

# Guatemala Adoption Program

Dear Prospective Families:

Thank you for your interest in the MAPS Guatemala program. Our commitment is to improve the quality of life for children all over the world through adoption programs, humanitarian aid, and support services.

In the early 90's, MAPS developed an adoption program for children in Guatemala. The foster care program we currently work with provides exceptional and loving individual care. There is always a need for children who are waiting for loving families to take them home. All are legally available as a result of judicial abandonment or relinquishment and have little hope of being adopted in their country of origin.

When you choose MAPS, you will work with a knowledgeable program coordinator who will walk you through the sometimes-complex adoption process. This person will coordinate the U.S. aspects of the program and will work closely with our in-country representatives who guide you while you travel. Together, these teams ensure a positive experience for your family and your new child, both before and during your trip.

When choosing to adopt a child internationally, an extra measure of patience and flexibility are required. In dealing with foreign governments, program and policy changes can occur during your adoption process. While these factors are out of any agency's control, our experienced staff will keep you informed of such changes and will help you navigate any challenges that arise during your adoption. MAPS provides you with the support and guidance you need throughout this journey, as we strive to bring you and your child together as quickly as possible.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kate Emery  
Guatemala Program Coordinator

## **THE CHILDREN**

Most of the children in Guatemala are Mestizo (a blend of European and Mayan Indian ancestry), and range from infants to toddler age. There are occasional older children and sibling groups available, but wait times for these children are unpredictable.

The health care and stimulation in the foster care homes is very good. Healing from neglect and poor nutrition is necessary for some children who come from inadequate birthfamily home conditions. Most children available for adoption are available as a result of relinquishment and enter the foster care home within 24 hours of birth. As with any country, there are always some children with special needs, correctable or otherwise.

Life in the foster care home is quite simple, but the individual love and attention from the foster family is exceptional. This is one of the outstanding characteristics of the foster care homes we work with.

Families who will be adopting older children must be aware that these children may have suffered some institutional and/or emotional deprivation during their early years of life. These children may have additional needs stemming from lack of proper parenting; a loss of personal history and genetic connection; multiple caregivers; and developmental delay.

MAPS recommends that adoptive families make every effort to understand the issues of adoption from their child's point of view. Since adoption issues do not end with placement, it is suggested that families remain open to support from a variety of resources as their child grows into adulthood. These resources include adoptive parent groups, the home study agency, professional counseling, and an ever-expanding body of literature on adoptive parenting. MAPS is always available to help parents with such resources.

## **FAMILY REQUIREMENTS**

Married couples and single women are accepted to adopt children of all ages. There may be other children in the family. A maximum difference of 48 years between parent and child is the usual guideline.

Families should demonstrate a sincere willingness to get to know and appreciate the culture of Guatemala and be prepared to impart that knowledge and affirmation to their child.

## **TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS**

Parents may choose the escort option or may travel themselves. If you decide to travel, one or both parents can go. If you decide to use an escort, MAPS will make all travel arrangements. Parents will meet the child and escort at a designated city within the U.S. If the parents decide to travel, the length of stay is approximately 4-5 days.

## **TIMEFRAME AND PROCESS**

Once your family has applied to the Guatemala Program, the MAPS program coordinator will advise and assist you in completing a dossier (an authenticated set of documents that will represent your family in the adoption process).

MAPS works with the foster care program staff to seek the most appropriate child for your family and vice versa. After receipt of your dossier, referrals occur within an estimated 0-2 months for boys and 2-5+ months for girls.

Administrative and judicial processing of the adoption takes approximately 6-10 months. This timeframe is the period between child acceptance and travel.

After your child arrives home, there is a post-placement supervisory period and re-finalization in the court of your family's state of residence. Families are required by the Guatemalan government to send periodic reports and photographs through MAPS.

Please be aware that programs of international adoption are always evolving on the foreign side. You may encounter some policy and procedural changes during the course of adoption. These may include various changes in the foreign government and required paperwork. If this should happen, we will keep you advised on any changes and will work diligently to bring you and your child together as soon as possible.

## **COSTS**

The initial fee submitted to MAPS, with your application materials, is an application fee of \$600 and is not country-specific. MAPS agency fee for Guatemala is \$6,300 and is due upon acceptance into the Guatemala program. The Foreign Program fee for relinquishment cases is \$21,000 through our foster care program. The foreign program fee includes MAPS costs both in the U.S. and Guatemala, Guatemalan administration and court fees, dossier translation, and child-specific orphanage expenses. Half of this fee is due at the time of acceptance of child referral, the other half is due upon entrance to the PGN (Procuraduria General de la Nacion).

If you chose the escort option for travel, the fee is \$3,000.

## **GETTING STARTED**

The adoption process begins with the application packet. In this information we walk you through the materials needed to open your file. Your application to MAPS should be submitted as soon as possible, whether or not your home study has been completed. Your home study must be done by a licensed adoption agency in your state that is familiar with international adoption and provides adoption education. We cannot accept studies done by licensed independent social workers or probate courts. We will be able to formally accept you into the Guatemala program after full review of your home study and related application materials.

Your home study is valid for approximately one year (varies by state). If placement has not occurred within that time, you will need your home study agency to provide MAPS with an original, notarized update. We recommend that you determine the fee for this service up front so you will be prepared if the process takes longer than expected.

Families should be prepared to file an I-600A with their local CIS office, upon completion of their home study.

## **HUMANITARIAN AID**

An important component of our adoption program in Guatemala is humanitarian aid. Placed families are encouraged to participate at whatever level of involvement they can offer to help support the children who remain behind.

We are proud that our families continue to care and put forth efforts on behalf of the children of Guatemala.

Please review the enclosed material and let us know if you have further questions regarding adoption through the MAPS Guatemala Program. I would be delighted to speak with you about the many children who are waiting for homes and your plans to build your family through adoption.

Sincerely,

Kate Emery  
Guatemala Program Coordinator



**MAPS**  
 277 Congress Street, Portland, Maine 04101  
 Tel: 207-775-4101, Fax: 207-775-2255, Email: [info@mapsadopt.org](mailto:info@mapsadopt.org)  
[www.mapsadopt.org](http://www.mapsadopt.org)

**FEE SCHEDULE FOR ADOPTIONS THROUGH  
MAPS Foster Care Program**

MAPS application fee (due with application)	\$600
MAPS agency fee for Guatemala (due upon acceptance into Guatemala program)	\$6,300
MAPS foreign program fee (1/2 due at acceptance of child referral, remainder due upon entrance to the Procuraduria General de la Nacion)	\$21,000
Relinquishment cases:	\$21,000
<small>This fee includes Dossier translation, most attorney/processing fees, child care for the length of the process, initial lab tests for referral, immunizations, DNA office visit, translation of final adoption documents, birth certificate registration, child's passport/visa photos</small>	

*The above fees and costs are estimated and, due to the nature of international adoption, subject to change without notice.*

**Other expenses to plan for:**

Immigration application (I600A)	\$670
USCIS fingerprints (per adult in home)	\$80
Passport fees	Approximately \$100-\$200 per person
Travel to and from Guatemala	Approximately \$350-\$1,000 per person
Travel for child/ren	Approximately \$350-\$1,000 per child
Lodging, food, necessities for parents & child/ren	Approximately \$80-\$240 daily per person depends on accommodation
Fee for taxi	\$13-\$15 per taxi ride
Travel related taxes	Approximately \$30 per person
Translations of final adoption docs into English	Approximately \$5-\$10 per document
Escort fee	\$3,000
Photographs	Approximately \$10-\$15 per child
Child's U.S. Visa	\$380
DNA tests for relinquishments	\$470 + \$117.50 for second DNA test

**Miscellaneous expenses that vary case by case:**

Home study and post-placement fees	Approximately \$2,000-\$6,000
Notarization/authentication/certification	Approximately \$270-450
Physical exams for parents for dossier	Approximately \$200-\$500
Medical exams/lab expenses for child as requested by adoptive parent	Approximately \$150-\$400
Miscellaneous personal expenses	