

INDIA

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION PROGRAMME



Last Updated: February 2025

Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Intercountry Adoption	<p>India and New Zealand are parties to the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (the Hague Convention). All intercountry adoptions from India must comply with the Hague Convention’s principles and procedural requirements.</p>
The Indian Central Authority	<p>The Indian Central Authority under the Hague Convention is the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA), Ministry of Women and Child Development, in New Delhi, India: https://cara.wcd.gov.in/</p>
The Indian Adoption Regulations	<p>The intercountry adoption program with India is guided by the Indian Adoption Regulations 2022: Adoption Regulations 2022 (cara.nic.in).</p>
Legislation	<p>The intercountry adoption of Indian children is completed under Indian legislation, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act 2021. After an adoption order is granted by the District Magistrate in India, CARA confirms the adoption under Article 23 of the Hague Convention by issuing a Certificate of Conformity of Intercountry Adoption.</p>
Facilitation	<p>The intercountry adoption process from India is facilitated by the Authorised Adoption Agencies (AFAA) in New Zealand.</p> <p>Applicants may choose to engage the services of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) <p><u>OR</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-Country Adoption New Zealand (ICANZ) - the accredited adoption placement agency authorised to facilitate intercountry adoptions in India.
Adoption Application Categories, Matching of Children, and Children Available	<p>Applicants can have their application registered to adopt either one child or a sibling group.</p> <p>‘NORMAL’ CHILDREN</p> <p>Applications to adopt healthy children and children with mild/correctable medical conditions and/or mild developmental delays (emotional, physical, social) are registered under the ‘normal child’ category. Matching of children under the ‘normal child’ category is done through the online platform CARINGS (Child Adoption Resource Information & Guidance System) managed by CARA. The child’s information is referred to the Authorised Adoption Agency in New Zealand electronically via CARINGS for adoptive applicants to consider. As far as possible, the applicants’ preferences are taken into consideration when a child is referred to them for adoption. Non-Resident Indian (NRI) and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) applicants can choose three preferred States they wish to adopt from, based on their States of origin in India. Foreign applicants are provided referrals on the basis of ‘anywhere in India’.</p> <p>Children under 5 years are made available for adoption by Resident Indian, NRI, and OCI applicants within 60 days from the date the Child Welfare Committee Certificate declaring the child free for adoption is provided. Children over 5 years of age and siblings are made available for adoption by Resident Indian, NRI, or</p>

	<p>OCI applicants within 30 days from the date the Child Welfare Committee Certificate declaring the child free for adoption is provided.</p> <p>If not accepted for adoption by Resident Indian, NRI, or OCI applicants within the stipulated above timeframe, the child will be referred to foreign applicants for 15 days. If not accepted for adoption by foreign applicants within 15 days, the child will be categorised as 'hard to place' and become available for adoption under the 'hard-to-place children' category.</p> <p>'HARD TO PLACE' AND 'SPECIAL NEEDS' CHILDREN</p> <p>Hard-to-place children Children who were referred but not accepted for adoption by Resident Indian, NRI, OCI, and foreign applicants within the specified above timeframes become categorised as 'hard to place' children.</p> <p>Special needs children Special needs children available for adoption from India are children of different ages who have been diagnosed with physical, mental, intellectual, sensory, or multiple disabilities as classified in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 and the Indian Adoption Regulations 2022. Children with mild and/or correctable physical, intellectual, or sensory impairments are not categorised as special needs.</p> <p>'Hard to place' and 'special needs' children are available for matching from the 'special needs' and 'hard to place' children's online databases in CARINGS. Authorised Adoption Agencies in New Zealand have online access to the databases of special needs and hard-to-place children available for matching via CARINGS and can reserve a suitable match online in CARINGS.</p> <p>Inter-Country Adoption New Zealand (ICANZ) is the Authorised Adoption Agency in New Zealand that facilitates the matching process and adoption placements of children categorised as 'special needs' and 'hard to place'. If PAPs¹ consider adopting a child/siblings categorised as 'hard to place' and/or 'special needs', they should employ the services of ICANZ to facilitate their adoption application in India.</p> <p>Oranga Tamariki Adoption Service does not facilitate applications to adopt 'hard to place' and 'special needs' children from India.</p>
Approval of the Match	All matches of children from India must be considered and approved by Oranga Tamariki, which is the New Zealand Central Authority for Intercountry Adoption.
Citizenship and Residency	Adoptive applicants must be New Zealand citizens or permanent residents and live in New Zealand.
Applicant Couples	A couple applying to adopt a child from India must have been legally married for at least TWO years. The duration of marriage should be confirmed by their marriage certificate.
Single Applicants	CARA accepts applications from single applicants. A single male is not permitted to adopt a female child.
Number of Children in the Family	Adoptive applicants with TWO or more children in the family (biological or adopted) can only be considered for adoption of 'special needs' and 'hard to

¹ PAP/s = Prospective Adoptive Parent/s

	place' children, as specified in the Special Needs and Hard-to-Place Children sections above.		
Age of Applicants	The minimum age difference between the child and either of the PAPs should not be less than 25 years. For couples, the composite age of the PAPs is considered for determining their eligibility to adopt children within the identified age groups. The age of PAPs as on the date of registration of their application with CARA is considered to determine their eligibility to adopt children of different age groups, as below:		
	Age of the Child	Maximum Composite Age of PAPs (couple)	Maximum Age of PAP (single)
	Up to 2 years	85 years	40 years
	Above 2 up to 4 years	90 years	45 years
	Above 4 up to 8 years	100 years	50 years
	Above 8 up to 18 years	110 years	55 years
Priority for Applications in India	<p>The adoption application and complete set of the required documents are submitted to CARA online in CARINGS. PAPs will be on the waiting list from the date of approval of their adoption application by CARA. The seniority of applications will be considered from the date of their online registration in CARINGS.</p> <p>Adoption applications by NRIs (Non-Resident Indians) and OCIs (Overseas Citizen of India) are treated on par with Resident Indians in terms of priority regarding referral of children for adoption.</p>		
Matching Process and Timeframes	<p>The adoption application documents remain valid for three years from the date of their registration with CARA. If the PAPs have not been matched with a child within three years, their application documents are required to be updated. They retain seniority on the waiting list from the date their application was first registered in CARINGS.</p> <p>NRI and OCI applicants will be referred a maximum of three child referrals for consideration - with at least a one-month interval between each referral, subject to availability of children through the CARINGS Portal. If NRI or OCI applicants do not reserve a child from these three referrals, they will be stood down for a period of one year, after which time they will be eligible to make a fresh registration.</p> <p>Foreign applicants will be referred a maximum of two child referrals for consideration with at least one month interval in between referrals, subject to availability of children through the CARINGS Portal. Foreign applicants will be stood down for a period of one year if they do not reserve a child from these two referrals, after which time they will be eligible for fresh registration.</p> <p>If the applicants wish to proceed with the adoption of the child they reserved, they shall formally accept the child for adoption by completing the required acceptance documents. If the applicants do not accept the reserved child, the child's profile will be withdrawn in CARINGS, and the PAPs' seniority will be relegated to the bottom of the waiting list.</p>		

	The Indian Adoption Regulations 2022 provide timeframes for different stages of the adoption process in India. Adherence to these timeframes is dependent on agencies and processes in India – Oranga Tamariki and ICANZ are unable to accelerate the process timeframes in India.
Child's Background	Medical information and very limited social history are provided for each child in the Child Study and Medical Examination reports, which are uploaded into CARINGS and referred electronically.
Travel Requirements	The adoptive parents travel to India to bring the adopted child to New Zealand after the adoption order is issued by the District Magistrate and the intercountry adoption is confirmed by CARA under Article 23 of the Hague Convention.
Pre-adoption Foster Care	The PAPs are offered an option of taking custodial responsibility for the child in pre-adoption foster care in India after the proposed adoption is approved to proceed by CARA issuing a No Objection Certificate (NOC). The PAPs can have the child in their care anywhere in India while waiting for their intercountry adoption to be finalised. They are not permitted to take the child out of India until the intercountry adoption is finalised.
Approximate Costs	<p>From May 2024, CARA set up the adoption fee amount of INR 50,000 (Indian Rupees) to be paid by the PAPs (NRI, OCI and Foreign) to the Specialised Adoption Agency (SAA) in India if they adopt a child under the 'normal child' category.</p> <p>In the cases of adoption of a special needs child, the PAPs are required to pay the adoption fee of \$5,000 USD as provided in Schedule XV of the Adoption Regulations, 2022.</p> <p>All PAPs are required to commission an assessment by a registered clinical psychologist and obtain a psychological report. The cost of the psychological assessment and report is covered by the applicants.</p> <p>In addition, there are fees in New Zealand for the notary and apostille services required for the adoption documentation before being sent to India. Applicants also pay for their travel to and from India and all associated travel and accommodation costs.</p> <p>Details on ICANZ service fees can be obtained from ICANZ.</p>
Post Adoption Reports	A total of six post-adoption progress reports are provided to CARA - four reports (every three months) during the first year and two reports (every six months) during the second year from the date of the arrival of the adopted child in New Zealand. The Authorised Adoption Agency (Oranga Tamariki or ICANZ) is responsible for reporting on the progress of the adoption. Further reports may be requested and provided if required.
<i>This fact sheet provides a brief general overview of the Central Adoption Resource Authority's (CARA) requirements and process. Applicants should speak to an Adoption Service social worker and ICANZ for more information.</i>	