Frequently Asked Questions
about *Adoption*

Adoption is a process that creates a permanent legal relationship between a child and their adoptive parents. In North Carolina, adoption can take many forms, including agency adoption, foster care adoption, relative adoption, and independent adoption. Wherever you are on your adoption journey, this FAQ provides information to help you understand the process, legal steps, and available support.

What types of adoption are available in North Carolina?

Common types of adoption include public or private agency adoptions, foster care adoption, relative or kinship adoption, independent or private adoption, stepparent adoption, and more.

What is the legal process for adoption in North Carolina?

The adoption process typically includes filing a petition for adoption contemporaneously with a termination of parental rights proceeding (by consent or by court order), a home study, and confirmation of the adoption being in the child's best interests. Thereafter, a court order will result that can be utilized to adjust the child's birth certificate.

Is a TPR necessary for adoption?

Yes, terminating the parental rights of a biological parent is a necessary step before a child can be legally adopted by another person that will step in as a parent.

Can birth parents revoke consent after adoption?

No, once the adoption is finalized, it is permanent and irrevocable.

What rights do adoptive parents have?

Adoptive parents have the same legal rights and responsibilities as biological parents, including custody, decision-making, and inheritance rights.

Do I need an attorney to adopt a child in North Carolina?

While not legally required in all cases, having an attorney is strongly recommended, especially for private or independent adoptions, contested cases involving a termination of parental rights, and to ensure all legal documents and procedures are properly handled. An experienced family law attorney can help you navigate the process, protect your rights, and avoid delays and complications.

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