



Adoption Program

Fee Overview Guide

Effective: January 1, 2026

This document provides amounts and explanations for the fees associated with the adoption programs at Catholic Social Services of Montana (CSSM) and includes information for the infant adoption program, international/domestic adoption program, and direct parental placement adoption program. Payments can be made with cash, check, credit, or debit card. All transactions completed with a credit or debit card will include an additional 4% processing fee. If you have questions about this document, call CSSM's main office in Helena at (406) 442-4130x1. If you are interested in starting your adoption journey, you can call the number listed previously listed or visit www.cssmt.org/adoption-application/.

Agency Information

Catholic Social Services of Montana has served the state of Montana since 1953. CSSM's adoption program has office locations in Helena and Billings. Neither adoptive parents or birth mothers need be Catholic to receive services from CSSM. Potential adoptive parents will undergo an approval process before they are accepted into the adoption program.

Mission

Based on our commitment to Catholic social teaching, Catholic Social Services of Montana provides for works of advocacy, compassion, pastoral outreach, education, and social justice.

Non-Discrimination Policy and Adoption Disclosure

CSSM does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law. As a faith-based, religious organization, CSSM reserves and protects all of its rights under all federal and state constitutions, statutes, rules, and case law. This includes delivery of services and whether they align with the moral values and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

Infant Program

\$35	Pre-application Fee
\$250	Workshop Fee
\$350	Application Fee
\$150	Technology Fee
\$1,150	Home Study Fee <i>*This fee is reduced to \$850 for families entering the adoption pool for a subsequent adoption*</i>
\$6,000-\$15,000	Adoption Fee This fee is a sliding scale that equals 15.4% of your family's gross income. The minimum fee is \$6,000; the maximum is \$15,000. This fee requires a signed financial agreement that will be completed at the conclusion of your home study.
\$7,935-\$16,935	Total Approximate Infant Program Fees <i>(Approximate, not guaranteed. Costs are for a first adoption with CSSM. See details about additional third-party fees below)</i>

Explanation of Fees

Pre-application Fee- This covers the initial application processing, documentation, and agency assessment. This fee is non-refundable.

Workshop Fee- This required two-day workshop gives couples the opportunity to learn more about CSSM and infant adoption before making the final decision to become adoptive parents. CSSM currently offers an annual Infant Adoption Workshop to families in its Infant Program. This fee is non-refundable.

Application Fee- The application fee is non-refundable and due prior to proceeding with the home study evaluation.

Technology Fee- This is a non-refundable fee that is paid directly to CAIRS (My Adoption Portal or MAP) technical and web development team. MAP software allows you to receive and submit documentation for your adoption journey at your own pace through the online software package. CSSM does not have any financial accounting for this fee.

Home Study Fee- This is a non-refundable fee which covers the costs to complete all the home study requirements, visits, and other services directly related to gathering all the information for the evaluation report. Required criminal background checks are billed separately.

Infant Program Adoption Fee- The CSSM Infant Program Adoption fee is based on a sliding fee scale relative to the couple's current gross income. Half of this fee is considered the "presentation fee" which is non-refundable, and half of this fee is considered the "placement fee." The placement fee is not billed or due until a placement has been made. -All fees must be paid in full prior to being eligible to finalize an adoption. Birth mother counseling, postplacement supervision, and attorney fees (not including adoption finalization for anyone in the CSSM infant program) are covered by this fee.

Psychological Assessment- As part of your home study, each couple will be required to have a psychological assessment completed by a Montana Board Certified Psychologist. Information about this requirement will be provided at a post workshop meeting with your social worker. Fees are paid by the adoptive couple directly to the psychologist.

Medical Assessment- As part of your home study, you will be required to have your personal physician complete a report about your physical and emotional health. Fees are paid by the adoptive couple directly to the physician.

Other Expenses- An adoptive couple will be responsible for all other incurred expenses. This may include hotels, meals, and other various expenses.

Background Check Fees- All residents of a household applying for adoption are required to complete Criminal background checks through the CSSM offices. We do not accept previous or externally completed checks. Your CSSM social worker will assist you in determining who may be exempt from completing checks (some minor children). These checks include Federal Fingerprint checks, Criminal Justice Checks, Adam Walsh Child Protective background checks, and DMV checks. Felony convictions are automatic disqualifiers for adoption. Processing fees will vary depending on which states individuals have lived and will be the financial responsibility of the adoptive couple.

Specialized Program

Direct Parental Placement, Domestic Adoptions (single or multi-agency)

\$350	Application Fee
\$50	Technology Fee
\$2,250	Home Study Fee- <i>Includes case consultation, home consultation, report preparation, and release of study to one agency. Does not include birth mother counseling or social worker travel time/ mileage.</i>
\$1,125	Home Study Yearly Update Fee
\$350 per agency	Release of Home Study to Additional Agency Fee
\$25 per 15 mins	Home Study Review and Revisions for Interstate Adoptions
\$20 per 15 mins	Case Consultation
\$50 per 15 mins	Home Consultation
\$25 per 15 mins	Report Preparation
\$50 per 15 mins	Birth Mother Counseling
\$50 per 15 mins	Placement Support
\$50 per 15 mins	Adoption Counseling
\$15 per 15 mins	CSSM Social Worker Travel Time
Current Federal Rate	CSSM Social Worker Mileage
Variable depending on state and locations of previous residency	Fingerprint, CPS, DMV, State Background Check, etc.

Explanation of Fees

Home Study Review and Revisions for Interstate Adoptions- This is applied for studies where an interstate agency requests additional information or revisions of information outside of what is standard for Montana-based home studies and will be applied in addition to the Home Study Fee.

Release of Home Study to Additional Agency Fee- This is applied to cover the time and work of CSSM to prepare an additional home study for release to any additional adoption agencies.

Case Consultation- CSSM offers experience and knowledge to adoptive families through their adoption journey. This begins from the time CSSM is contacted by any involved party, unless waived by the Executive Director of CSSM. Case Consultation is the process of planning and coordinating care and services to meet the needs of children and their families in the process of a Direct Parental Placement and Domestic Adoption. Case consultation includes all contacts between the Social Worker and any involved party (including birth and adoptive families, medical providers, attorneys, etc.) necessary in the assessment, case plan development, monitoring, service coordination, and follow-up. Contacts include, but are not limited to, face-to-face visits, phone calls, and email exchanges. This does not include family interviews conducted in the home study process.

Home Consultation- As part of a home study renewal, domestic adoption agencies require an annual visit to the adoptive parent home by the home study provider. This visit includes safety inspection of the home, as well as the gathering of updated information about the adoptive family. Home Consultation also occurs as part of the post-placement supervision visit.

Birth Mother Counseling- Per Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 42-2-409 Counseling requirements: *(2) a minimum of 3 hours of counseling must be completed prior to execution of a relinquishment of parental rights and consent to adopt.* The maximum number of hours provided by the law is 10 and the number of hours necessary to meet the requirements of law will be determined by the CSSM Social Worker.

Placement Support – Social Worker support for an adoptive family and birth mother in a domestic adoption. Includes all direct time with an adoptive family, birth mother (not including counseling time), and adoptees. May also include home study review and facilitating medical and social history gathering, match meetings, hospital support and relationship building.

Adoption Counseling- Support for those that are experiencing infertility, considering adoption or struggling with a situation with a past adoption. This may be done individually, as a couple, or a family.

Social Worker Travel Time and Mileage- As of 1/1/26, CSSM Social Workers are located in Helena and Billings. If the birth mother or adoptive parent cannot come to one of our offices, the potential adoptive parents will be billed for the Social Worker's travel time and mileage to meet with the birth mother or to visit the adoptive home.

Report Preparation for Post Home Study Services Fee- Writing and preparation of all Birth Mother Counseling and Post Placement Reports, as well as any additionally requested documentation. This does not include report prep conducted during the home study process.

Post-placement request for Social Worker- CSSM supports birth and adoptive families for the entirety of their lives. If there is a situation where a CSSM Social Worker is needed to support the families, such as a mediation, the requesting party will be billed for Social Worker travel time and mileage.

Technology Fee- This is a non-refundable fee that is paid directly to CAIRS (MAP) technical & web development team. MAP software allows you to receive and submit documentation for your adoption journey at your own pace through the online software package. CSSM does not have any financial accounting for this fee.

Application Fee- The application fee is non-refundable and due prior to proceeding with the home study evaluation.

Background Check Fees- All residents of a household applying for adoption are required to complete Criminal background checks through the CSSM offices. We do not accept previous or externally completed checks. Your CSSM social worker will assist you in determining who may be exempt from completing checks (some minor children). These checks include Federal Fingerprint checks, Criminal Justice Checks, Adam Walsh Child Protective background checks, and DMV checks. Felony convictions are automatic disqualifiers for adoption. Processing fees will vary depending on which states individuals have lived and will be the financial responsibility of the adoptive couple.

Additional Services

Generalized Services Provided by CSSM

Case-by-case basis	Request for Information Requiring Confidential Intermediary Services
Case-by-case basis	Request for Information <u>NOT</u> Requiring Confidential Intermediary Services

Explanation of Fees

Request for Information Requiring Confidential Intermediary Services- This is applied for cases where the requestor is seeking information that is legally considered confidential and will require the use of a confidential intermediary. Call us for more details.

Request for Information Not Requiring Confidential Intermediary Services- This is applied for cases where the requestor is seeking information that can legally be shared with them without requiring the use of a confidential intermediary.