Nightlight® Christian Adoptions

International Adoption Program Description

Nicaragua

GENERAL INFORMATION

Nicaragua is the largest country in Central America, it borders with Honduras to the north and Costa Rica to the south. The Pacific Ocean lies to the west of the country, the Caribbean Sea to the east. Nicaragua sits north of the Equator. The Capital is Managua; the main language is Spanish although native tribes on the eastern coast speak their native languages.

Adoptions in Nicaragua are completed through a collaborative effort that includes a Nicaraguan attorney working directly with the Nicaraguan Ministry of Family (Mi Familia), the government agency that authorizes all domestic and international adoptions. Mi Familia ensures that the child has been abandoned and no biological family members are willing and able to care for the child.

The following websites are a useful place to start for reading more about Nicaragua adoption and the country:

- https://travel.state.gov/content/adoptionsabroad/en/country-information/learn-about-a-country/Nicaragua.html U.S. State Department page about Nicaragua adoption
- http://www.Nicaragua.com/: Nicaragua Tourism

CHILDREN AVAILABLE

- Nicaraguan children available for adoption range from 3 years of age to pre-teens.
- Both boys and girls are available for adoption, with no preference given to either sex.
- Children are either Caucasian or of Hispanic ancestry.

ELIGIBILITY TO ADOPT

- Nicaraguans only
- Married couples only may adopt from Nicaragua.
- Applicants must be between 25 and 55, but a single parent must be at least 15 years older than the child they wish to adopt.

PROCESS

1. Make application to Nightlight Christian Adoptions.
2. Begin your **adoption home study** and submit **form I-600A** to USCIS.
3. Submit a letter of intent and Dossier to Nicaragua.
4. Mi Familia will confirm that the adoptive family has been approved by the USCIS to adopt a child and that they have a completed home study. Once your completed dossier has been evaluated, the case is presented to the Mi Familia's adoption advisory council for a final decision on the adoption.
5. For children under 5 years old, the adoptive parents will be notified of a referral approximately 12 months to 36 months after the dossier is submitted. The younger the child you wish to adopt, the longer the wait for a referral. Families interested in adopting children over the age of 5 years old, can expect a referral within 6 months of registering their dossier in Nicaragua. If the adoptive parents accept their referral, they will prepare for their trip to Nicaragua. The trip will take approximately 12 to 20 weeks. (The Nicaraguan Central Authority requires families only be in Nicaragua for 12 weeks. However, the process can be delayed.)
6. Complete official referral review with Nightlight's Social Services Department
7. Mi Familia will authorize the court proceedings. The judicial process can take an additional 4 weeks.

8. Once the final decree of adoption is issued by the court, the adoptive parents are able to obtain a birth certificate from the Central Registry of Managua. As soon as the birth certificate has been issued, a passport can be obtained from Nicaraguan Immigration, then the family can request a visa appointment at the US Embassy, receive child medical, and visa.
9. Finally, you may travel back to the United States with your child.

TRAVEL & ADOPTION

After receiving a referral from Mi Familia, the adoptive family must travel to Nicaragua and remain there approximately 3-5 months (12-20 weeks). The first 4 weeks is an adaptation period where the adoptive parents will visit the child in the orphanage. After the 4 weeks adaptation period is complete the child will live in Nicaragua with the family until the process is completed in Nicaragua. After the adaptation period, Mi Familia with authorize the court proceedings which can take an additional 4-8 weeks. Once the final decree of adoption is issued, the family then begins the final process through the US Embassy to obtain a visa for their child to return to the US.

The in-country stay gives you time to visit and bond with your child. It is amazing to see how children change while receiving one on one attention from their parents. The bonding process is very important, and being in the country allows your child to transition from being in an orphanage to being with you, his new family.

POST ADOPTION

Within 30 days of your arrival home, you must have a home visit by your home study provider. Your first written report will be required 6 months after the child comes home. Additionally, your home study provider will prepare post-placement reports and submit them to Nightlight every year until your child turns 21 years old. These reports include your child's developmental progress and pictures. This is a very serious commitment; Nightlight is committed to showing Mi Familia and birth families that children adopted by US citizens are healthy and well cared for. Compliance with post adoption reports is also required by Nicaragua. Therefore, Nightlight charges a fee to monitor and process these post placement reports and also requires families to pay for the cost of the post placement report in advance.

COSTS

The program fee for a Nicaragua adoption is $17,000. Your additional costs will include home study, USCIS approval, notary & apostille fees, airfare, hotel, in country guide, and embassy fees as shown on the fee schedule. Your out-of-pocket expenses may further be reduced if you receive scholarships, grants or employer-provided adoption benefits. For additional fee information please see Exhibit A.

Please contact Lisa Whitaker, at LisaW@nightlight.org or call our KY office (859-263-9964) with any questions.

Getting Started CHECKLIST

1. **Fill out Application Documents**
   - Fill out the Online Application
   - Read and Sign the Agreement for International Adoption Services
   - Read and Sign the Social Media Policy
   - Read and Sign the Complaint Procedure
   - Read and Sign the "No Healthy Child Letter"
   - Read and Sign the Consent to Release Confidential Information
   - Read and sign the Privacy Practices
   - Upload your family photo
   - Pay the application fee

**Please Note: Keep the Complaint form for your records; you may want to make a copy of the Policy & Procedure to also keep for your records.*

2. **Complete your Orientation**
   Once we review and accept your Application materials, we will send you an acceptance letter via e-mail. Shortly after that you will receive an invoice for the orientation phase and then begin your orientation with your adoption advisor.

3. **Obtain a Home Study**
   - **If you live in Nightlight's licensed area,** we will perform your home study. Once your application is approved, your adoption advisor will notify you how to get started on your home study with one of our Nightlight offices.
   - **If you are out of Nightlight's licensed area,** we will help you find a local agency.

Please read our FAQs before submitting your application. If you have any questions please call our office: at 502- 423-5780 or send us an e-mail at info@nightlight.org.

ATTACHMENT A
NIGHTLIGHT® CHRISTIAN ADOPTIONS
INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS – FEES AND ESTIMATED COSTS

Nicaragua

PROGRAM FEE	COSTS	TOTALS	NOTES
Application Phase		$500	*Due with application*
Monitoring and Oversight fee charged by accrediting entity. Per child		$500	*Due upon signing the Agreement for International Services*
Orientation Phase		$3,000	*Due upon receiving a Letter of Acceptance from Nightlight*
Nightlight Program Fee	*$3,000*		
Dossier Phase		$5,600	
Nightlight Program Fee	*$3,100*		
Foreign Fee #1	*$2,500*		
Referral Phase		$3,500	
Nightlight Program Fee	*$2,500*		
Foreign Fee #2	*$1,000*		*Fee for adoption 2nd child is $1,500, 3rd child $1,000*
Travel Phase		$3,900	
Nightlight program fee	*$2,400*		*Paid before travel to Nicaragua*
Foreign Fee #3	*$1,500*		*Paid before travel to Nicaragua*
Total Program Fee		**$17,000**	

OTHER COSTS (ESTIMATED)	COSTS	TOTALS	NOTES
U.S.-Based Fees		$9,650 - $15,340	
Home Study	*$1,500 - $2,500*		*Costs vary by state/agency*
Post Adoption Reports	*$2,400 - $3,200*		*Costs vary by state/agency. Nicaragua requires social worker reports every year until the child turns 21. We usually will charge for a portion up front and then charge you later for the rest. This can vary depending on the age of the child you are adopting.*
Shipping and/or translating of post adoption reports	*$2,380 - $2,500*		*(per child adopted) Costs may vary based on number of children you are adopting, due at referral phase.*
Home study supporting documents	*$225*		*Cost for criminal clearances, obtaining physicals, and other misc. expenses*
Parent Education/Training	*$100 - $300*		*Estimated cost of online education courses*
Home Study Review Fee	*$300*		*Review of home study prepared by an agency other than Nightlight*
Home Study/USCIS updates shipping and translation fees	*$250 - $500*		*Paid to Nightlight when applicable*
USCIS Fees	*$945*		*Includes I-600A application & biometrics for 2 adults*
Dossier and adoption document translation expenses	*$1,100 - $1,500*		*The dossier expense is variable depending on the number of pages that need to be translated and authenticated.*
Dossier Authentication & Shipping	*$250 - $500*		*Varies by state*
Psychological Evaluation/ 2 parents	*$500 - $1,500*		*Varies by Provider*
Medical Review of Referral	*$0 - $200*		*Some physicians do not charge for this service. Other international clinics will charge a fee for this.*
Certificate of Citizenship Certificate (COC)	*$0 - $1,170*		*Applies to families in guardianship countries, families living abroad, families coming home on an IR4 Visa. Not applicable in some countries.*
Other In-Country Adoption Costs		$6,925 – $13,725	*Estimates are for 2 people and 1 trip*
Airfare (2 adults)	*$1,500 - $4,000*		
Airfare for child (one way)	*$400 - $600*		*Depends on the child's age.*
In Country Travel and Accommodations	*$3,000 - $6,500*		*Based on 3 to 5 month stay for 2 adults*
Medical exam, immunization costs, TB screening, birth certificate, passport, etc.	*$200 - $300*		
In region facilitator/translator expenses	*$1,500 - $2,000*		
Child's visa	*$325*		
Total Other Costs (Est.)		**$16,575 – $29,065**	

TOTAL FEES & ESTIMATED EXPENSES		
GRAND TOTAL		**$33,575 – $46,065**

The cost of operating an international adoption program is substantial and increasing with the additional compliance requirements under The Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption. The nature of international adoption makes it impossible to predict the exact costs you will incur, but we believe the estimates above are realistic. Although we strive to maintain a predictable fee schedule, unexpected increase in our costs may necessitate an increase in fees. Therefore, fees may be increased upon 90-day notice. Program fees are paid in phases and are non-refundable. Nightlight establishes a budget for costs each year based on the number of adoptions it estimates completing, as well as revenue from grants and donations. Based on these estimates, we establish program fees to cover the costs of attorneys, facilitators, social workers, insurance, and other costs we incur. Of course it would be prohibitive to allocate all of the costs (payroll, rent, insurance, supplies, travel, etc) to one adoption in one program.

A late fee of 12% annual (1% monthly) will be assessed for fees more than 30 days past due.

Please initial on both this page and the following page that you have received a copy of this List of Fees and Estimated Costs.

Date:_____ Adopting Parents: _____ _____

Attachment B
Nightlight Christian Adoptions
INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS – FEES AND ESTIMATED COSTS

Nicaragua

SERVICES CATEGORIZED PER HAGUE REQUIREMENTS	Nicaragua
Home Study (including estimated out of pocket costs)	$1,725 - $3,025
Adoption expenses in the US (includes personnel costs, administrative overhead, operational costs, training and education, communications and publications costs and other costs associated with providing adoption services in the US)	$12,000
Foreign country program expenses (includes personnel costs, administrative overhead, operational costs, training and education, communications and publications costs and other costs associated with providing adoption services in the child's convention country)	$5,000
Care of the child (the expected total fees and estimated expenses charged to PAP's for the care of the child in the country of origin prior to adoption, including, but not limited to costs for food, clothing, shelter, medical care, foster care, orphanage care and other services provided DIRECTLY to the child.	$0
Translation and Document Expenses: the expected total fees and estimated expenses for obtaining any necessary documents, translation of documents related to the adoption and information on whether the PAP's will pay costs directly or to a 3rd party either in the US or Convention country or through the agency. Category includes but is not limited to, costs for obtaining, translating, copying records or documents required to complete the adoption, costs for Convention court documents, passport, adoption certificate and other documents related to the adoption, costs for notarization and certifications.	$1,350 - $2,000
Contributions: any fixed contribution amount or percentage that the PAP expected or required to make to child protection or child welfare service programs in the Child's convention country or in the US along with an explanation of the intended use of the contribution and the manner in which the transaction will be recorded and accounted for.	$0
Post placement (PP) and post adoption (PA) reports: the expected total fees and estimated expenses for any PP or PA reports that the agency or parents must prepare to comply with requirements of the expected country of origin (and NCA requirements)	$4,780 - $5,700
Travel/Accommodation Expenses: Estimated 2 Adults, 1 child: includes hotel, food, fuel, and airfare estimates.	$4,900 - $11,100
Third Party Expenses: includes USCIS fees, courier services, in country guide, and child medical or visa costs if paid directly by the family rather than through Nightlight.	$3,820 - $7,240

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Date:_____ Adopting Parents: _____ _____