

You Have the Right To...

- You have the right to change your mind about your adoption plan at any point before the baby is born.
- After baby is born and before you have signed legal consent or paperwork for the adoption, you have the right to be informed about the law and your ability to change your mind and timeframe to revoke your consent to the adoption.

Your Additional Rights...

- Free counseling to help with your decision.
- Continued counseling even after your rights have been terminated.
- Select and meet the adoptive family.
- Place your baby directly from the hospital with a family. Foster care is not required.
- Seek an open adoption including picture and letter updates as well as visits.
- Help from the hospital social worker:
 - about your decision
 - if you are feeling pressured

Delaware Office

18-A Trolley Square
Wilmington, DE 19806

302.658.8883

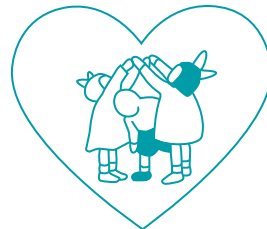
Adoptions From The Heart is a statewide agency serving all parts of Delaware.

Speak with a counselor in confidence

24 hours a day

800-355-5500

afth.org/pregnant



Adoptions From The Heart®

AFTH is a private, non-profit, non-sectarian agency licensed in PA, NJ, DE, VA, CT and NY.



**Considering Adoption?
Know Your Rights**



Adoptions From The Heart®

You Should Know

Delaware Adoption Law States:

1 In order to place your child for adoption you are required to sign consent paperwork. The consent cannot be signed until after the child's birth.

If the birth father is available, he will also be required to sign consent paperwork. The law allows him to sign before or after birth.

If you are or were married during the year prior to birth, your husband will be required to sign consent paperwork whether or not he is the father of your baby.

2 After you have signed the consent paperwork, **the law allows you to change your mind** about adoption and parent your baby. It must be done in writing **within 14 days** from the day you signed your consent. It must be delivered to the agency office.

Other Important Information

- You **cannot** accept money for your child to be placed for adoption.
- Adopting parents living in DE **can pay for living, legal and medical expenses** for an expecting parent. Payments are made into an escrow account and cannot be paid directly to an expecting parent.
- Even if legal fees and medical expenses are paid by adopting parent, **you are under no obligation to place your baby or repay the family.**
- You have the right to have counseling about whether or not to choose adoption for your baby. This **counseling must be provided, at no cost to you.**
- Adoptions are legal in DE when done by a licensed agency. **Agencies, unlike attorneys, provide free counseling before and after placement.**

3 If you continue with adoption, there will be a court hearing to terminate your parental rights about 4-5 months after the birth of your baby.

Typically, birth parents receive notice of the hearing, however DE laws allow you to sign a written statement waiving the requirement for the courts to notify you about the hearing.

For birth parents under 18, the law does not require parent or guardian involvement, however, it does require birth parents to be advised by an attorney (AFTH can assist with locating legal representation). Please know we will work with you to develop an adoption plan that is most comfortable for you.

Typically, you will not be required to attend the hearing however there are some situations which would require your presence. Your social worker will be at the hearing.

This brochure was prepared for you by

 **Adoptions From The Heart®**

If you need more information after reading this brochure, ask to speak to a hospital or clinic social worker, or call Adoptions From The Heart.

