

# International Adoption Program Description

## Samoa



### GENERAL INFORMATION

Samoa, located in the region of the South Pacific known as Polynesia, is an island nation in the South Pacific Ocean. Samoa is roughly midway between Fiji and New Zealand. The islands have narrow coastal plains with volcanic, rocky, rugged mountains in the interior. The two main islands of Samoa are Upolu and Savaii. The capital, Apia, and the international airport are on Upolu. The official languages are Samoan and English. Samoan is the native language of most of the population. English is widely understood and spoken in the capital of Apia as well as many tourist resorts; however, it is less commonly understood in the villages.

All adoptions in Samoa are completed through a collaborative effort with a Samoan attorney, Samoa's Attorney General and the Family Court of Samoa who handle international adoptions and orphan care in Samoa.

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

- <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/Intercountry-Adoption/Intercountry-Adoption-Country-Information/Samoa.html>  
U.S. State Department page about Samoa adoption
- <http://www.samoa.travel/> Samoa Tourism

### CHILDREN AVAILABLE

This is a relative only adoption program.

### ELIGIBILITY TO ADOPT

Married couples and singles may adopt from Samoa. Married couples must be between 23-55 years of age. Singles must be at least 24 years old at the time of the I-600A filing and 25 years old at the time of the I-600 filing. Applicants must be in good health, show financial stability and the ability to provide financially and emotionally for a child through adulthood.

### RELATIVE ADOPTIONS

The child must meet orphan status under USCIS immigration law. For some cases where orphan status is uncertain it may require the family to speak with an immigration attorney first to have your case vetted prior to applying to Nightlight. **The Prospective adoptive parents must prove they were already, before the adoption, any of the following:** parent, step-parent, brother, step-brother, sister, step-sister, grandparent, aunt, uncle, half-brother to the child's parent, half-sister to the child's parent, half-brother, half-sister, or the U.S. citizen spouse of the person with one of these qualifying relationships with the child. The relationship can exist by virtue of blood, marriage, or adoption. The Samoan Attorney General must certify the following.

- The child has no suitable family members in Samoa who are willing and able to care for the child
- There is no other suitable arrangement available in Samoa
- A relinquishment form confirming the relinquishment of the rights of the natural parents over the child is included in the court adoption application.

### PROCESS

1. Submit application to Nightlight Christian Adoptions
2. Complete 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 you to adopt from Samoa, you will receive your **I-171H approval notice**.
5. Once your USCIS approval has been received and your dossier is complete, you will complete an official referral review with Nightlight's Social Services Department
6. Upon referral acceptance, you will complete the Court legal process and Attorney General approval process, which generally takes 9 – 12 months to complete.
7. Upon Court approval of your adoption, the attorney in Samoa will obtain your child's post-adoption birth certificate, Samoan passport and your child's New Zealand travel visa.
8. Upon completion of your legal adoption process in Samoa, NCA will assist with filing your form I600.

9. Upon provisional approval of U.S. form I600, your file is sent to the U.S. Embassy in Auckland, New Zealand for visa processing.
10. Once your child's visa is approved by the U.S. embassy, you will travel to Apia Samoa to meet your child, then onto Auckland New Zealand for visa medicals and final visa processing.
11. Once your child's visa is received you travel home with your child!

#### **TRAVEL & ADOPTION**

Only one trip is required to Samoa to complete the Embassy appointment and obtain the visa for your child. The case will be finalized in the court prior to you traveling based on a POA given to the attorney working on your case. When you are invited to travel, you will know the date of your embassy visa appointment (U.S. families). U.S families travel to Samoa to be united with their child(ren), and then travel to Auckland, New Zealand to attend the child's visa medical appointment, the embassy appointment, and receive the child's Orphan Visa.

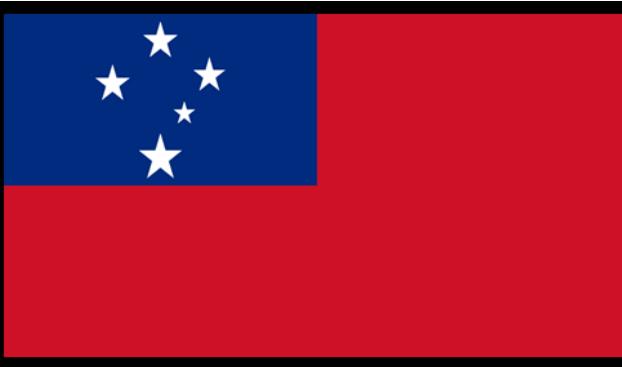
#### **POST ADOPTION**

Within 30 days of your arrival home, you must have a home visit by your home study provider. Your home study provider will prepare a full post-adoption reports and submit them to Nightlight Christian Adoptions at 6 months, 12 months, and 24 months from the date of placement and pictures of the child with family, every three months for the first year e-mailed to the parents' program director. Reports include your child's developmental progress and pictures. This is a very serious commitment; Nightlight Christian Adoptions is committed to showing the Samoan Government and birth families that children adopted by US citizens are healthy and well cared for. Compliance with post adoption reports is also required by the U.S. Department of State. 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 agency program fees as well as other fees both in the US and in country for a Samoa adoption are listed below. 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 Viktoriia Serediuk-Buz at [viktoriia@nightlight.org](mailto:viktoriia@nightlight.org) or call 520-423-5780 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](mailto:info@nightlight.org).

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

**Samoa**

PROGRAM FEE	COSTS	TOTALS	NOTES
<b>Application Fee</b>		\$600	<i>Due with application</i>
<b>Nightlight Program Fee #1</b>		\$2,500	<i>Due upon application acceptance</i>
<b>Nightlight Program Fee #2</b>		\$3,500	<i>Due upon completion of Orientation Call</i>
<b>Nightlight Program Fee #3</b>		\$5,500	<i>Due prior to submission of dossier to the country</i>
<i>Agency Fee</i>	\$3,500		
<i>Attorney Fee</i>	\$2,000		
<b>Nightlight Program Fee #4</b>		\$6,200-\$8,200	<i>Due upon receipt of referral</i>
<i>Agency Fee</i>	\$4,000		
<i>Attorney Fee</i>	\$2,000-\$4,000		
<b>Total Program Fee</b>		<b>\$12,300</b>	
OTHER COSTS (ESTIMATED)	COSTS	TOTALS	NOTES
<b>U.S.-Based Fees</b>		<b>\$6,390 - \$12,230</b>	
<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 upon receipt of referral.</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 fees</i>	\$300 - \$1,645		<i>Paid to Nightlight when applicable</i>
<i>USCIS Filing Fees</i>	\$920		<i>Includes I-600A application &amp; biometrics for all family members.</i>
<i>Shipping/ Translation of Dossier</i>	\$95 - \$220		<i>Paid prior to submission of dossier to the country</i>
<i>Medical Review of Referral</i>	\$0 - \$200		<i>Some physicians do not charge for this service. Other international clinics will charge a fee for this.</i>
<i>Certificate of Citizenship (COC)</i>	\$0 - \$1170		<i>Applies to families in guardianship countries, families living abroad, families coming home on an IR4 visa. Not applicable in some countries.</i>
<i>Social History Report of Matched Child</i>	\$400		<i>Cost is per child, due at referral</i>
<i>Attorney Fee Re-adoption Fee</i>	\$800 - \$1,500		<i>Dependent on your state of residence. Due after child comes home.</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>
<b>Other In-Country Adoption Costs</b>		<b>\$7,588 - \$16,094</b>	
<i>Airfare (2 adults)</i>	\$2,500 - \$4,500		<i>Airfare varies depending on time of year travel occurs.</i>
<i>Airfare for child (one way)</i>	\$1,500 - \$2,000		
<i>Visas (for 2 Adults)</i>	\$88 - \$94		<i>Applies to the NZ eta only, as U.S. Citizens do not need a Visa to travel into Samoa.</i>
<i>In Country Travel, Accommodations, Meals</i>	\$2,000 - \$8,000		<i>Estimated for 2 adults. 1 trip. Approximately 10-14 days, traveling to Apia, Samoa &amp; Auckland, New Zealand.</i>
<i>Child documents in country</i>	\$500		<i>Due prior to and while travelling in country</i>
<i>Child's Visa &amp; Medical</i>	\$1,000		
<b>Total Other Costs (Est.)</b>		<b>\$13,978 - \$28,324</b>	
<b>TOTAL FEES &amp; ESTIMATED EXPENSES</b>			
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>\$26,278 - \$40,624</b>	

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

**Samoa**

<b>SERVICES CATEGORIZED PER HAGUE REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>Samoa</b>
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)	\$14,100
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)	\$4,000-\$6,000
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.	\$395 - \$1,765
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.	\$6,000 - \$14,500
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.	\$4,753 - \$7,154

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