

There is Adoption Financial Assistance available for Adoption of a Permanent Ward, including start up assistance, ongoing assistance and assistance for special needs, if that service is not available through a public or private plan. There is an annual application process for ongoing assistance and eligibility is based on Line 150 of the Notice of Assessment from Revenue Canada. The maximum amount of assistance is \$13.04 per day for children younger than eleven and \$15.88 for children eleven and older.

The agency adoption worker is available for support, education and information to the adoptive family on an ongoing basis.

The Repatriation Program will provide support services to adult adoptees and their birth family members, including parents and siblings, who have connections to Opaskwayak Cree Nation, including the coordination of reunions with the Northern Authority. For children who are or have been in care away from the community, there is provision for ongoing contact with the agency and/or identified individuals within Opaskwayak Cree Nation.

MISSION STATEMENT

Opaskwayak Cree Nation Child & Family Services will deliver comprehensive child and family services to the members of Opaskwayak Cree Nation.

By promoting protection and preventative services to children and their families, members of Opaskwayak Cree Nation can be assured that the workers of Opaskwayak Cree Nation Child & Family Services are delivering community-based child and family services.

VISION STATEMENT

To ensure that quality child and family services are provided by the workers of Opaskwayak Cree Nation Child & Family Services to Opaskwayak Cree Nation children and their families.

For further information, please contact:

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Adoption Worker

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Alternative Care Department
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Adoption Program

The **ADOPTION ACT OF MANITOBA** was proclaimed on June 28, 1997 and mandates seven types of Adoption:

DIVISION 1

Adoption of a Permanent Ward

DIVISION 2

Private Adoptions

DIVISION 3

Inter-Country Adoptions

DIVISION 4

**DeFacto Adoptions
(child must have lived with adoptive
parents for over two years)**

DIVISION 5

Extended Family Adoptions

DIVISION 6

**Adoption by Spouse or Common-law
Partner of Child's Parent**

DIVISION 7

Adoption of An Adult

Child and Family Services Agencies are primarily involved in Division 1 Adoptions, providing permanency for children in care who are unable to return to the care of their family of origin. The child must be legally free for adoption.

Adoption is a legal and social process by which a child joins a family. Before the adoption homestudy is started, the Social Worker, Supervisor, and the Agency Executive Director sign off on the adoption plan, which will initiate the adoption homestudy process. After completion of an approved homestudy, which includes reference checks, records checks and medicals, the home is registered with the Central Adoption Registry. If their home cannot be approved, adoptive applicants will be advised of the reasons and given opportunity to be reconsidered at a future time. Children to be adopted are also registered with the Central Adoption Registry and the placement is approved by the Provincial Director.

Once the adoption placement agreement is signed, the child's status changes and for all intents and purposes, the adoptive parents are able to make all decisions regarding their adoptive child. After a probationary period of approximately six months, the

adoption documents are forwarded to Queens Bench Court in Winnipeg for finalization. This is a paperwork process; no one has to appear in court, although sometimes it may be preferable to have a court appearance with an older child. After an Order of Adoption is granted, a new birth registration is completed with Vital Statistics, showing the adoptive parents as the legal parents of the child.

The trend in adoptions has moved towards openness, and birth families are often involved in the selection of an adoptive family for their child, and there is provision for ongoing contact between the birth and adoptive families, both formal and informal. After the proposed legislative changes are proclaimed (anticipated to happen in June, 2015), there will no longer be "closed" adoptions.

Lawyers may be involved in all other adoptions, however, Opaskwayak Cree Nation Child and Family Services can provide information and guidance for families about those types of adoptions. Upon notification, the agency will be required to complete a home assessment for the Court on all adoptions under Divisions 2, 3, 4 and 5.