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Adoption Program with Poland

In 1998, Catholic Charities began to investigate the possibility of serving as a child placing agency for Poland. A formal agreement to do this was signed with Poland in January, 1999 and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago currently has formal agreements with all three entities within Poland that place children in the US. We also have a staff person in Poland who serves as our liaison and works with the entities in Poland to secure child referrals for our families, as well as working with the families once they travel and are in-country. The following is an overview of our Poland Program:

WHO MAY ADOPT?

The following eligibility guidelines are specified by child placing authorities in Poland and Convention requirements:

- Prospective adoptive parents can be no more than 40 years older than the child they are adopting
- Married couples must be married at least 3 years (exceptions determined by Poland on a case by case basis)
- Single women may adopt
- Prospective adoptive parents must demonstrate the means to support the physical and educational needs of the child.

- At least one parent must be a U.S. citizen.
- Must be in good health
- Must have explored their medical situation regarding infertility, if applicable, and are not involved in infertility treatment.
- Must have a willingness to recognize and support the importance of a child's heritage and family of origin.
- Must be financially stable, with the ability to make two trips to Poland and stay for a period of up to 8 weeks during second trip.

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION?

In Poland, children become available for international adoption following the death of their parents, or extreme economic hardship or other crises that may cause parents to abandon their children or prevent them from properly caring for them. Their parental rights have been legally terminated, and the children are cared for in relatively small group homes, foster homes or orphanages. The children qualified for international adoption are typically:

1. Children between the ages of 6-15 years.
2. Children 5 years or younger with an identified medical condition.
3. Sibling groups, (may include a child under 6 years of age).

REFERRAL AND TRAVEL

Once your dossier has been completed and you have been pre-approved, your documents are sent to Poland for certified translation. The average wait for referral is 9 to 14 months. When a possible match has been made, a referral packet will be forwarded for you to review. The referral will include information on the medical, developmental and social history of the child or children. Following your acceptance of the referral, you will file for provisional approval of the children's visas, and then will be granted approval from the Central Authority, before you make your first trip to Poland to meet the child or children, and begin the legal processing of your adoption. This trip requires a stay of five business days.

The second trip is on average six weeks to eight weeks and for this trip both parents are required to travel to Poland prior to, and remain for both assigned court dates. It is possible for one of the parents to return to the U.S. after the second court date if necessary. During this time, you will await the final adoption decree and amended birth certificate, obtain your child's Polish Passport and other required documents before having a Visa Interview Appointment at the U.S. Embassy, which issues visas for all adopted children. *(More specific information on Visa requirements will be provided to you during your adoptive home study and preparation process.)*

Hague Accredited



Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago is recognized as a 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit Agency, is fully accredited and is Licensed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services—License #003971.

Catholic Charities is recognized by the Department of State, and accredited by the Council on Accreditation, to provide adoption services for Hague Adoption cases.

