Lund's Private Adoption Program! We have many services for families who are interested in adoption and we are pleased to assist you on your adoption journey. This packet is designed to acquaint you with our services and to help you begin to assess your interest and readiness for adoption. Reviewing this packet is a great first step in exploring adoption.

The next step is to set up an informational meeting with Lund's Adoption Counselor. Instructions for this step are on page 19 of this packet. **An informational meeting is required prior to moving forward with an adoption Homestudy Application or Evaluation.** This meeting is a time to talk with the Adoption Counselor about your path to adoption, discuss any questions you have, assess whether or not Lund's private adoption program is the right fit for you, and make any recommendations for next steps before applying for a Homestudy Evaluation.

Lund does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ancestry, place of birth, age, veteran status, marital status, or against qualified individuals with a disability.

THE HOMESTUDY APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS

At your informational meeting, you and the Adoption Counselor will discuss your readiness to apply for a Homestudy Evaluation. The Adoption Counselor may make recommendations for steps to take (i.e. reading, education, reflection, counseling) before applying for a Homestudy. Please note that completion of an Informational Meeting does not guarantee a Homestudy application, and submission of a Homestudy application does not guarantee an approved Homestudy evaluation.

THE HOMESTUDY EVALUATION APPLICATION

The Homestudy Application must be completed in full and returned to Lund with the following required supplemental materials:

- Three signed letters of reference, including contact information. Letters must be mailed directly to Lund from the reference-writer.
- Most recent 1040 tax returns
- Physician's report/s
- Certified copies of: marriage certificate, divorce decree/s, and death certificate/s, as applicable
- Copy of birth certificate/s, from vital records
- If born outside United States, documentation indicating permanent legal residence in the US
- Adoptive Parents Key Sheet
- Fingerprint Clearances paperwork (fee required)**
- DMV Clearance paperwork (fee required)
- Office of Child Support Clearance paperwork
- Payment for Homestudy Evaluation

****We recommend that you get your fingerprints done the week you submit your Homestudy application.** Fingerprint clearances can take up to twelve weeks to be returned to Lund. Even if you have been fingerprinted before for foster care licensing, teaching, social work or governmental jobs, you **MUST** be fingerprinted again for the purpose of the adoption homestudy.

If you have lived in states other than Vermont in the past five years, Lund will submit Adam Walsh checks for those states. These clearances may require additional fees and paperwork, in which case the Adoption Specialist will contact you with further information.

Every Homestudy applicant must be at least twenty-one years old. If any applicant owes back child support, or is in foreclosure or bankruptcy proceedings, they are not eligible for an adoption Homestudy. Applicants with any history of filing for bankruptcy or foreclosures will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Director of Adoption. Every Homestudy applicant must be a United States citizen or have permanent legal residence in the United States. Lund requires families to wait six months from the birth of a child or finalization of a child's adoption before receiving placement of another child with the intent of adoption.

If you share a home with other adults, Lund will need to run Vermont Case Access System, Adult Abuse Registry, and Child Abuse Registry checks on those individuals as part of your Homestudy (fingerprints are required for these clearance checks; the applicant/s are responsible for the fingerprint fees). If there are people living in attached or adjacent dwellings to the applicant(s)' home, Lund does not run clearances on these individuals provided they are not sharing living space with the applicant(s).

After we have received your complete Homestudy Application, we will begin your family file and the Adoption Counselor will contact you to set up a time for your first Homestudy interview. The Homestudy Interview meetings typically occur as follows, with additional meetings as necessary:

1. Homestudy Interview (with all applicants, at Lund)
2. Individual Homestudy Interview (one separate interview for each applicant, at Lund)
3. Home Visit (home inspection and final meeting at your home with all applicants present)

**If you have children, they will be included during the Homestudy process, typically during the Home Visit.

The Homestudy process is intensive. The Homestudy interview meetings will cover similar topics to those you write about in the Homestudy Application. Your Adoption Counselor will have in-depth conversations with you about all areas of your life, and ask you to thoughtfully consider many aspects of parenting and adoption. At Lund, we value open and honest conversations throughout this process. We recognize that these conversations and this process are extremely personal and can at times feel uncomfortable. It is our ultimate responsibility to assess families, as well as to prepare families to be ready to adopt. We take that responsibility seriously, and at the same time we strive to develop positive working relationships with families as we support them through their adoption journey.

The Homestudy Evaluation generally takes two to three months from the time you submit your application to completion of the report. The Homestudy Evaluation can take longer, or require additional meetings if it is deemed appropriate by the Adoption Counselor and/or Director of Adoption. When the Homestudy Evaluation is completed, you will receive an original, in both paper and electronic formats. An expectant parent considering adoption will never see your full Homestudy Evaluation, rather, it is a tool for the adoption team to document your readiness to adopt and to help match your family with expectant parent(s) and baby. Your Homestudy Evaluation will be viewed only by Lund's Private Adoption Counselor, Options Coordinator, Director of Adoption, Adoption Specialist and the Probate Judge. In addition, if you are considering adopting a child through foster care, or through another adoption agency, we will send your Homestudy Evaluation to the appropriate worker/agency for them to review.

THE ADOPTIVE PARENTS KEY SHEET

The Adoptive Parents Key Sheet addresses different situations in a potential placement. We will ask about what medical and mental health issues you may be open to in an expectant parent(s)' history and what substance exposure and other known medical issues you are open to considering. This form will also ask about openness around transracial placements, twins, sibling groups, age range and desired openness in adoption. We understand that this form can be particularly overwhelming to complete and the Adoption Counselor will review it with you in detail. We also highly recommend that you speak to a pediatrician regarding the medical topics on this sheet.

PROFILE BOOKS

During the Homestudy Evaluation interviews, you will be asked to start thinking about compiling photographs for a profile book. The profile book is an important piece of the Homestudy process, as this is how expectant parents initially get to know your family and choose the adoptive family for their baby. This is an opportunity for you to show your family through pictures and text, and it is important to include photos of family, pets, your home, activities and hobbies you enjoy, etc. The Adoption Counselor will show you examples of books families have made in the past so you can get some ideas; some families choose to make scrapbooks while others enjoy making their books on an online photobook site.

Important information about the Profile Books:

- Lund requires two hard copies of your profile book, in addition to an electronic version (PDF format preferred; keep in mind that this may be printed to show expectant parents offsite/out of state).
- Do not include identifying information, such as last names, addresses, places of employment, etc.
- Have fun and be creative! Think about what the most important aspects of your family are, and the things that you would like to share with a child, and make sure to represent those in your book.

Your Adoption Counselor will provide more information and guidance about creating your book during your Homestudy meetings.

REGISTERING YOUR HOMESTUDY WITH ANOTHER AGENCY/IES

Some families choose to register their Homestudy Evaluation with other agencies while continuing to wait to be matched and placed through Lund. We welcome the collaboration with other adoption agencies! This can be beneficial for families who are interested in casting a wider net in seeking potential matches with expectant parents and babies. If you do choose to register your homestudy with another agency or agencies, you *must* let your Lund Adoption Counselor know. We are happy to send other agencies your Homestudy Evaluation, physician's reports or any other supplemental information they may require. Lund cannot share fingerprint clearances with any other entity. If you are registering your homestudy with another agency which has additional requirements for your existing homestudy evaluation, there will be an additional fee of \$300 per conversion. If you register with another agency and are matched and placed through that agency, **you will be required to pay the placing agency's placement fee/s and not Lund's**. Your Lund Adoption Counselor will work with you to provide post placement supervision and finalization services that the placing agency requires. You will be required to pay a post placement fee to Lund if you are placed through another agency (see Lund Private Adoption Fees section).

KEEPING YOUR HOMESTUDY EVALUATION UPDATED

We need to update your Homestudy Evaluation annually. To remain in compliance with homestudy guidelines, prospective adoptive parents will need to submit the following information on an annual basis. The Adoption Counselor will meet with you to discuss changes in your family as well as the waiting process before writing your Homestudy Clearance Update.

- Most recent 1040 tax return & financial information
- Physician's report/s (required every two years)
- Fingerprint clearances (fee required)
- DMV Clearances (fee required)
- Office of Child Support Clearances
- Any information that has changed within the last year. This could include: changes in employment, housing, family structure, openness/preferences for adoption, etc.

***You will receive a letter from Lund's Adoption Specialist when you should begin gathering this information to submit.*

INFANT ADOPTION – Expectant Parents considering Adoption, Options Counseling & Openness in Adoption

Lund works with expectant parents in the State of Vermont. We provide full spectrum, non-coercive options counseling for people who are considering the possibilities for their pregnancy. For those who choose to parent, or who choose to terminate their pregnancy, Lund makes the appropriate referrals to services and follows up. For those who choose to make an adoption plan, counseling from Lund continues throughout pregnancy, birth, placement, and beyond for a lifetime, or as long as needed, and can include families, partners or support people.

Lund's philosophy is that some degree of openness in adoption is beneficial to everyone involved; birth parents, birth families, adoptees, adoptive parents and families. We listen to what expectant/birth parents' hopes are for ongoing contact and correspondence with the child and family, and work to make a match with a family who shares these hopes and values about openness. There is a spectrum of openness in adoption and ongoing contact can vary; from exchanging letters and photos to periodic visits with birth parent(s) to frequent contact between families. Lund is here to help both birth families and adoptive families navigate the adoption and the ongoing contact in a way that feels comfortable, safe, and beneficial for everyone involved. Correspondence is most often exchanged through Lund and visits between birth and adoptive families can be facilitated by Lund to provide support to both families and to maintain the confidentiality of each family if desired.

Following the placement of a baby with your family, a **Good Faith Contact Agreement** will be established. If matched and placed through an out-of-state agency, you may have a post placement adoption contact agreement in place with the corresponding agency.

If matched and placed through Lund, you will be required to sign a Good Faith Contact Agreement. At minimum, you will be required to send a letter and photos on an annual basis until the child turns eighteen years old. Each family and adoption scenario is unique, therefore, each agreement around contact and correspondence differs. Good Faith Contact Agreements are not legally binding; however, Lund takes these agreements seriously and expects families to follow through with their agreements. Lund will work with you and the birth family to establish contact and correspondence agreements—you are certainly not expected to figure this out on your own!

Mail being sent through Lund as an intermediary is opened and read by a Lund worker before being sent along to its destination. Lund maintains copies of all Lund-mediated correspondence between families in the family's file.

For further information on Lund's work with expectant/birth parents, please see the enclosed **Lund Expectant Parent's Bill of Rights**. This document outlines Lund's philosophy and responsibility in working with expectant families making an adoption plan.

TRANSRACIAL ADOPTION

We at Lund believe that every child is equally valued and deserves the same love, respect, and dedication that each and every human being deserves in this world. Lund appreciates and values the importance of transracial adoption and has supported many families throughout our history grow through transracial adoption. We define transracial adoption as the adoption of a child of a different racial and/or cultural background than their adoptive parent(s).

As an agency, we know that systemic and institutional racism is still prevalent within our society. Because of this, we believe that our families who transracially adopt are most successful when there is a pre-existing level of cultural competency which could include having interactions with members of the child's racial community and engaging in meaningful and thoughtful conversations around race. We at Lund feel that it is important to examine our own beliefs and furthermore understand the privileges we have been afforded or denied based on our own racial and cultural background. Children who are transracially adopted should be afforded the opportunity to create and form their own racial identities. As their parent(s), it is important to actively develop an environment where they feel comfortable to explore and talk about their racial and cultural background. We believe that transracial adoption brings the same joys, difficulties, loss, and love that come with any adoption. We also understand that there are additional layers of complexity when parenting a child of a different race and helping them navigate and understand their own identities. As an agency, it is our responsibility to help you to prepare your family to be as engaged and open to learning and exposing yourself to thinking about the diverse and sometimes opposing views that exist in the world surrounding race and identity.

We believe that race does matter and that as prospective adoptive parent(s), it is important to be reflective of your own biases, privileges, and experiences that will shape how you raise your child. As an agency, we are here to provide resources, supports and establish connections that will best help you as a family to feel prepared and supported throughout this journey of parenting through transracial adoption.

If you are considering transracial adoption, your Adoption Counselor will have extensive conversations with you about race, racism, and transracial adoption during your homestudy process. **Lund requires that each individual homestudy applicant in families considering transracial adoption complete a minimum of eight hours of training (in-person or online workshops, or self-study through reading and/or watching videos) prior to homestudy meetings.** The Adoption Counselor will provide you with a list of some suggested resources and trainings. Lund may require you to engage in additional education, training, and/or conversations prior to approval for transracial adoption.

INFANT ADOPTION – Matching & Placement

MATCHING & PLACEMENT THROUGH LUND

Lund's Options Coordinator and Private Adoption Counselor work to facilitate matches between expectant parents making an adoption plan and prospective adoptive families. Expectant parents who are receiving options counseling through Lund and are considering adoption have the opportunity to view the profile books of prospective adoptive families who are waiting to be placed. Here are the typical stages Lund goes through in facilitating a potential match between expectant parent(s) and an adoptive family:

- The Options Coordinator collects information about an expectant parent's medical and mental health history. Sometimes we will have access to information from only the pregnant person, and sometimes we are able to obtain history from the second parent as well. While we do everything we can to gather comprehensive medical information, there are often gaps, and most of this information is self-reported. We also ask expectant parents what their preferences are in an adoptive family, and what their hopes and dreams are for their child.
- Considering the health history information, what we know about the individual's pregnancy, and honoring preferences for an adoptive family, we find potential matches in our group of waiting families based on what families have identified they are open to in their Adoptive Parents Key Sheet. We want the match to be true to what each family is looking for, so we take into account medical history, mental health history, any information we have regarding prenatal care, substance use during pregnancy, etc. in identifying families who may be a good match for the expectant family and baby.
- Expectant parents will view the profile books of the families that have been identified as good matches. It takes expectant parents varying amounts of time to choose a family. Some feel a connection instantly with a family after viewing their book and others take more time to consider all their options in choosing and may ask for more information about one or more than one adoptive family.
- If your family has been chosen by expectant parents, we will call and speak with you about the situation. We will provide you with whatever information we have, including medical and mental health history, known information regarding the pregnancy and any other additional information we've collected. We may also recommend that you take the medical and mental health information to your doctor or pediatrician for them to review with you.
- Expectant parents may choose to meet a prospective adoptive family prior to the birth, once or more, and we will schedule and facilitate that meeting, usually here at Lund. Generally, both our Options Coordinator, who supports the expectant parents, and Adoption Counselor, who supports you, will attend. Some expectant parents choose not to meet the prospective adoptive family before, or even after, the birth, but can choose to leave that door open for the possibility of meeting in the future.
- Likewise, expectant parents can choose how involved or uninvolved they would like the prospective adoptive family to be in their birth plan. Some expectant parents choose to have the prospective adoptive family at the hospital during or right after the birth, while others prefer to have that time be private. Lund will help you navigate this process and will support you throughout, including at the hospital.
- **Lund's Policy Regarding Visitors at the Hospital:** Out of respect for the birth parents and for hospitals which provide courtesy rooms for our families, Lund requires that only the pre-adoptive parent(s) be at the hospital with baby. The time at the hospital is for the pre-adoptive parent(s) to spend time bonding with the baby. It is not a time meant for friends and family to be visiting with the family and baby. Every hospital has their own individual visitor policy, however Lund requests that our families follow Lund's policy regarding no visitors during this time.
- **Health Insurance for the Child:** You are responsible for providing health insurance for the child upon receiving placement.

MATCHING & PLACEMENT THROUGH ANOTHER AGENCY

Some matches are made between expectant parents and adoptive families through other agencies in different states. Lund has a few agencies that we partner with frequently, and we work to develop new relationships with agencies that share our mission and philosophy of working with expectant families and adoptive families. These agencies can call Lund to see if we have an adoptive family that might be a good match for families they are working with. If the expectant parents choose, you may be asked to travel to the state before the birth to meet with them, or they may choose not to meet the prospective adoptive family. Sometimes an agency will call Lund after a baby is born, if they have received a referral from a hospital social worker post-birth (if birth parents decide they want to make an adoption plan while at the hospital during or after labor and delivery).

If you have chosen to register your homestudy through another agency and you are matched and placed through them, the process is similar to if Lund received a call from an out-of-state agency and the same ICPC requirements (listed below) will apply to your family.

The matching process is similar in these situations as described above for Lund matches and placements, however, another agency is now involved. Your profile book may be sent to the agency so the social worker can show the book to the expectant parents, and your homestudy will be emailed to the social worker for their review. Your Lund Adoption Counselor remains involved throughout this process and is in contact with your family, as well as the partner agency throughout the placement process.

INTERSTATE COMPACT ON THE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN

If matched with a baby through another agency in a different state, you will need to travel to that state for placement. After placement, the state where the baby was born (the sending state) must send a request to the state where the adoptive family lives (receiving state). Once the receiving state (Vermont) approves the placement and sends the approval back to the sending state, the adoptive family is free to travel across state lines with the baby and return home. The ICPC process *can* take up to two weeks, however if both states are able to send and receive requests and approvals via email, the process can be much quicker. It is important to plan on being in the state where the baby was born for some time until the ICPC process is completed. Your Lund Adoption Counselor will be in touch with you throughout this process and will call you once you are free to travel home. If you are interested in learning more about the ICPC process and procedures, you may visit the Vermont Department for Children and Families ICPC page at:

http://dcf.vermont.gov/fsd/interstate_compacts/icpc

****A note about matching and placement:**

As you might imagine, being matched with expectant parent/s and placed with a baby can happen in many different ways. Each match and placement is unique to all involved, and happens over different timelines depending on the particular circumstances. Lund's Adoption Counselor is your support person throughout the process, to help guide and assist you through the different steps as they arise. This will remain true for matches and placements that occur here in Vermont, as well as with agencies in other states.

REVOCATION PERIODS

A revocation period refers to the time in which a parent who has placed their child for adoption has to change their mind about their adoption plan. The length of this period varies state by state, which means you may not know what revocation period the birth parents will have until you are matched and know what state they live in. In Vermont, an individual making an adoption plan must wait 36 hours after giving birth to sign the relinquishment of their parental rights for the purpose of adoption in court. Following signing the consent to the adoption and voluntarily relinquishing parental rights to the baby, there is a 21-day revocation period. In Vermont, birth fathers can sign out of court, which gives no revocation period, or in court, which gives the same 21-day revocation period.

Different states have different laws around birth parent consent and revocation periods, and your Lund Adoption Counselor will make sure the information regarding these laws is made clear to you. If you are curious about the consent and revocation period laws in each state, there is a listing made available at the following link: <http://www.theadoptionguide.com/files/StateAdoptionLaws.pdf>

You and the Adoption Counselor will talk more about the revocation period during the homestudy process and once you are matched with an expectant parent and placed with a baby.

LOSS/DISRUPTION IN A MATCH/PLACEMENT

As with any adoption both at Lund or out-of-state, there is a potential at any point during a match and/or during a revocation period that a birth parent can change their mind. We encourage pre-adoptive families to know of the legal risk period if your family is working with an out of state agency and to understand birth parent rights. In the event that a birth parent does change their mind, whether it is an out of state or Vermont placement, Lund believes in supporting families through this intense loss. Every family grieves in their own way, and a family never “gets over” this loss. The Lund Adoption Counselor meets with every family after they experience a loss during matching or placement to provide support and space to process this event. This is an important time to talk about what a family needs to feel ready to be considered for another potential match.

TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS

The parental rights of both birth parents must be terminated or the adoption is considered legal risk. Your Lund Adoption Counselor will help you better understand this legal process depending on the nature of your placement and the state where the birth parents live.

INFANT ADOPTION – POST PLACEMENT & FINALIZATION

POST PLACEMENT SUPERVISION

Once you are placed with a baby, you will wait to legally finalize the adoption in court. During the post placement period, you will have physical custody of your child and will be parenting. The agency that placed the baby with you (either Lund or an out-of-state agency) will maintain legal custody of the baby until the adoption is legally finalized. Most states require a six-month post placement period, and this can be extended if your family needs to apply for certain benefits in the case of adopting a baby with significant special needs.

During the post placement period, your Lund Adoption Counselor will meet with you, typically three times over the six months (once every other month). Generally, the first visit takes place in your home, and the following visits occur at the Lund office in Burlington. During these visits, we will go over your family's adjustment, your baby's growth and development, sign the Good Faith Contact Agreement, and address any questions you may have going forward. We will also complete the paperwork to be submitted to court, including an Adoption Petition, Affidavit of Fees, etc. and the Adoption Counselor will collect notes from your baby's most recent visit to the pediatrician.

FINALIZATION

After the post placement period, you will legally finalize the adoption in court. This will make you the legal parent/s and guardian/s of your child. If you were placed with a baby born in Vermont, you will finalize your adoption in the probate court of the county where you live, or in Chittenden County. Once your Adoption Counselor completes your final post placement report and submits the final paperwork to court, a finalization date will be assigned by the court. You may invite family and friends to your adoption finalization, and the hearings are typically very short (less than half an hour). It's a joyous occasion, and many families choose to celebrate their child/ren's adoption date for years to come.

If your child was born in another state, there is the possibility that you will be required to finalize their adoption in their state of birth. Some states have begun allowing adoption finalizations to occur by phone or video call with a notary present, but it is important to keep in mind that you may be required to travel back to your child's state of birth for their adoption finalization.

After the adoption finalization, you will receive a certified copy of your child's adoption decree. This document will be used to obtain a new, amended birth certificate. The adoption decree will be sent to the state where your child was born and that state's Vital Records department will re-issue an amended birth certificate. The new birth certificate will list your name/s as parents and will show the child's legal name you have chosen. You may also use the adoption decree, along with the amended birth certificate, to apply for documents such as a social security number/card and passport.

ADOPTION RESOURCES

Adoption is a lifelong journey. Your family will experience many changes and developments as time passes and your family grows together. We recommend you read as much as possible about adoption, explore websites, take adoption webinars, and attend trainings. The Vermont Consortium for Adoption and Guardianship is a good place to find resources, including a lending library and upcoming trainings : vtadoption.org .

LUND PRIVATE ADOPTION FEES

In some adoption cases, there may be additional expenses including, but not limited to: legal, medical, court, foster care and birth parent expenses. These fees will be the responsibility of the adoptive parent/s. Additional fees will be discussed before the placement of the child. Placement fees are based on a family's total income line on their 1040 tax return. Please note that for a placement through an agency other than Lund, the family will be required to pay the placement fee of the placing agency, *not Lund's placement fee*.

INFORMATIONAL MEETING & HOMESTUDY APPLICATION FEE

\$200—*Due at scheduling of informational meeting.*

Clearance fees—*see application for current fees, due at the time of homestudy application submission.*

HOMESTUDY FEE

\$3000-3500 (for an expedited homestudy or a homestudy with out-of-state requirements)

Homestudy fee is non-refundable and due at the time of homestudy application submission.

HOMESTUDY CONVERSION FEE

\$300 per homestudy conversion—*If you choose to register your homestudy with another agency which has additional requirements and/or requires Lund to convert your homestudy, you will be responsible for this fee.*

INCOME

PLACEMENT FEE

Base - \$90,000.....	\$25,000
\$90,001 - \$150,000.....	\$30,000
\$150,001 - \$200,000.....	\$35,000
\$200,001 - \$250,000.....	\$40,000
\$250,001 - \$300,000.....	\$45,000
\$301,000-\$350,000.....	\$50,000
\$350,001 and up.....	\$55,000

Placement Fee is for families matched and placed with a baby/child through Lund (baby born in Vermont and no out-of-state agency involvement). Payment of total Placement Fee is due as follows:

- *1/3 at time of first post placement visit*
- *1/3 at time of second post placement visit*
- *1/3 at time of third post placement visit*

Placement Fee must be paid in full prior to finalization of the adoption.

Out-of-state families with homestudy registered at Lund: *Lund's placement fee is due in full at the time of placement.*

POST PLACEMENT FEE

\$3,000* for three in-person visits

If the placing agency requires additional post-placement visits, a fee of \$100 per phone meeting and \$150 per in-person meeting will be added.

**If you are placed with a child through Lund and are paying Lund's placement fee (i.e. another out-of-state agency is not involved), your post placement fee will be included in your Placement Fee and will not be an additional fee.*

RETURNING LUND FAMILY HOMESTUDY (for additional adoptive placements)

\$2500 – *A Returning Family Homestudy will be conducted if you decide to adopt through Lund additional times.*

HOMESTUDY REGISTRATION FEE (for families who have an existing homestudy)

\$4000—*If you have an existing homestudy from the state where you live and wish to register your homestudy with Lund's adoption program. Lund currently does not work with residents of New York State.*

Services may include:

- Presenting adoptive parent/s profile books and letters to expectant parents
- Arranging and facilitating meetings between expectant and adoptive parents (if appropriate)
- Placement of the baby/child
- Post placement supervision
- Finalization of the adoption

Out-of-state services:

- Meeting with out-of-state adoptive parent/s after review of homestudy
- Contact and planning with receiving agency
- Interstate Compact arrangements & Relinquishment services to birth parents
- Contact with out-of-state agency during post placement visits



LUND CLIENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Prospective and adoptive families working with Lund have the right to:

1. Be treated with respect and dignity;
2. Receive services regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ancestry, place of birth, age, veteran status or disability (see **Lund Information for Adoption Clients**);
3. Make decisions free from pressure or coercion, including the decision to accept or reject the placement of a particular child;
4. Be informed of the rights of expectant parents working with Lund (see **Expectant Parent's Bill of Rights**);
5. Maintain confidentiality, unless waived or mandated otherwise by Vermont law or directed by court order;
6. Be informed about the range and scope of services provided by the agency, including information regarding eligibility criteria, requirements of the homestudy process, information about the post-placement process, and requirements for the finalization of the adoption;
7. Receive a written schedule of agency fees;
8. Review the completed homestudy for factual accuracy;
9. Request that a homestudy be provided to another agency;
10. Receive a copy of the agency's grievance procedure (see **Lund Information for Adoption Clients**);
11. Seek medical, emotional, and/or social work advice from independent resources prior to proceeding with placement;
12. Full and fair disclosure, *to the extent reported to the agency*, of available non-identifying information about the child, including: medical and mental health histories of the child, birth parents, and extended family; and conditions or diseases believed to be hereditary; drugs or medications taken by the child's mother during pregnancy. Other non-identifying information includes their race, religion, and ethnic background; general physical appearance; education, occupation, interests, and talents; existence and age of any other children born to the biological parents; the relationship between biological parents; and the actual date and place of birth of the adoptee;

13. Be informed of legal risk in a potential placement;
14. Be informed of the Vermont Adoption Registry;
15. Learn about the possibility of an adoption subsidy for a medically needy child (child needs to be SSI eligible and approved to receive SSI payment in order for an adoption subsidy to be applied for);

As prospective or adoptive parents working with Lund, it is your responsibility to:

1. Work cooperatively and honestly with Lund;
2. Truthfully disclose personal information;
3. Disclose if you have ever been the subject of an unfavorable homestudy or if you have ever withdrawn an application from an agency;
4. Act in a respectful, non-threatening manner with staff;
5. Keep Lund informed of new pertinent information about your family;
6. Submit required materials and complete procedures in a timely manner;
7. Comply with Lund's Discipline policy (see **Lund Information for Adoption Clients**);
8. Pay agreed-upon fees promptly;
9. Understand that Lund cannot guarantee the placement of a child, or any attributes of a particular child;
10. Understand the legal risk in adoption;
11. Be informed about birth parent rights and responsibilities;
12. Obtain training, counseling, and/or medical advice from independent resources as necessary;
13. Notify Lund if you have adopted or no longer wish to be considered for an adoptive placement.



LUND INFORMATION FOR ADOPTION CLIENTS

ABOUT LUND:

For over 120 years, Lund has been making a positive and lasting difference in the lives of women, children and families in our home state of Vermont, and well beyond. We serve over 5,000 people in Vermont each year and hundreds more throughout the country. Originally founded as a maternity home in 1890, Lund has evolved over the years to meet the changing needs of society, yet never straying from our mission of helping children to thrive. Today, Lund is a comprehensive treatment center and family support agency, offering an array of integrated services in response to the needs of pregnant or parenting teens and women, adoptive families, and children. All that we do – facilitating adoption, caring for infants and toddlers while parents work, treating women for substance abuse and mental health issues, counseling pregnant women and teens, teaching and modeling parenting skills, providing access to education and job training, and a host of other services – helps children thrive and promotes strong families. Lund is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Lund Respects your privacy and confidentiality, and is in compliance with Vermont Licensing Regulations for Child-Placing Agencies. The Adoption Department protects your privacy by sharing only the following general information gathered through the adoption process with the larger agency: name, contact information, and the fact that you have adopted through Lund. Adoption records, including information gathered during the homestudy process are confidential. Information about you other than general information may only be gathered through research available to the public.

LUND'S CORE VALUES:

- Commitment to building relationships based in shared purpose, empathy, teamwork, and the greater good;
- Mutual trust and respect grounded in honesty, integrity, and honoring diversity;
- Passion for our work, which we carry out with courage, dedication, enthusiasm, and pride;
- Hope for and belief in a better future, the possibility of positive change, and limitless human potential.

LICENSURE & CERTIFICATION:

Lund is Vermont's oldest and largest private non-profit adoption agency. Lund's Adoption program is a Licensed Child-Placing Agency through the State of Vermont. The Adoption program is evaluated yearly by a state licenser to ensure our program meets requirements and regulations. Adoption clients have the right to request verification of Lund's current licensure.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY (INCLUSIVENESS & DIVERSITY):

Lund does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ancestry, place of birth, age, veteran status, or against qualified individuals with a disability.

GOVERNANCE:

Lund's Board of Trustees is an active governing body that is responsible for setting the mission and strategic direction of the organization; ensuring a continuity of mission, values, and direction; and oversight of the finances, operations, and policies of the organization. Lund is proud of our dedicated volunteer community leaders who serve on the Board of Trustees.

ADOPTION SERVICES CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY:

With respect to Lund's Adoption Program, current employees, consultants, and Board of Trustees of Lund are not eligible to receive adoption services from the Lund Adoption Department. Adoption Department staff can provide information about other adoption resources for these designated persons. It is Lund's policy that volunteers as well as family members of both the current staff and Board of Trustees will not receive preferential treatment for adoption services.

GRIEVANCE POLICY:

Any client or prospective client of Lund's Adoption Program who believes they have a legitimate grievance may file a written complaint with the Director of Adoption. Written complaints may be mailed to:

Lund

c/o: Director of Adoption

PO Box 4009

Burlington, Vermont 05406

The Director of Adoption will respond in writing within 48 hours of receipt of a written complaint. Any client or prospective client of Lund's Adoption Program also has the right to submit a complaint to the Vermont Department for Children and Families' Residential Licensing and Special Investigations Unit, care of DCF - Family Services Division, 280 State Drive, HC 1 North, Waterbury, VT 05671-1030.

DISCIPLINE POLICY:

In accordance with Lund's licensing body, Lund's Adoption Program asks that prospective adoptive families adhere to the Discipline Policy as outlined in the Licensing Regulations for Foster Care as required by the Vermont Department for Children and Families – Family Services Division. Lund's philosophy and expectation for appropriate discipline is in line with that of Vermont's Department for Children and Families Licensing Regulations and reads as follows:

Discipline shall be constructive and educational in nature. Correction must be fair, reasonable, and consistent, and whenever possible must be logically connected to the behavior in need of change.

Prospective adoptive parents shall not subject an adoptive child to any cruel, degrading or unnecessary discipline techniques, including but not limited to: spanking, slapping, hitting, shaking, or otherwise engaging in aggressive physical contact with a child or engage in any act defined as abuse or neglect by Vermont Statutes Annotated, Title 33, Chapter 49.

Prospective adoptive parents shall not engage in any practices that have the effect of degrading or humiliating a child, or that would undermine a child's sense of self-worth.



HOPE • OPPORTUNITY • FAMILY

LUND EXPECTANT PARENT'S BILL OF RIGHTS

adapted from Spence-Chapin Adoption Service

You have the right to be free from pressure.

This is an important decision and you need the time to make it. Lund will treat you with dignity, respect, and honesty, and will not force or persuade you into making any decisions. Our Options Counselor supports your decision-making process and will be there with you when you are ready to make a choice.

You have the right to confidentiality.

Options counseling is completely confidential, so you can feel comfortable speaking freely with your counselor.

You have the right to complete and accurate information about all of your choices.

Lund is committed to providing thorough, up-to-date information about all options so that you can make an informed decision. We will support you whether you choose abortion, parenting, or adoption.

You have the right to counseling.

A trained and impartial Options Counselor is available to help you explore your thoughts, feelings, and current circumstances, and to review all the options and make the best plan for you and your child. Options counseling may be billed to your insurance if eligible; if not, counseling is free. This service is available regardless of what options you are considering.

You have the right to include whomever you wish in your process.

Lund's goal is to help you feel as supported and informed as possible. It can be helpful to have another support person with you to ask questions or help you voice your concerns. Our Options Counselor will meet with you and anyone you choose to be with you—friend, family member, partner, doctor, or otherwise.

You have the right to a safe, legal, efficient process.

You are able to review and familiarize yourself with all related documents and papers before you make your decision, and you have the right to keep copies of anything you sign. You have the right to take your time when making an adoption plan. You should not sign relinquishment documents until you are absolutely sure that adoption is the right choice for you and your child.

You have the right to choose your child's adoptive parents.

Should you choose to make an adoption plan, Lund will present you with profile books for several families so you can choose the family to parent your child. You may specify what is important to you about an adoptive family (like age, education, religion, and other children), and Lund will match your preferences with families waiting to adopt.

If you want, you can choose to meet with the family to get to know each other and talk about ongoing contact. If you do not wish to choose or meet adoptive parents, you have the right not to do so.

You have the right to choose an open adoption.

Lund requires every adoptive family to provide a yearly photograph and letter to birth parents for 18 years, as well as at least one visit after the child's birth. You may choose whether or not this is something you'd like to do, and whether you would like more communication than this, like phone calls, letters, or further visits supervised by Lund. Some families make good faith contact agreements, which are informal understandings between birth and adoptive families (these are not legally enforceable in the state of Vermont).

You have the right to peace of mind.

Every prospective adoptive family is extensively pre-screened by Lund to ensure that they will provide an excellent and loving home. Lund requires homestudies to examine the family's personal and work history, physical and emotional health, financial situation, and educational background. This includes a home inspection of the living environment.

You have the right to an adoption resource that will stand by a child with health problems.

Lund locates adoptive families for any child, regardless of health issues.

You have the right to affirm your future options.

Lund is and will be here for you. Birth parents are entitled to free lifetime counseling and support services, should you need them at any time in the future.

SIGNATURE PAGE

Please sign this page after you have carefully read the Information Packet and have received responses from the Adoption Counselor about any questions you had. This signature page will be kept in your family's adoption file at Lund.

I have received, read and understand the following Lund documents and understand the information all documents contain:

Lund Private Adoption Information Packet

Lund Information for Adoption Clients

Lund Client Rights & Responsibilities

Lund Expectant Parent's Bill of Rights

I understand I can contact the Adoption Counselor with any questions regarding Lund's adoption program.

Homestudy Applicant

Date

Homestudy Applicant

Date

Lund Adoption Counselor (to be signed at Informational Meeting)

Date



ADOPTION INFORMATIONAL MEETING APPLICATION

If you are interested in having an initial Adoption Informational Meeting with Lund, please send this completed form along with a \$200 non-refundable Informational Meeting Fee and the signature page from the Lund Private Adoption Informational Packet to:

Lund /Adoption Specialist
PO Box 4009
Burlington, VT 05406

The Adoption Specialist will contact you to schedule your Informational Meeting.

NAME(S): _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER(S): _____

EMAIL(S): _____

REFERRED BY: _____

	(Applicant #1)	(Applicant #2)
Name:	_____	_____
Date of Birth:	_____	_____
SSN:	_____	_____
Religion:	_____	_____
Education:	_____	_____
Occupation:	_____	_____
Annual Income:	_____	_____
Employer:	_____	_____
Health Problems:	_____	_____
Relationship Status:	Single: _____ Married: _____ Civil Union: _____ In relationship, not married: _____	
How long have you been in this current relationship?	_____	
Child(ren) Name(s), if applicable:	_____	DOB: _____

Have you ever applied elsewhere for adoption? Yes: _____ No: _____
If _____ yes, _____ where _____ and _____ status _____ of _____ application:

Do you have an approved Homestudy? Yes: _____ No: _____
If yes, please provide agency name, contact person, and contact information:

*Submission of this form does not guarantee a Homestudy application, Homestudy evaluation, or placement of a child.