



## **Adopt Abroad, Inc.'s**

### International Adoption Program Description

## **ARMENIA**



### **General Information**

Adopt Abroad's Armenia program has been active since 2004. We estimate the process for an adoption from Armenia will take 12-18 months from dossier to completion, depending on the type of child you are seeking to adopt. Your wait time will likely be at the shorter end of this range if you are open to a special needs or older child.

Armenia is a former republic of the Soviet Union. Armenia, formerly part of the Soviet Union, borders Azerbaijan, the Republic of Georgia and Turkey. It is situated at the juncture of Western Asia and Eastern Europe. The capital city is Yerevan.

Armenia is a Hague adoption country. If you are considering adopting from Armenia, please read the following information as required by the Hague Convention on International Adoptions.

The following websites are a useful place to start for reading more about

Armenia adoption and the country:

- <http://adoption.state.gov/country/armenia.html>: Information on international adoptions from Armenia at the Office of Children's Issues, U.S. Department of State web site.
- <http://www.state.gov> for Information on the country of Armenia on the U.S. Department of State web site
- [www.armenialinks.com](http://www.armenialinks.com) for tips on Armenian culture & customs

## **ABOUT THE CHILDREN**

The orphans from Armenia are well cared for in state run orphanages. Generally the children have fair to olive complexions with dark hair and eyes. Armenia does not allow photo listings of waiting children.

## **CHILDREN AVAILABLE**

The Armenian children that are available for international adoption range in age from three months to 12 years old. For the first three months children are available only for in country Armenian domestic adoption. The children are placed for adoption due to economic hardship or birth parent's personal decisions.

We will provide you with as much information as we are able to obtain on a child, however, there will never be as much information on a child's background as we would like. The most valuable information will be obtained when the family travels to Armenia. The medical information is more critical for evaluating a baby for adoption since this is essentially all of the information that is available. As a child gets older, their character, personality, temperament and intelligence become more important.

## **ELIGIBILITY TO ADOPT**

The Armenian adoption program is open to married couples and single women of any heritage. Families of Armenian heritage may be given preference. Twins, siblings or single children can be adopted, but two unrelated children cannot be adopted during this same adoption process. Questions as to the number of children in the family and other considerations are evaluated on a case by case basis depending on the

characteristics of the child that is sought for adoption. There is no age limit, although this may influence which child is referred to the adoptive family. The parents must be in good health. The orphanage director, the adoption officials or the court may impose other restrictions as they consider necessary or advisable. Armenia will not approve any families for adoption if either parent has anything on their FBI record, even if charges were dismissed.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE COUNTRY**

The beautiful country of Armenia borders Azerbaijan, Republic of Georgia and Turkey. The climate is similar to the southeastern section of the United States. Armenia's terrain is rocky and dry, as evidenced by the architecture and striking structural use of stone. Armenia is one of the oldest Christian civilizations. The primary religion is the Armenian Apostolic church and approximately 94% of the population practices the Armenian Orthodox religion. Armenia gained its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, but was heavily dependent upon its subsidies. The percentage of people living in poverty is above 45%. The Armenians are an Indo-European race made up of tribes that long inhabited the Armenian Plateau. It is difficult to pinpoint the predominant ethnic make-up of the people. Armenians tend to be olive to dark complexions, with black or brown hair and eyes.

Websites for information on Armenia & its history:

- [www.armenialinks.com](http://www.armenialinks.com)
- [www.everyculture.com](http://www.everyculture.com)

## **THE ADOPTION PROCESS**

It generally takes approximately 12-18 months to complete the adoption process. First, you will need to complete your home study, get USCIS approval and prepare your dossier for Armenia. Adopt Abroad will assist you with these steps along the way.

Once your documents are approved by USCIS (about 4-6 weeks), families will submit their dossier to Adopt Abroad, Inc. We will have your dossier translated and hand-delivered to the special committee on adoptions under the government of the Armenian Prime Minister.

Your adoption dossier will then be reviewed. The initial approval by the Armenian adoption authorities takes approximately 1-2 months. The adoptive applicants will be notified when their adoption dossier has been approved.

After approval your information will be entered into the data bank and the search for a suitable referral can begin. Once they have an orphan referral that meets your requirements, you-the adoptive family will be notified. The adoptive family will receive brief information regarding the child's health.

## **TRAVEL**

Armenia can be a two or three trip process. Upon receiving your referral information families may travel to Armenia to meet their child and file acceptance papers in Armenia. Once the acceptance paperwork has been filed, the Prime Minister's office will then issue a final approval notice. You will have to follow Hague adoption protocols regarding paperwork. We will advise you on this.

Once the final approval notice has been received, a first court date will be scheduled. It is preferable if both adoptive parents can attend the court hearing, if this is not possible they traveling spouse must have power of attorney for the court hearing & adoption process. A second court hearing occurs several weeks later.

After second court hearing there is a 30-day waiting period for the court decree to be enacted. Once this waiting period has passed, your child can leave the country. U.S. Consular exit interviews are held in Yerevan, Armenia.

As with all our adoption programs, you will be met at the airport by our in country facilitator who will escort you to the apartment/hotel, bring you to all official appointments and be available for assistance during your entire stay in Armenia.

It is Adopt Abroad's policy to not allow escorts as we believe it is important bonding time spent with your child.

## **POST ADOPTION**

Once you return home, you will need to immediately register your child's passport with the Armenian Embassy (we will provide you with instructions). Your home study provider will prepare two post placement reports and submit them to Adopt Abroad: one report will be submitted when the social worker visits your home about 6 weeks after your child's arrival home and another about 6 months after your child has been with you. Along with several pictures, these reports, which include information on your child's progress and development, will be sent to the orphanage staff and officials for receipt in Armenia. This allows them to see your child's adjustment into your family and life in the United States.

Thereafter the family must submit annual reports, including photographs, until the child reaches the age of 18. These reports are self reports.

### **COSTS**

Total fees for an Armenian adoption including expenses such as travel and related costs, will bring the total cost to approximately \$38,000-40,000.00

### **CONTACT US**

Please call (1-888-687-3644) or e-mail us at [client@adopt-abroad.org](mailto:client@adopt-abroad.org) with any questions.