

ADOPTION SERVICES PROVIDED BY DEBORAH L. BERECZ, PLC

GENERAL

Attorney Deborah Bennett Berezcz (pronounced Bé-reece) has limited her practice to Family Law. In addition to a law degree from Notre Dame, she has a bachelor's degree in Psychology. Her educational background and interest in families and mediation makes Ms. Berezcz uniquely suited to assist those seeking to achieve a successful adoption plan. Ms. Berezcz has completed all requirements under Michigan law to function as an adoption attorney and provides legal services for direct placement, step-parent and relative adoptions. Under Michigan law, if a birthmother has chosen adoptive parents, she and the adoptive parents may work with an attorney to ensure that a successful adoption plan is completed. Ms. Berezcz's primary goal as an adoption attorney is to safeguard individual rights in the adoption process such that later dilemmas--like the tragic accounts we've seen in the media--are avoided.

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Ms. Berezcz represents birthmothers, birthfathers, and prospective adoptive parents in all legal aspects of the adoption process. However, each party to an

adoption has a right to independent representation by an attorney and one attorney may not represent both the birthparents and the adoptive parents in a given adoption process. Our firm strictly upholds these rights and will not represent both birthparents and adoptive parents in an adoption. Our policy in this regard safeguards all involved to ensure a successful adoption.

Ms. Berezcz has experience dealing with the various adoption agencies and provides assistance in choosing an agency for prospective adoptive parents who have not undergone a Pre-Placement Assessment. Our office maintains a database of qualified professionals for individuals seeking counseling for the emotional and psychological issues surrounding adoption. We also provide post-finalization services, such as securing a revised birth certificate, acting as intermediary for post-adoption communication between birthparents and adoptive parents, etc.

Our firm has developed eligibility standards for prospective adoptive families in order to ensure that the best interests of the adopted child are met. For example, prospective adoptive parents must commit to complete disclosure of any information which may impinge on parenting abilities, be free of any

chemical dependency, obtain a favorable Pre-Placement Assessment (unless seeking to appeal an unfavorable report), agree to provide the birthmother complete medical and mental health information on both adoptive parents and their children in exchange for similar information from the birthmother, and be free of terminal illnesses.

Many adoptions today are considerably more "open" than they were ten to fifteen years ago. There are a wide range of options available from no contact whatsoever between birthparents and adoptive parents, to meeting one another on a frequent basis, both before and after the adoption is completed. Ms. Berecz will facilitate the degree of contact mutually desired by birthparents and adoptive parents. This is a delicate issue requiring careful consideration and perhaps counseling in an effort to meet the needs of all parties

involved, particularly on behalf of the adopted child.

FEES FOR SERVICES

Ms. Berecz's services are billed at her normal hourly rate. In addition, a retainer fee is required. This retainer fee is put into a trust account and time charged is billed against it. Periodic statements are generated indicating the balance on retainer. At the conclusion of your case, any surplus is returned to you. Please refer to the fee agreement for complete information.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ms. Berecz encourages you to call with any questions you may have about the adoption process. This is often an exciting yet challenging time for all involved and we are committed to providing caring, excellent service for our clients in all phases of the adoption process.

