

# Nightlight® Christian Adoptions

## International Adoption Program Description

### China – Relative Adoption



#### GENERAL INFORMATION

The People's Republic of China is the world's most populated country estimating 1.37 billion people. It is a nation located in East Asia with a massive landscape consisting of grassland, desert, mountains, lakes, rivers and nearly 8700 miles of coastline. Beijing, it's capital, blends historical sites such as the Forbidden City palace and Tiananmen Square with modern architecture. Shanghai is a global financial center with a skyscraper-studded skyline. The iconic Great Wall of China runs east to west across the northern part of the country.

China is party to The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Hague Adoption Convention), therefore, all intercountry adoptions between China and the United States must meet the requirements of the Convention and U.S. law implementing the Convention. Chinese adoptions are conducted through a collaborative effort of a Hague accredited adoption agency in the US and by the China Center for Children's Welfare and Adoption (CCCWA), its Central Adoption Authority. Nightlight offers a relative adoption program from China. Information on international adoptions from China on the U.S. Department of State website can be found at this site: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/Intercountry-Adoption/Intercountry-Adoption-Country-Information/China.html>

Information on the country of China on the U.S. Department of State web site: <https://www.state.gov/countries-areas/china/>

#### CHILDREN AVAILABLE

- Stepchildren
- Children of "collateral relatives" within three generations in the PRC
- Children related by blood of the same generation within three degrees of kinship
- Ages 0-16 (USCIS I-800A must be filed before child's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday)
- Any child 8 years or older must consent to the adoption

#### ELIGIBILITY TO ADOPT

Relative adoption eligibility:

1. Relation to child being adopted
  - a. Stepparent
  - b. Collateral relative within three generations
  - c. At least one prospective adoptive parent must:
    - i. Be related to the child by blood (not marriage),
    - ii. Share a common grandparent with a biological parent of the child, and
    - iii. Adopt only children of siblings and first cousins
2. Stepparent adoptions -Children in the home requirements. The following may or may not be enforced:
  - a. Prospective adoptive parents cannot have any children together
  - b. Prospective adoptive parents may have one child each from a previous marriage

These are the general eligibility requirements of the CCCWA. Some of these requirements can be waived in cases of relative adoptions but will need to be discussed with CCCWA prior to moving forward.

1. Age – Both Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) must be a minimum of 30 years old. There can be no more than 50 years between the youngest PAP and child to be adopted.
2. Marital Status – only married heterosexual couples or single heterosexual women may adopt. Neither party should have more than 2 divorces. If there is no divorce history or only 1 divorce between the couple, the current marriage should be at least 2 years. If one party has two divorces, the current marriage should be at least 5 years. Widowhood does not count as a divorce.
3. Health Status – PAPs should be physically and mentally fit, with the ability to raise and educate the adopted child without any of the following:
  - a. Intellectual disability;
  - b. HIV positive or infectious disease that is actively contagious;
  - c. Schizophrenia;
  - d. Mental disorders including mania, depression, bipolar affective disorder, anxiety and phobia, etc.
    - i. PAPs with minor symptoms under good control with medicine may be exempt with a psychological evaluation from a psychological professional assessing that the disorder does not affect their normal work and life, and they are fit to care and educate the adoptee.
  - e. Binocular blindness, binocular low vision or monocular blindness with no ocular prosthesis;
  - f. Severe facial deformity;
  - g. Binaural hearing loss or language function loss
    - i. PAPs may adopt a child with an identical condition
    - ii. EXEMPT if one party of the couple is healthy
  - h. Non-function or dysfunction of limbs or trunk caused by impairment, incomplete limb, paralysis or deformation;
  - i. Diseases that require long-term treatment and have a poor prognosis which will affect PAPs child caring ability. This includes lupus, nephrosis, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, etc.
    - i. EXEMPT for couples where one party is completely healthy and the other suffers from any such disease but is under good control after treatment.
    - ii. Must provide a doctor's note to attest that the illness has no effects on normal work and life and fit to care for adoptee;
  - j. Cancer
    - i. Skin, thyroid, breast and testicular cancer that has been cured for at least 3 years
    - ii. Other cancer or malignant tumor cured at least 5 years;
  - k. Vital Organ Transplant within 10 years
    - i. EXEMPT for couples if one party is healthy and the other had a transplant less than 10 years ago but has recovered to live a normal life.
  - l. Body Mass Index less than 40 ( $BMI = \frac{\text{weight (kg)}}{\text{height}^2(\text{m}^2)}$ )
  - m. Short stature or dwarfism; PAPs may adopt a child with identical condition.
4. Family Financial Condition
  - a. At least one party of the couple should have stable occupation and income;
  - b. Annual Income
    - i. Couple Adoptions = \$10,000 per family member, including the child to be adopted;
    - ii. Single Parent adoptions = \$10,000 for the actual number of family members after the adoption PLUS one additional person
  - c. Net Worth (Assets minus Liabilities)
    - i. Couple adoptions = \$80,000
    - ii. Single = \$100,000
  - d. Welfare allowances such as relief fund, pension, disability benefits, adoption subsidy, foster care subsidy and disabled child subsidy, etc. are not to be included
  - e. Relaxation is granted to foreigners (ex-pats) living in China
5. Moral Character
  - a. PAPs should have no record of criminal penalties, good moral character, honorable behavior and abide by the laws and regulations, without any of the following:
    - i. History of Domestic violence, sex abuse, abandonment/abuse of children (even if they were not arrested or convicted);
    - ii. History of taking drugs, including opium, morphine, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, etc.
    - iii. History of alcohol abuse and stopped less than 10 years ago
  - b. Due consideration is given when PAPs have had no more than 3 criminal records with minor violations and no severe outcomes and the time for correction has been 10 years or more; or have had no more than 5 traffic law violations with no severe outcomes.
6. Children in the House
  - a. The adoption of orphans, disabled children, or abandoned infants and children whose parents cannot be found are not subject to the requirements that the adopter should be childless.

- b. The PAPs should have enough time and energy to care for the minors in the house, including the child to be adopted.
    - i. Couples should have no more than 5 minors in the household
    - ii. Singles should have no more than 2 in the home
  - c. The youngest child in the home should be at least 3 years old.
7. Adoption Frequency and Numbers
- a. Adopters should submit post placement reports as required after the adoption;
  - b. There should be 1 year between the second adoption application and the previous (from registration date of previous adoption to the current adoption application date)
  - c. PAPs should adopt 1 child from China at a time;
  - d. Couples may adopt twins or multiple births or those who have siblings.
8. Other
- a. PAPs should receive appropriate pre-adoption training to have correct cognition and understand the risks of inter-country adoption and be fully prepared for the adoption and to care for the child to be adopted;
  - b. PAPs should promise not to abandon or maltreat the child to be adopted;
  - c. PAPs should promise to submit post placement reports as required;
  - d. For PAPs residing in a country other than the USA, if they intend to adopt from China, should reside in a country which has a cooperative relationship with China in inter-country adoption, or in contracting states of the Hague Convention;
  - e. These rules do not apply to stepchild adoptions.
  - f. As for the adoption of a child belonging to a blood relative of the same generation and up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree of kinship, relaxation will be granted properly.
  - g. Time or age is calculated based on the adoption application dossier log-in date at CCCWA.
  - h. These rules are effective as of June 30, 2017.

To read the originally printed Chinese Adoption laws, [click here](#). Amendments have been made over the years by the CCCWA through the Ministry of Civil Affairs. Those amendments are reflected in the eligibility information listed above. Please note that these changes were passed to agencies through memorandum however the Chinese laws have not changed.

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Our China program began in Kentucky with A Helping Hand Adoption Agency in 1996. A Helping Hand later merged with Nightlight in 2014. Our agency works directly with the CCCWA (China Center for Children's Welfare and Adoption) as well as liaisons in Beijing and Guangzhou. Nightlight has a long history of successful placements through our China program. In 2024, China announced they would only be processing relative cases. These are the only cases we are able to consider.

## PROCESS

1. Submit an application to Nightlight Christian Adoptions.
2. Complete an adoption home study.
3. Prepare an I-800A form to be granted approval by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). In the most basic terms, this process grants a pre-approval for you to bring an orphaned child into the US as a citizen.
4. Gather documents which will go through a certification and authentication process to become your dossier. (We will help you through the certification and authentication process.) This step can be worked on concurrently with the adoption home study.
5. Collect documents and appropriate notary books to develop the child's adoption file to be submitted to the CCCWA. This will require medical documentation, a social report and notary filings from various relatives of the child. All documentation may require approvals at the county, city and provincial government levels in China.
6. The completed file shall be reviewed by a medical professional and, once you are committed, submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) packet to the CCCWA indicating your desire to adopt the specific relative child.
7. Within 1-2 weeks after the CCCWA receives and approves your Letter of Intent, you will be issued a Pre-Approval (PA).
8. If your dossier has already been submitted and logged in with the CCCWA, the review of your dossier will be expedited. If you do not have your dossier logged in at the time you are matched with a child, you will be given 6 months to submit your dossier to the CCCWA. Once it is complete, it will be sent along with your PA, logged in and reviewed.
9. A Letter of Approval (LOA) will be received from the CCCWA officially matching you with the child and allowing you to move forward with the completion of the adoption in country. The timing of the LOA is dependent on whether or not your dossier has already been reviewed. If your dossier has already been reviewed, you can expect to receive your LOA within 1-2 weeks after your LOI is submitted. If you log in your dossier after you are matched with a child, it can take approximately 2-4 months after log in to receive your LOA.
10. Complete official referral review with Nightlight's Social Services Department

11. Upon receipt and acceptance of the LOA, a travel meeting is held with the agency to explain the final adoption processes and travel procedures. A family can expect to travel in 2.5-4 months from the acceptance of the LOA. During this period, the agency will guide you through several steps that will help your family receive Travel Approval (TA).
12. Travel to China generally takes place 3-4 weeks after your family receives TA. Your family will enter China and travel to your child's province to finalize the adoption. The average stay in China is approximately 10-14 days. Some provinces require a longer period of time to process the child's passport once the adoption is finalized.
13. Travel to the U.S. Consulate in Guangzhou, China to receive your child's visa to enter the United States.
14. Bring your child to the USA from China!

## **ADOPTION & TRAVEL**

Typically, families travel approximately 2.5 to 4 months after receiving their LOA. More specifically, they will travel 3-4 weeks after receiving TA. This depends on how quickly the visa appointment at the US Consulate can be scheduled by our agency. Usually the trip lasts 10-14 days, however this can vary depending on the province from which your child comes. The typical travel schedule is to arrive in the capitol city of your child's province on Sunday. The adoption will be finalized at the beginning of the week at the Ministry of Civil Affairs Adoption Unit. You will remain in the capitol city of your child's province the remainder of the week while waiting for the child's Chinese passport to be issued. Typically, this is completed by Friday. Once you receive your child's passport you will travel to Guangzhou where the U.S. Embassy is located responsible for issuing immigrant visas for adoptees. On Saturday, your child will have a Medical Appointment with a U.S. Embassy doctor. Most children are given a Consulate Appointment on Monday or Tuesday (depending on their age). After the Consulate Appointment, you must remain in China for two more days to receive the child's immigrant visa. Once the child's Chinese passport with visa to enter the United States is picked up you are free to depart to return to the USA with your child!

We will arrange someone to assist you with adoption proceedings at the Provincial Civil Affairs, however, no guides, transportation or translators will be provided. If you desire this as part of your package, it can be negotiated. While in Guangzhou, you will have someone available to assist with all paperwork and the Embassy appointments.

## **POST ADOPTION**

Within 30 days of your arrival home, you must have a home visit by your home study provider. China requires 6 post-adoption reports: at 6 and 12 months after the adoption as well as 2-, 3-, 4-, and 5-years post adoption. The first three post adoption reports are completed by a social worker and the final three reports are self-reports. Once your self-reports are completed, you will be required to continue submitting yearly updates to China until your child reaches 18 years of age. Post adoption reports include your child's developmental progress as well as photos. This is a very serious commitment - Nightlight is committed to showing the CCCWA that children adopted by US citizens are thriving, healthy and well cared for. Compliance with post adoption reports is also required by the Hague Convention. 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 adoption report in advance.

## **COSTS**

The program fee for a China Relative adoption is \$14,440.00. 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 Dana Poynter at [Dana@nightlight.org](mailto:Dana@nightlight.org) or call 502-423-5780 ext. 244 with any questions.





nightlight®  
christian adoptions

...because every child deserves a loving family

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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 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).

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

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>		\$3,000	<i>Due upon completion of the Orientation Call</i>
<i>Agency Fee</i>	\$2,500		
<i>Foreign Fee</i>	\$500		<i>Fee paid to Foreign Supervised Provider</i>
<b>Nightlight Program Fee #3</b>		\$4,840	<i>Due prior to submission of dossier to foreign country.</i>
<i>Agency Fee</i>	\$3,100		
<i>Foreign Fee</i>	\$1,740		<i>Fee paid to CCCWA (\$1240) for dossier log-in, translation, and fee to Foreign Supervised Provider (\$500). \$300 for each additional sibling</i>
<b>Nightlight Program Fee #4</b>		\$3,700	<i>Due upon receipt of referral</i>
<i>Agency Fee</i>	\$3,000		<i>Due at LOA receipt from CCCWA. \$1000 for each additional sibling</i>
<i>Foreign Fee</i>	\$700		<i>FSP fee &amp; translation of referral. \$100 for each additional sibling</i>
<b>Total Program Fee</b>		<b>\$14,640</b>	<i>\$1400 for each additional sibling</i>
OTHER COSTS (ESTIMATED)	COSTS	TOTALS	NOTES
<b>U.S.-Based Fees</b>		<b>\$5,615–\$10,045</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>	\$660		<i>Costs may vary based on number of children adopted, due at referral phase</i>
<i>Home study supporting documents</i>	\$225		<i>Costs for criminal clearances, obtaining physicals, and other misc. expenses.</i>
<i>Parent education and training</i>	\$100-\$300		<i>Estimate cost of online education courses.</i>
<i>Psychological Evaluation</i>	\$0-\$500		<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>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 fees</i>	\$0		<i>Not applicable to China</i>
<i>USCIS Filing Fees</i>	\$920		<i>Includes I-800A application and biometrics for all family members</i>
<i>Dossier Authentication &amp; Courier Fees</i>	\$100-\$300		<i>The dossier must be certified through the secretary of state. Costs vary by state.</i>
<i>Shipping and translation of dossier</i>	\$60-\$70		<i>Due prior of submission of dossier to 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</i>	\$0-\$1,170		<i>Applies to families in guardianship countries, families living abroad, and families coming home on an IR4 visa</i>
<i>Dossier prep/state certification for families</i>	\$0-\$850		<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>\$7,165 – 12,670</b>	<i>Estimates are for 2 people and 1 trip</i>
<i>Airfare (2 adults)</i>	\$2,000-\$4,000		<i>Airfare varies greatly depending on departure city and travel season</i>
<i>Airfare for child (one way)</i>	\$400-\$1,000		<i>Depends on the child's age.</i>
<i>In China Travel &amp; Accommodations</i>	\$2,500-\$4,000		<i>Estimated for 14 days; Guide &amp; transportation services provided only in Guangzhou for Embassy preparation and appointment</i>
<i>China Visas (2 adults)</i>	\$460		<i>Estimate does not include courier expenses.</i>
<i>Civil Affairs Fees</i>	\$1,200-2,300		<i>Includes child file preparation, adoption registration, passport, announcement fees and misc. wiring costs</i>
<i>Medical exam, immunization costs, TB screening, etc.</i>	\$150-\$275		<i>Per child</i>
<i>Child's visa</i>	\$325		<i>Paid to the US consulate in China. Per child</i>
<i>Administrative Services in Guangzhou (Article 5/escort to medical and visa pick up)</i>	\$130-310		<i>Paid to FSP</i>
<b>Total Other Costs (Est.)</b>		<b>\$12,780 – 22,715</b>	<i>Range depends on adoption type and your expenses, which may vary from state to state</i>

**Total Fees & Estimated Expenses**

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, an 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 during the year from each country. Based on these estimates, we establish program fees, taking into consideration the amount of staff time and expenses which will be involved in maintaining the program. 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  
 China Relative

SERVICES CATEGORIZED PER HAGUE REQUIREMENTS	China
Home Study (including estimated out of pocket costs)	\$1,725-\$3,525
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)	\$12,550
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)	\$3,070
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.	\$1,360-\$3,520
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. <b>Suggested donation paid by the adoptive parents to the Ministry of Civil Affairs in the province of China where the child's orphanage is located.</b>	\$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)	\$1,560-\$1,860
Travel/Accommodation –Estimated 2 Adults, 1 child: includes hotel, food, fuel, and airfare estimates.	\$4,900-\$9,000
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.	\$1,955-\$3,650

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

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Adopting Parents: \_\_\_\_\_**