

Nightlight[®] Christian Adoptions International Adoption Program Description Malawi



GENERAL INFORMATION

Nightlight's Malawi program began in 2018. Malawi, a landlocked country in southeastern Africa, is defined by its topography of highlands split by the Great Rift Valley and enormous Lake Malawi. The lake's southern end falls within Lake Malawi National Park – sheltering diverse wildlife from colorful fish to baboons – and its clear waters are popular for diving and boating. Malawi is often referred to as the “Warm Heart” of Africa. The fees for an adoption from Malawi are reasonable, and we estimate that the process will take approximately 2 to 3 years from application to completion depending upon the type of child you are seeking to adopt.

We are seeing more Malawi children abandoned. Many are sent to an orphanage by extended family after a mother's death, inability to feed or clothe, and for issues regarding poverty related to social problems and the parents' illnesses. Families traveling to Malawi to adopt their children will receive a full and final adoption decree from the Malawi courts. Nightlight is committed to helping families prepare for the adoption of children from Malawi by providing educational information on possible developmental delays and health issues.

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

- <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/Intercountry-Adoption/Intercountry-Adoption-Country-Information/Malawi.html>
<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/malawi/>

CHILDREN AVAILABLE

Malawi adoption is a wonderful program for families desiring to adopt children 3 years and older. Children living in poverty and raised in institutional care often have both developmental and emotional needs. There are also children available for adoption that have minor and correctable to moderate and significant special needs. Children who would otherwise have little hope for a future can have a better life with the emotional and physical security that a loving family can offer, along with the availability of excellent medical care in the United States.

ELIGIBILITY TO ADOPT

Most loving, stable families qualify to adopt from Malawi. However, certain factors could keep you from adopting in general or from Malawi in particular, as each country has its own rules as to who can adopt. Malawi requires adoptive families to have a connection to the country of Malawi. This connection must be a continued connection and it is preferred that you have traveled to Malawi in the past. Before applying, please consult with Nightlight regarding any sensitive issues that may apply to you, such as a divorce, a mental health issue, or a criminal history.

PROCESS

1. Make application to Nightlight Christian Adoptions.
2. Begin your **adoption home study** and submit **form I-600A** to USCIS.
3. Begin to assemble your **dossier**. We will give you detailed instructions.
4. Once USCIS has approved your adoption home study, you will receive your **I-600A Approval Notice**.
5. Once your USCIS approval has been received, your dossier is complete. A letter of intent to adopt and your home study is sent to Malawi and the National Social Welfare will match you with a child. You will receive a referral of a child in Malawi.
6. Complete official referral review with Nightlight's Social Services Department
7. Once you have accepted a match of a child, you can often begin video calls with the child to assist with the transition. You will await a court date. The time frame to be assigned a court date varies greatly. Some families have waited as much as 12 months for a court date and some have waited a shorter time.
8. Once you receive a court date you will travel to Malawi 4 weeks before court and meet your child face-to-face. You are required to have the child in your physical custody for three full weeks before court for bonding.
9. The court ruling will be issued anywhere from a few days to one week after your hearing.

10. You will then obtain a new birth certificate for the child, apply for your child's passport and file the I-600 with the US Embassy.
11. You will take your child to a US Embassy approved doctor for a final health visit.
12. The Embassy will conduct a thorough investigation before choosing to issue your child a Visa.
13. You will return to the US Embassy for your final appointment, pick up your child's visa, and bring your child home! This trip is expected to take approximately 8-12 weeks; however, the US Embassy could take much longer to complete the investigation.

TRAVEL & ADOPTION

Your letter of intent to adopt will be sent to the representative in Malawi and to the National Social Welfare office in charge of International Adoptions. You will receive a referral of a child and documents will be obtained from the orphanage where the child resides. These documents will be sent to you for review. The referral will include a brief social history of the child, the current health and development of the child, and lab test results for HIV. We highly recommend that you have this information reviewed by a doctor who specializes in international adoption before you make a decision. You will have a referral review with the social services manager. Once you decide to accept a referral, and have returned the commitment form and letter of acceptance, you will be considered "matched" with the child. The attorney will prepare the petition and put together information on the child's file and add this information to your dossier to file with the court. Once you receive a court date, you will travel to Malawi. After the court order is issued, you will file your I-600 with the US Embassy and take your child for their visa medical appointment. Once these things are approved, the US Embassy will invite you to a final visa appointment. You will then travel home with your child. The adoption trip should be approximately 8 weeks long. The US Embassy will investigate all I-600 applications and the investigation can take up to 6 months.

POSTADOPTION

Within 30 days of your arrival home, you must have a home visit by your home study provider. Your home study provider will prepare three post-adoption reports and submit them to Nightlight; one report will be completed after the home study provider visits your home within 6 months of your child's arrival home and the others at 1 and 2 years after you arrive home with your child. In addition, you will be required to complete a self-report to be provided to the court every 12 months until your child turns 18 years old. These reports include your child's developmental progress and pictures. This is a very serious commitment; Nightlight is committed to showing the Malawi government and birth families that children adopted by US citizens are healthy and well cared for. Therefore, Nightlight charges a fee to monitor and process these post adoption reports and also requires families to pay for the cost of the post adoption reports in advance.

COSTS

The program fee for a Malawi adoption is \$21,300. Your additional costs will include home study, USCIS approval, notary & apostille fees, airfare, hotel, orphanage donation, 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.





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christian adoptions

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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 accepted, 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

Malawi

PROGRAM FEE	COSTS	TOTALS	NOTES
Application Fee		\$600	<i>Due with application</i>
Nightlight Program Fee #1		\$2,500	<i>Due application acceptance</i>
Nightlight Program Fee #2		\$2,500	<i>Due upon completion of the Orientation Call</i>
Nightlight Program Fee #3		\$5,000	<i>Due prior of submission of the dossier to the country</i>
<i>Agency Fee</i>	\$2,000		
<i>Foreign Fee #1</i>	\$3,000		<i>\$3,000 Attorney Fee</i>
Nightlight Program Fee #4		\$6,200	<i>Due upon acceptance of referral</i>
<i>Nightlight Program Fee</i>	\$1,500		
<i>Foreign Fee #2</i>	\$4,700		<i>\$4,700 Attorney Fee Sibling additional fees: \$4,400</i>
Nightlight Program Fee #5		\$4,500	<i>Due before traveling for court</i>
<i>Foreign Fee #3</i>	\$4,500		<i>\$4,500 Attorney Fee</i>
Total Program Fee		\$21,300	
OTHER COSTS (ESTIMATED)	COSTS	TOTALS	NOTES
U.S.-Based Fees		\$5,020 - \$10,465	
<i>Monitoring and Oversight fee charged by accrediting entity. Per child</i>	\$850		<i>Due upon signing the Agreement for International Services. \$850 for each additional child</i>
<i>Home Study</i>	\$1,500 - \$2,500		<i>Costs vary by state/agency</i>
<i>Post Adoption Reports</i>	\$900 - \$1,200		<i>Costs vary by state/agency</i>
<i>Shipping and/or translating of post adoption reports</i>	\$0		<i>Costs may vary based on the number of children you are adopting, due at referral phase.</i>
<i>Home study supporting documents</i>	\$225		<i>Cost for criminal clearances, obtaining physicals, and other misc. expenses</i>
<i>Parent Education/Training</i>	\$100 - \$300		<i>Estimated cost of online education courses</i>
<i>Home Study Review Fee</i>	\$300		<i>Review of home study prepared by an agency other than Nightlight</i>
<i>Home Study/USCIS update shipping and translation fee</i>	\$0		<i>Paid to Nightlight when applicable.</i>
<i>Psychological Evaluation</i>	\$0 - \$1,000		<i>Some countries will require this and some will not. In addition your home study agency or Nightlight may require in certain circumstances.</i>
<i>USCIS Fees</i>	\$920		<i>Includes I-600A application & biometrics for all family members</i>
<i>Dossier Apostille</i>	\$25 - \$500		<i>Dossier will be apostilled through the secretary of state. Costs vary by state.</i>
<i>Shipping/Translation of Dossier</i>	\$200		<i>Paid to Nightlight when applicable.</i>
<i>Medical review of referral</i>	\$0 - \$500		<i>Some physicians do not charge for this service. Other international clinics will charge a fee for this.</i>
<i>Certificate of Citizenship Certificate (COC)</i>	\$0 - \$1,170		<i>Applies to families in guardianship countries, families living abroad, families coming home on an IR-4 Visa. Not applicable in some countries.</i>
<i>Dossier prep/state certification for families</i>	\$0-\$800		<i>NCA offers dossier prep where our staff will gather the dossier documents and send off to the secretary of state for you. \$800 for entire dossier or \$50 per document. These fees do not include shipping or the apostille costs.</i>
Other In-Country Adoption Costs		\$13,450 – \$17,150	
<i>Airfare (2 adults)</i>	\$3,000 - \$4,000		<i>Estimated for 2 adults</i>
<i>Airfare for child (one way)</i>	\$1,000		<i>Depends on the child's age.</i>
<i>Visas (for 2 Adults)</i>	\$150		
<i>Orphanage Donation</i>	\$3,000		<i>Per Child</i>
<i>Lodging and Accommodations</i>	\$1,500 - \$2,500		<i>Estimated for 8 weeks</i>
<i>Food Expenses</i>	\$2,000		<i>Estimate for 8 weeks</i>
<i>Child's medical exam and visa</i>	\$400 - \$600		<i>Per Child</i>
<i>Child birth certificate and passport</i>	\$600		<i>Per Child</i>
<i>Transportation costs</i>	\$1,500 - \$3,000		<i>Estimated for 8 weeks.</i>
<i>Birth family death certificate</i>	\$100		<i>Per death certificate (if applicable)</i>
<i>DNA testing</i>	\$200		
Total Other Costs (Est.)		\$18,470 - \$27,615	
TOTAL FEES & ESTIMATED EXPENSES			
GRAND TOTAL		\$39,770 - \$48,915	

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

Malawi

SERVICES CATEGORIZED PER HAGUE REQUIREMENTS	Malawi
Home Study (including estimated out of pocket costs)	\$1,725 - \$2,725
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)	\$9,100
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)	\$12,200
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.	\$3,000
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.	\$225 - \$700
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)	\$900 - \$1,200
Travel/Accommodation Expenses: Estimated 2 Adults, 1 child: includes hotel, food, fuel, and airfare estimates.	\$9,000 - \$12,500
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.	\$3,345 - \$7,115

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