

Dossier Guide

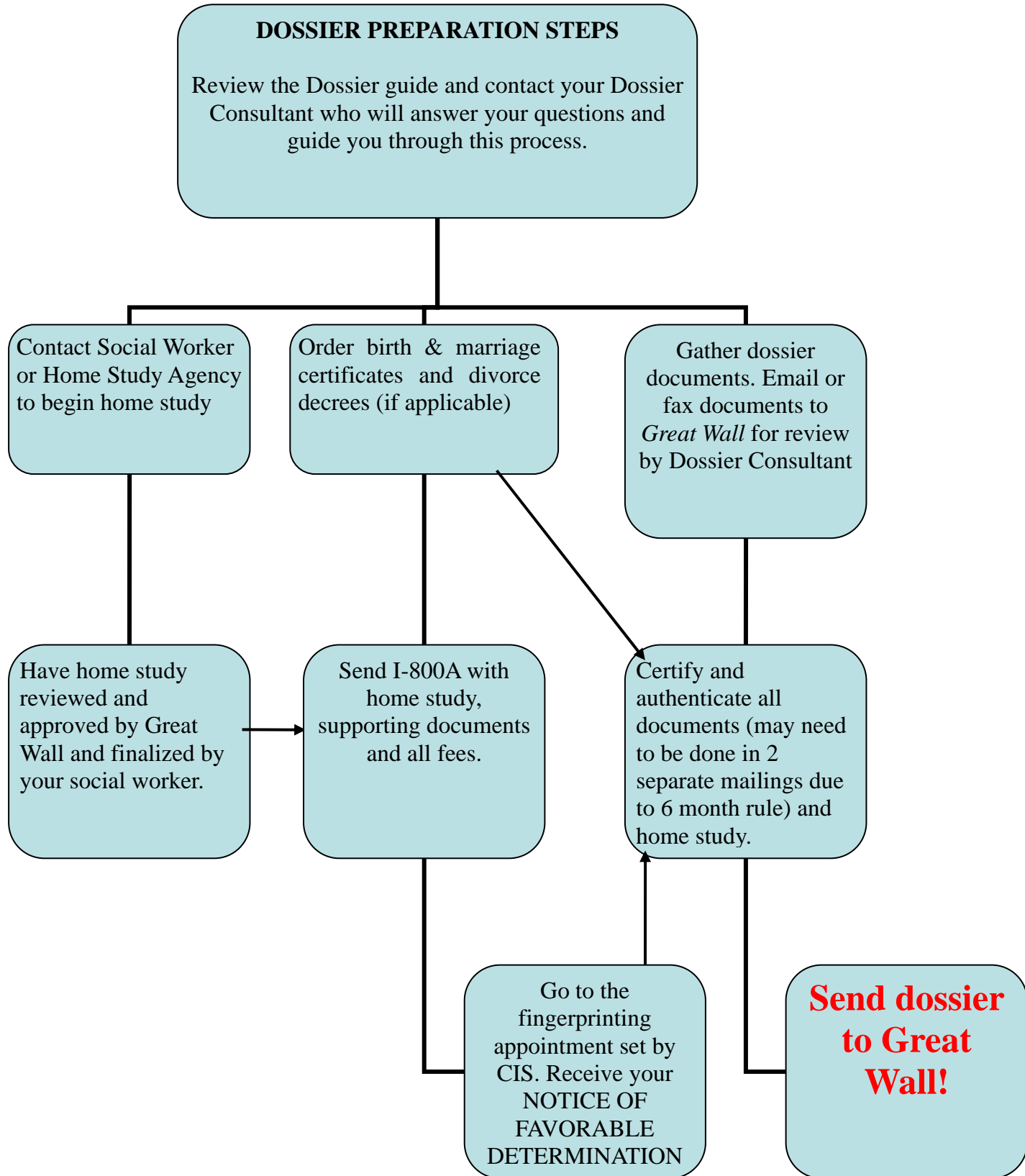
If you have any questions, please contact us.

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Dossier Preparation at a Glance



Filing the I-800A with USCIS

Welcome to *Great Wall China Adoption!*

An important step in all international adoptions is to file Form I-800A with the US Department of Homeland Security's Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS). U.S. citizens living outside of the U.S. should contact the overseas CIS office and U.S. Embassy/Consulate that serves your area; both offices provide many resources to assist adoptive parents.

Why file the I-800A? Since you are adopting a foreign child, you need to obtain approval from CIS to adopt a foreign child, in order to receive a visa for your child to enter the U.S. The I-800A is the application form for this approval. You will receive this approval as form I797 or "Notice of Favorable Determination". To download the I-800A please go to the *Great Wall* site, www.gwca.org and click on the Family Login button. The log-in information (username and password) is provided in the first email sent to you by your first Case Manager (Dossier Consultant).

As part of the I-800A, you will need to be fingerprinted by CIS in a specialized location. CIS arranges your fingerprinting appointments after you've submitted your I-800A along with the supporting documentation and fees. The current fee for fingerprinting is \$85 for **EACH** person 18 or over living in the home. This is in addition to the \$720.00 filing fee for the I-800A form. The fingerprinting and filing fees are due when you submit the I-800A application. **CIS will notify you as to when and where to go for fingerprinting.**

Only one adoptive parent can be listed as the petitioner. If you are sure both spouses will travel, you can list either spouse as the petitioner. If you are not certain that one of you will be traveling to China, please list as petitioner the parent you are sure will be traveling. If only one parent is a U.S. Citizen, that person must be listed as the petitioner.

The following items should be included in your I-800A application package:

1. A completed **I-800A** application form & Supplement 2.
2. **Birth Certificates or Proof of Citizenship** – Photocopies are acceptable.
3. **Divorce Decree** of ALL prior marriages, if applicable. Photocopies are acceptable.
4. **Death Certificate** if you have been a widow or widower.
5. **Marriage Certificate** – For current marriage only. Photocopies are acceptable.
6. **Certified Court Documents and Criminal History Explanation letter** – You must disclose any arrest/conviction/or other adverse criminal history to USCIS. USCIS requires that you provide "certified COURT documents" (including either a pen-in-hand-signature or a certified stamp) with your I-800A application. You must also include "a written statement giving details including any

mitigating circumstances about each arrest or incident.” At the end of the statement, you should write “I attest under penalty of perjury of the laws of the United States that this is a true and accurate account of the facts surrounding my arrest/ criminal incident”. Sign the statement; it does not need to be notarized.

7. **A favorable Home Study** – You must send a completed, original signed approved home study in with your I-800A application package. A few states and US territories (CO, IL, MS, SC, Guam, Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico) require that the state/territory government review and approve the HS prior to finalization. Check with your home study agency and see if s/he has any information about the finalization process for your state. *Great Wall* recommends that you wait to send the I-800A until the home study is finished and approved by your GWCA dossier consultant. If you have any questions about this process, please talk with your case manager.
8. **A Filing Fee of \$720 along with the fingerprinting fee of \$85 per adult (typically age 17+) in the household. The fee must be paid in one payment. Make your check or money order payable to “US Department of Homeland Security”.** CIS sometimes changes their fees with little public warning. We recommend you always verify this amount with your *Great Wall* contact. Remember to include the additional \$85 for each adult living in the household.
9. **A cover letter.** Please see the Appendix for a sample cover letter to CIS

PLEASE NOTE: Your I-800A, Passport and Home Study **must ALL bear the same name(s)**. If your name is hyphenated on one of these documents, it must be hyphenated on all of your documents. If you have used an Original and/or Married Last Name on one of these documents, you must use it on all of these documents. This is extremely important! If your name is not the same on all documents, it will delay your travel significantly! (Jr./Sr. designations and Middle Names/Initials are excluded from this rule.)

The typical sequence of events with USCIS is as follows: applications are currently sent to a central processing center in Lewisville, TX. Only the payment is processed at the Texas USCIS/Hague location. The Texas office will forward all the paperwork to the National Benefits Center (NBC) in Missouri, typically within about 2 weeks. The NBC Unit *may* send you a I 797 C " Receipt Acknowledgment " which lets you know it has now been received at the National Benefits Center (NBC). Next you will receive an I 797 C “Biometrics Notice”. This is an appointment notice sent to each applicant to have their fingerprints taken at your local CIS office.

Prep Tip: We advise families to pamper their hands for about 2 weeks prior to being fingerprinted. Nicks, scratches and minor blemishes can create problems with CIS fingerprinting process. Sometimes it helps to smooth Vaseline on your hands before going to bed (especially if you like to garden or work with your hands). You can put cotton gloves over your hands if the Vaseline texture is bothersome to you. This exercise helps to plump up the skin, heal the scratches and make the fingertips more amenable to fingerprinting.

The last notice you receive will be the I 797 “Approval Notice”. This is your formal approval from USCIS. You will keep the original, make a photocopy and send to GWCA with a Notarial statement. The processing time for the adjudication of the I800 A is currently averaging about 60 - 90 days.

Though applications are sometimes processed outside of the quoted time frame, USCIS reports that they adjudicate all I-800A applications within a 90 day time frame, upon receiving all required documentation, including the home study. When you receive CIS approval (NOTICE OF FAVORABLE DETERMINATION-Form I-797), a photocopy will be used for your dossier and you will keep the original document for your files. Keep this original in a safe place as you will hand carry it to China when you adopt your child.

We cannot guarantee or verify the accuracy of the information presented on the USCIS website since it is not our website, but feel that it is a useful tool to help alleviate some of the “unknowns” that our families experience during the paper chase while dealing with other agencies. Please know that processing times at the USCIS can change at any time without notice.

Collecting Documents for the I-800A

1. Birth Certificate(s) or Proof of Citizenship

a. To order your birth certificate you may either call the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the capital city of the state of your birth for a “certified” birth certificate or you may go to [Vital Check](#) to order a “certified” birth certificate from any state. You may use a copy of the birth certificate for filing the I-800A with CIS; however you must have a newly-issued *original certified* Birth Certificate for your dossier.

- You may consider the “certified” copy as officially **notarized**. This “certification” is basically considered as the notarization. **This is NOT considered certified by the Secretary of State.**
- Please note that the birth certificate must be a “certified copy” issued from the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the State Capital of your birth. A birth certificate issued by the hospital or local level is **NOT** acceptable by the Secretary of State for certification. Birth certificates ordered through [Vital Check](#) are “certified” copies.
- Please note some states have specific requirements for Vital Documents. See section on Birth Certificates.
- **If you do not have a passport, you should request an extra copy of your certified birth certificate to use when ordering your passport. Please order a passport at this time as you will need copies of your passport long before you travel.** To find more information about ordering your passport, please go to: http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html.
**Please note that current timeframes for processing a new application for a passport has extended due to increased applications – apply right away if you do not have a current passport or if it will expire before your dossier is registered in China. If you were born outside of the United States, you will need to provide one of the following:
 - Certificate of Naturalization
 - Form FS-240, “Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the US”

b. **If you were born in a foreign country and your birth was registered with the United States** upon return, you may obtain an original copy of your birth certificate from the State Department. Contact in writing:

Vital Records Section

Passport Services

1111 19th St NW, Suite 510

Washington, DC 20522-1704

Write a letter requesting this birth certificate with the following information:

- Applicant's name,
- address,

- date of birth,
- place of birth,
- applicant's birth father's name,
- date of birth and place of birth;
- applicant's birth mother's name,
- maiden name,
- date of birth and place of birth.

The cost is \$30 for the first document and \$20 per additional document. For more information or price verification, you may call the government help line at 800-688-9889 or check out the [US State Department website](#).

2. Marital Status Document–Marriage Certificates, Divorce Decrees and Death Certificates.

You will need to provide proof of current marriage and proof of terminations of all previous marriages. You may use a copy of the marriage certificate for filing the I-800A with CIS; however you must have a newly-issued *original certified* Marriage record for your dossier.

- a. You may be able to order marriage and death certificates from [Vital Check](#) see if this is an option for the state in which your documents are from.
- b. If VitalChek is not an option for you, contact the Bureau of Vital Statistics or the record office in the county where you were married for a “certified” marriage or death certificate. A county or city issued Certificate is acceptable in some states. Again, the “certified” copy you receive is certified by the signature of the county or city clerk. **This is NOT considered certified by the Secretary of State.** This certification is a separate piece of paper and is not a seal on the actual marriage certificate
- c. If you are **currently a widow/widower** or are **currently married but have been a widow/widower** previously you will need to submit a death certificate for the deceased spouse.
- d. If any of your marriage or birth certificates are foreign documents please refer to the “Birth Certificate” section of this document.

Note: For families working on their 2nd or 3rd adoptions, please make sure that you order new Birth and Marriage Certificates for your dossier. You will need updated records for your dossier.

Home Study Information

An important piece of your dossier is the Home Study. The Home Study documents a number of things about your family including: the parents' background, health information, experience with children, views on adoption, suitability of the home, religious/spiritual beliefs, etc. You will meet in person with the social worker who writes your home study and provide your social worker with supporting documentation.

For families who have completed their first China adoption and are working on their next adoption, it is imperative that a *new* Home Study be drafted. Elements from previous Home Studies (for information that never changes, such as family history, etc.) may be incorporated into the latest version of the Home Study and presented as part of a new Home Study. However, **we cannot accept a Home Study "update" with only the updated information in lieu of the full Home Study. Your new home study must document at least 4 recent meetings with the social worker.**

The age of the child approved by the social worker in the Home Study, should be a broad age range (fully encompassing and greater than the family's requested age range). If the age of your child is not within the approved age range at the time of your US Consulate appointment, the family must do an addendum/update to the Home Study. In addition, if the gender and health status of the child referred does not match the original information in the Home Study recommendation section, the family must obtain an addendum/update to the Home Study. The updated Home Study addendum/update for any circumstances noted above will be sent in to USCIS with the appropriate USCIS application (Supplement 3) and filing fee. The recommendation information must match the referred child's information in order for the child's visa to be issued from the American Consulate.

Home studies **MUST** also meet all state and USCIS requirements. Some states require that the local department of child welfare approve the Home Study before it is sent to USCIS. The Home Study and HS update must state that the family has met any state pre-adoption requirements. Your social worker is responsible for explaining your state's requirements to you and should document your understanding and completion of these requirements in the recommendation section of the Home Study. **Failure to meet your state's requirements could significantly delay or prevent your adoption!**

USCIS requires that all persons living in the home be asked if they have ever experienced a problem with child abuse, sexual abuse, or family violence. They also must be asked if they have ever received an unfavorable Home Study. These issues must be documented and, if necessary, explained in the Home Study to meet CIS and State requirements. It is imperative that you include all information regarding criminal history, including expunged records. If CIS finds any criminal history not included in the home study, they could deny your approval to adopt internationally.

The following guide is based on China and USCIS requirements. We highly recommend that you work with a Home Study Agency that has experience working with USCIS and completing international home studies.

Home Study Outline for *ALL* Social Workers

Give your Social Worker a copy of this outline (this includes *Great Wall* social workers.)

The following is a guideline for your social worker to follow in writing your home study (HS) for China. These are guidelines required by the *China Center for Children's Welfare and Adoption* (CCCWA) and the Hague Convention as set forth by The US Citizen and Immigration Service (USCIS). **It is imperative that your social worker incorporate these guidelines into your Home study.**

Your home study preparer/social worker must hold a license or other authorization to conduct adoption home studies under the law of the jurisdiction in which the home study is conducted.

- If the home study is conducted in the U.S., the social worker must hold a license or authorization according to that state.
- For families living abroad, the preparer must hold any license or authorization required to conduct home studies under the law of that country. If the adoption service provider who prepares home studies abroad is also engaged in providing of any adoption services in the U.S. the ASP must also be authorized or licensed to do so in any State in which the adoption service provider practices.

The guidelines for the home study that is sent to USCIS are regulated by the state in which you live and/or Home Study Agency with which you work. Some states may require that the home study be sent to the Child Welfare Department of your state for approval before being sent to USCIS. Please ask your home study Agency for more information on your state's requirements.

Your home study must meet State, USCIS/Department of State (DOS), and CCCWA regulations.

Your home study must be less than 6 months old (based on finalized, approved home study date) when it is submitted to USCIS along with your I800A application. The home study must be tailored to the particular situation of the applicant and to the specific Convention country in which the applicant intends to seek adoption of a child. According to Hague Convention and Department of State Standards, all applicants and adult household members have a duty of candor to disclose and must:

1. Give true and complete information to the home study preparer
2. Disclose any arrest, conviction or other adverse criminal history whether in the U.S. or aboard, even if the record of the arrest, conviction or other adverse criminal history has been expunged, sealed, pardoned, or the subject of any other amelioration.
3. Disclose other relevant information, such as physical mental or emotional health issues, or behavioral issues.
4. This duty of candor is ongoing and continues while the Form I800A is pending and after the Form I800A is approved and while any subsequent form I-800 is pending until there is a final decision admitting the Convention adoptee to the United States with a visa. The applicant and any additional adult member of the household must notify the home study preparer and USCIS of any new event of information that might warrant submission of an amended or updated home study.

Your social worker/ Home Study Agency should provide you with 3-4 signed and notarized copies of your home study.

- **One for USCIS/DOS:** Talk to your Home Study Agency to see if they send this copy to CIS for you, or if you need to send it.

- **One for your dossier:** to be sent to the CCCWA
- **One for you to take to China.**
- **One for your records**

CCCWA requires a minimum of four (4) face-to-face visits with the social worker/Home Study Agency. These may include but are not limited to the following: home visits, parent education classes (by the social worker or home study Agency), office visits to the Home Study Agency, etc.

Great Wall will not accept home study or any work from agencies that are denied Hague Accreditation. Therefore, families need to check the home study Hague Accreditation status. China now requires that the home study agency be Hague Accredited. The homestudy must be prepared by certified social workers hired by the government or adoption agencies that are Hague Accredited. The Hague Accreditation certificate must accompany the homestudy.

The family's home study agency must sign an Exempt Provider Agreement (EPA) to work with Great Wall. This agreement does not need to be done for each individual family but for the HS Agency as a whole. If your HS agency has not completed this EPA previously, please inform your Dossier Consultant so we can send one over. Great Wall will NOT send your dossier to China without this signed EPA in our files.

Please note Great Wall requires verification of completion of the required specific Hague Parent Education topics prior to final approval of the homestudy. You must have the certificates of completion on file with Great Wall and documentation of this in the homestudy.

Before your home study can be finalized by your social worker, the draft of the home study must be emailed to *Great Wall* for approval. Please have your social worker email the draft of your home study to homestudy@gwca.org AND the Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) (unless prohibited by your state law) to review/edit for factual information.

ALL revisions/re-drafts, MUST be reviewed by Great Wall until final approval is issued. Upon sending back the revisions, please bold, highlight, or otherwise note the corrections that have been made so as to quickly and easily locate the changes.

Texas Residents and Social Workers: Please make sure you read and follow the guidelines applicable to **Texas Families only** in each section as indicated in **blue**.

I. MEETINGS AND INTERVIEWS

- A. There will be at least four (4) face-to-face visits with the social worker/Home Study Agency. At least one visit must be in the home. Telephone or internet visits are not accepted in lieu of the face to face visits.
- B. The social worker must list the following: number of meetings; participants of the meetings (including other household members), dates of meetings; the place of the meetings; duration (or exact times) of meetings and topics discussed.
- C. Please note that for USCIS the home study must be less than 6 months old (based on finalized, approved home study date) prior to submitting it with your I800A application. **All face-to-face visits must not be older than one year** from the date the dossier is submitted to China. If the home study visits become older than 1 year, a home study update will be required.
- D. **For Texas families only:** The social worker must document the following interviews.
 - i. Individual interview with each parent.
 - ii. Joint interview with both parents.
 - iii. Group interview in the home with all members of family living in the home.
 - iv. Individual interview with EACH member of the household three years of age or older, living in the home full or part time.
 - v. Individual interview with any other persons living full or part time in the home.
 - vi. Document who was present at each interview **AND** their relationship to adoptive applicants
- E. The social worker must identify additional adult members of the household by name, alien registration number (if applicable) and date of birth. (USCIS)
- F. The social worker must include an interview of any additional adult member (age 17+) of the household and an assessment of him or her. **NBC considers a nanny, housekeeper, employee, etc who works in the home full time (approximately 30+ hrs./week) to be a household member, even if this person does not reside in the home.** Please consult the GWCA case manager should you have any questions/concerns about what constitutes an additional household member. **Please note that ALL requirements must be applied to any additional adult household member** (age 17+). Please include the information about the household member in each section of the home study and an assessment of that person regarding the content of that section.
- G. **For Texas families only:** The social worker must contact EACH child living outside the home and include information about these contacts within the home study. This applies to all children twelve years of age or older living outside the home for *any portion of the year*, including adult children. If they cannot get in contact they must document every attempt to contact.

II. MOTIVATION TO ADOPT

- A. Reason for the applicants' decision to adopt. (*Why is the family adopting?*)
- B. Reason for the applicants' decision to adopt internationally from China. (*What lead them to select China?*)
- C. Any relevant information regarding applicant's preparation for adoption, *especially if the family is interested in adopting a special needs child.* (i.e. reading books, attending workshops, consulting physicians, talking with other adoptive families, etc.)
- D. An understanding and mental preparedness of: (**feel free to use these EXACT words as appropriate**)
 - i. The possible **risks and delays** when adopting a child from China.
 - ii. The possibility of adaptability problems with the child after placement.
 - iii. The impact of institutionalization on children.
- E. **For Texas families only:** The home study must specify whether or not the family has experienced fertility problems, **AND** if so, how the family has resolved the **FEELINGS** surrounding those issues.
- F. The home study preparer must assess the suitability to adopt based on reasons for adoption. (**A summary statement of suitability is required for each section of the HS.**)

III. FAMILY BACKGROUND, PERSONAL HISTORY AND IDENTIFICATION

- a. For each adult member of the household, give a summary of:

1. **For Texas families only: Citizenship status** (applicant is a citizen of the US; has dual citizenship in the US and “xxx” country; is a citizen of “xxx” country and has a permanent resident alien card/green card; or a Naturalized citizen in the US originally from “xxx” country, etc)
 2. Age (list date and place of birth)
 3. Appearance (ex. Brown hair, green eyes, etc.)
 4. Personality (ex. Introverted, outspoken, friendly, organized, calm, etc.)
 5. Interests and hobbies (ex. biking, swimming, reading, scrap booking, shopping, etc.)
- C. Make sure **ALL** members of existing household are identified and described.
- D. Background information about applicants’ family of origin and applicants’ youth.
- E. Summary of current relationship with parents, siblings, etc.
- F. Summary of education
1. Level of education and other training.
 2. Educational achievements, certifications, etc.
- F. Employment History for each applicant
1. For current employer: place of employment, field of work, title, annual salary, and length of time with employer.
 2. Brief employment history. (*This can be basic, general information.*)
- G. Religious/Spiritual beliefs-Please clearly **state that religious beliefs DO NOT PROHIBIT any medical treatment.**
- H. **For Texas families only:** State ALL languages spoken by each applicant.
- I. **For Texas families only:** The social worker must state that s/he has verified the ages of both parents.
- J. **Additional Adult Household member** (age 17+): provide all of the above information for any adult cohabitant (age 17+). Social worker must also include an assessment of cohabitants’ physical, mental and emotional stability. Include results of police and child abuse clearances. Include an assessment of the cohabitants’ feelings towards the adoption. Explain reason for cohabitation. **NBC considers a nanny, housekeeper, employee, etc who works in the home full time (approximately 30+ hrs./week) to be a household member, even if this person does not reside in the home.** Please consult the GWCA case manager should you have any questions/concerns about what constitutes an additional household member.
- IV. MARITAL STATUS AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS
- A. Summary of marital experience and quality (and marriage certificate verification).
 1. Views about each other. (ex. John sees Jane as “...” Jane describes John as “...”)
 2. Adoptive parents’ attitudes toward their marriage/ extent of satisfaction with the marriage.
 3. Method of resolving issues/conflict within the marriage.
 - B. Summary of prior divorce(s), including the date, number, cause(s) of the divorce(s), verification of divorce decree(s). If this is the first marriage for each PAP, please state this fact.
 - C. **For Texas families only:** The social worker must state that s/he has verified the marriage certificate and divorce decrees (if applicable) of the applicants
 - D. The home study preparer must assess the suitability to adopt based on the quality of the marriage. (**A summary statement of suitability is required for each section of the HS.**)
- V. CHILDREN STATUS
- A. Summary of all children of the applicant(s). **This includes all biological and adopted children living within or outside of the home.**
 - B. Statement of the children’s sex, age, interests, education, and place of residence (if not living with prospective adoptive parents)
 - C. Children 10 years and older shall clearly state their views on the parents adopting a child from China.
 - D. Make sure the visit/interview/observation of child (ren) is notated in one of the four “meetings.”

- E. Documented attempts to contact each child 12 years and older living outside the home.
- F. **For Texas families only:** Notate the individual interview with EACH member of the household three years of age or older, living in the home full or part time.
- G. **For Texas families only:** Please clearly state that the children living in the home are healthy and free of communicable diseases. This **MUST** be verified by a letter from the child's physician.

VI. HEALTH STATUS (**Families: please review for matching information with dossier documents**)

- A. **The health status of the adoption applicants shall be identical with the physical exam form provided by the CCCWA.** (i.e. height, weight, exam dates, test results, medications, must match exactly).
- B. Summary of applicant's height, weight, and health status (**verification of the physical exam form**)
- C. Statement on whether the applicants **have suffered from or have a history of any illness, or any mental, emotional, psychological or behavioral instability. The social worker must refer the applicant for psychological testing & evaluation if any of the following are applicable:**
 1. **Has received or is receiving psychological counseling, training or therapy**
 2. **Has potential emotional problems which could affect adoption, such as previous alcohol problems (must be sober for at least 10 yrs); mentally or physically abused; suffered emotional trauma or loss**
 3. **Has other problems which the social worker considers necessary to conduct psychological evaluation.**

The psychological report must be included with the home study. State if these conditions will constitute unfavorable elements that affect the raising of a child.

D. Address the **current physical, mental and emotional health** of the applicant or any additional adult member of the household. (ex. "The current physical, mental and emotional health of John & Jane is excellent.")

E. Specify whether the **home study preparer** made any **referrals** for the **physical, mental or emotional health** of the applicant or household member. Include a copy of the report resulting from each referral, and the assessment of the impact of the report on the suitability of the applicant to adopt. (ex. referrals for professional evaluation when the home study reveals prior psychiatric care or issues arising from sexual abuse, child abuse, or family violence, etc. if the home study preparer considers such referrals necessary or helpful for the proper completion of the home study.) **If the Social Worker had no concerns or referrals for the applicants' physical, mental or emotional health, please state this fact.** (ex. "This social worker had no concerns and made no referrals for the physical, mental and emotional health of John and Jane.")

G. The home study preparer must assess the suitability to adopt based on the past and current health of the applicants. (**A summary statement of suitability is required for each section of the HS.**)

H. **For Texas families only:** Any disabilities of adoptive applicants evaluated in relation to their adjustment to the disability and any limits on their ability to care for a child.

VII. FINANCIAL STATUS (Includes any additional adult household member): (**Families: please review for matching information with dossier documents**)

- A. **The financial information provided in this Home study Report must exactly match the Certificate of Financial Status, bank statements, and other supporting documents (as provided by the applicants).**
- B. **YOU MUST INCLUDE A STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE EVIDENCE/SOURCE, ETC USED TO VERIFY THE SOURCES AND AMOUNTS OF THE FINANCIAL INFORMATION** (viewing the Certificate of Financial Status does not qualify as verifying the "evidence" of their financial status- Ex. Mortgage statement, employment letter, tax returns, checking statement, etc)
- C. Summary of applicant's financial status: (may not be limited to the items listed below)

- a. Annual income (list combined and separate) **(as verified by: the employment letter, pay stub, tax return, etc)**
 - b. Other income (i.e. dividends, social security, annuity, trusts, etc.) **(as verified by: tax statements, court document, CPA letter, etc.)**
 - c. Assets (i.e. personal property, value of real estate, stocks and bonds, savings and checking accounts, other investments, etc.) **(as verified by: account statements, mortgage deed of trust, 401k statements, etc.)**
 - d. Liabilities (i.e. mortgage, car loans, student loans, credit cards, etc) **(as verified by: mortgage statement, credit card statements, student loan documents, etc.)** (Ex. John & Jane have mortgage of \$250,000.00 with a monthly payment of \$986.57, car loans totaling \$15,385.00 with a monthly payment of \$462.13, and credit card debt totaling \$4,596.21 with a monthly payment of \$34.51(/or which is paid in full each month).)
 - e. Living expenses- This is everything outside of the family's monthly liability payments. .. Should not include their mortgage, student loans, credit cards, etc. You must state how much the monthly living expenses total, but you do NOT have to list the amounts of the monthly living expenses separately. However, you must make a statement explaining what the monthly expenses include. (Ex. "John & Jane have monthly living expenses totaling \$1000.00 which includes groceries, utilities, clothing, dance classes, ...")
- D. Summary of balance between monthly income and monthly expenditures (monthly liability payments and monthly living expenses combined) shall be described. (ex. "John & Jane have monthly income totaling \$3500.00 and monthly expenses/liabilities totaling \$1000.00. This leaves a balance of \$2500.00 monthly which could be used for support of the adoptive child.")
 - E. Any income designated for the support of one or more children in the applicant's care and custody (child support) or any income designated for the support of another member of the household (disability income for adult member living with the family) must not be counted towards the financial resources available for the support of a prospective child.
 - F. **For Texas families only:** Health insurance of the applicants and indicate if adopted child will be covered- This is especially important for families preparing to adopt a child with special needs. The family should talk with their insurance company and make sure that the child will be covered upon placement with the family. **(as verified by: insurance policy statement, etc.)**
 - G. Life insurance of the applicants (not required) **(as verified by: insurance policy statement)**
 - H. **If there is mention of a liability or expense for a second home (not an investment home), USCIS/ NBC will require that a social worker visit that home, provide a full description of the home, address all state requirements, as well as make a statement of the suitability of the second home.**
 - I. The home study preparer must assess the suitability to adopt based on the current financial status of the applicants. **(A summary statement of suitability is required for each section of the HS.)**
- VIII. CRIMINAL HISTORY AND ABUSE (Families: please review to ensure the results of a Child Abuse Clearance is included for EVERY ADULT MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (age 17+) for EVERY state and foreign country lived in (regardless of length of time) since the age of 18)**
- A. Name **ALL** adult members of the household and list all states and foreign countries where **ALL** adult members of the household have lived since the age of 18, regardless of how long they lived there. (ex. "Since the age of 18, John has lived in Idaho, Nebraska, and Texas. Since the age of 18, Jane has lived in Italy, Switzerland, Florida, and Texas. There are no other adult members of the household.")
 - B. **A child abuse registry check MUST be completed for every adult member (age 17+) of the household for ALL places of residence since the person's 18th birthday. This includes all states and foreign residences regardless of how long they resided there.** Verification of NO child abuse record or other domestic violence record. **Home study must indicate the results and the date of clearance.**
 - C. Statement of verification of NO police record (from local police department or statewide clearance), RESULTS, indicate date of clearance.

1. If there is an arrest, include a certified copy of the documentation showing the final disposition of each incident which resulted in arrest, indictment, conviction and/or any other judicial or administrative action for anyone subject to the home study and a written statement submitted with the home study giving details, including any mitigating circumstances about each arrest, signed under penalty of perjury by the person to whom the arrest relates.
- D. The home study preparer **MUST** ask and report an answer to (in question/answer format) the questions for each applicant and adult household member (age 17+) whether he or she has **any arrest**, conviction, or other adverse criminal history **in the U.S. or abroad**, even if the record has been expunged, sealed, pardoned, or the subject of any other amelioration. **Non-disclosure could significantly delay or prevent CIS approval to adopt.** (Ex. “John & Jane were each asked ‘Have you ever been arrested or convicted of a crime in the US or Abroad?’ They each responded ‘no’”.)
- E. The home study preparer **MUST** ask and report an answer to (**in question/answer format**) the questions for each applicant and adult household member (age 17+) whether he or she has **“a history as an offender, in the United States or Abroad, of the following: alcoholism, drug addiction, substance abuse, family violence, sexual abuse, or child abuse, even if such history did not result in an arrest or conviction.”** *Please feel free to cut and paste this exact statement as appropriate for the family.* (Ex. “John & Jane were each asked ‘Do you have a history as an offender, in the United States or Abroad, of the following: alcoholism, drug addiction, substance abuse, family violence, sexual abuse, or child abuse, even if such history did not result in an arrest or conviction?’ They each responded ‘no.’”)
- F. **For Texas families only: A statement if applicant was a victim of sexual abuse or neglect as a child.** A single incident of sexual abuse, child abuse, or family violence is sufficient to constitute a “history” of abuse and/or violence. If the applicant was a victim of this abuse, please discuss the way they have resolved the feelings related to this abuse. *If no history, please state that fact.*
- G. Evaluations of any of the history listed above must provide the following
1. Dates of each arrest or conviction or history of substance abuse, sexual abuse, child abuse and/or family violence; or
 2. If not resulting in an arrest, the date or time period (if occurring over an extended period of time) of each occurrence and
 3. Details including any mitigating circumstances about each incident.
 4. Each statement must be signed, under penalty of perjury by the person to whom the incident relates.
- H. Statements about whether there was any punishment for any listed offense and whether the applicant has shown signs of correction.
- I. If an applicant or additional adult member of the household has history of substance abuse, sexual abuse or child abuse and /or family violence as an offender or any other criminal history, and the social worker wish to provide a favorable recommendation the applicant must have demonstrated appropriate rehabilitation. A favorable recommendation cannot be made based on a claim of rehabilitation while an applicant or any adult member is on probation, parole, supervised release or other similar arrangement for conviction. Evidence of rehabilitation may include:
1. Evaluation of the seriousness of the arrests, conviction, history of abuse, number of incidents, length of time since the last incident, and offenders’ acceptance of responsibility for his or her conduct and any type of counseling or rehabilitation programs which have been successfully completed.
 2. Written opinion from an appropriate licensed professional, such as a psychiatrist, clinical psychologist or clinical social worker.
- J. **The social worker shall make an assessment of the adoption applicant and whether or not she/he/they are eligible to adopt based on the information disclosed or obtained in any manner regarding abuse and criminal history of any applicant or household member.**

- K. **For Texas families only:** Statement that all persons 14 years of age and older have provided a criminal history and central registry background check for the state of Texas.
- L. **For Texas families only:** If any person in the household age 14+, prospective adoptive parent or additional household member has lived outside of the State of Texas in the last 5 years there must be documentation of Fingerprinting Clearances (fingerprinting must be completed for background check).
- M. The home study preparer must assess the suitability to adopt based on the criminal checks, criminal history, and child abuse clearances. **(A summary statement of suitability is required for each section of the HS.)**

IX. DESCRIPTION OF HOME AND NEIGHBORHOOD

- A. Type of home (ex. duplex, single family, brick, ranch-style, etc.), size (square footage), and appearance (ex. Well kept, uncluttered, nice landscaping, etc). Include a detailed description of the living accommodations where applicant currently resides.
- B. If the applicant is planning to move, the home study must include a description of the living accommodations where the child will reside if known. If the applicant is residing abroad at the time of the home study, the home study must include a description of the living accommodations where the child will reside in the United States if known.
- C. Each description **MUST** include an assessment of the family home and living space for the suitability of a child and determination whether such space meets state requirements (if any).
- D. Description of proposed bedroom for the adoptive child including size, ventilation, closet, window, etc **AND** an assessment of the suitability for the child **AND** whether the bedroom living space meets the requirements of the local government.
- E. Information about city, neighborhood/ environment of the community. (Big city, farming community, small town, university town, industrial, etc.)
- F. The type of educational, medical and public service utilities available in the area. (schools, hospitals, parks, recreation, libraries, etc.) For a family interested in the special needs program, it is important that detail is provided regarding medical resources in their area.
- G. The cultural diversity of the area and community's acceptance of children of other cultures and nationalities. (ex. John & Jane live in a very culturally diverse area with many families who have previously adopted from China and are always welcomed fully into the community.)
- H. **If you indicate that the family owns a second home (not an investment property), USCIS/ NBC will require that a social worker visit that home, provide a full description of the home, address all state requirements, as well as make a statement of the suitability of the second home.**
- I. The home study preparer must assess the suitability to adopt based on home and neighborhood described. **(A summary statement of suitability is required for each section of the HS.)**
- J. **For Texas families only:** Social worker must obtain a sketch or blueprint of the floor plan of the home showing dimensions and purposes of all the rooms in the home. Review floor plan and sketches to determine whether there is sufficient space to accommodate the members of the household and the adoptive child and Any potential safety or health issues. Sketch/blueprint must be attached to the home study draft sent to GWCA staff for approval. **THE HS WILL NOT BE APPROVED WITHOUT THIS**
- K. **For Texas Families only:** Social worker must obtain either a sketch or a photo of the outside areas showing areas of the grounds to be used by a child. This is used to determine any safety or health issues for the child. Sketch or photo must accompany the home study draft sent to GWCA staff for approval. **THE HS WILL NOT BE APPROVED WITHOUT THIS**
- L. **For Texas families only:** length of time spent at each residence for the past 10 years. You must specifically list the street address, city, and state, and zip code of each residence. You must also include the dates residing at each location.
- M. **For Texas families only:** statement that **the home is clean, safe, free of obvious fire hazards, and is equipped with smoke detectors.** *Texas licensing requires each of these be addressed. Feel free to cut and paste this statement if applicable for the family.*

- N. **For Texas families only:** statement that all pets are vaccinated.
- O. **For Texas families only:** if the adoptive home has a pool, wading pool, or other body of water, you must discuss safety issues and plans to ensure the safety of the child.

X. PARENTING PREPARATION

- A. Experience with children and/or training in childcare. (ex. Baby-sitting, godparents, cares for children of family members/ friends, parenting classes, etc.)
- B. Plans for childcare. (ex. Jane plans to stay at home with the new child. John & Jane plan to enroll their daughter in the same day care their other child attends. Etc.)
- C. Ways, means and ideas of parenting the adopted child (ex. Parenting plan, parenting style, etc. including specific information for special needs child, if applicable)
- D. **If the applicant(s) are planning to adopt a special needs or older child (over 3), the social worker must state the mental preparedness, willingness and ability of the applicant to provide proper care for such a child, their intention to adopt such a child and whether they are suitable to adopt such a child in light of their parenting plan.** If this information is not included in the home study an updated or amended home study will be necessary if the applicant seeks to adopt a special needs child.
- E. Discipline style (ex. Removal of privileges, time-out, grounding, etc.)
- F. Discuss the ways the applicants were disciplined as children and their reactions to the discipline they received. (ex. John was never disciplined as a child and feels like he was given too much freedom and knows that he will not implement this style with his child. Jane's parents used time outs when she was a child and grounding as a teenager for discipline. She believes these were appropriate methods of dealing with disciplinary issues)
- G. Verify the applicants' completion of current Hague Convention training requirements (**at least 12 hours each of specific approved Hague topics outside of the home study process**). Provide copies of certificates for the completed training. This must be documented for final approval of the homestudy.
- H. Include assessment of any potential problem areas, referrals to outside licensed professionals (physician, psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, clinical social worker, or professional substance abuse counselor, etc) a copy of any outside evaluations, and recommendations/restrictions, if any, on the characteristics of the child to be placed in the home.
 - a. If any referrals were made, include a copy of the report resulting from each referral, and the assessment of the impact of the report on the suitability of the applicant to adopt
 - b. **If none made, please state this.** (ex. "It is this home study preparer's opinion that no further parenting counseling is needed at this time and I have made no such referrals.")
- I. Document plans for post adoption monitoring:
 - a. State that 6 post adoption reports will be submitted to the *China Center for Children's Welfare and Adoption* per the post adoption regulation at the following intervals: 1 month, 6 months, 12 months, 2 years, 3 years and 5 years. If there are additional state requirements, please list.
- J. The home study preparer must assess the suitability to adopt based on the applicants' parenting preparation. (**A summary statement of suitability is required for each section of the HS.**)
- K. **For Texas families only:** Willingness to respect a child's religious affiliation and willingness to provide an opportunity for spiritual development if desired. This needs to be discussed regardless of the age of the adoptive child. (Ex. John & Jane will support any questions and investigation by their adoptive child of any religion, even if that differs from their own belief system. They agree to provide the child with an opportunity for religious and spiritual development.)
- L. **For Texas families only:** Discuss the adoptive applicants' sensitivity to and feelings about adopted children who may have been subjected to abuse and neglect. Discuss and assess the adoptive applicants' ability to help children who have been abused and neglected. If the applicants' experienced abuse or neglect as a child assess the handling of those experiences and the impact of those experiences on the applicants' ability to help children deal with their own experiences. (ex. John & Jane are sensitive to the feelings of children who may have been

abused or neglected. They fully respect that the child might need extra support, attention, love, patience, or possibly counseling. They are more than willing to seek out any outside help they may need.)

- M. **For Texas families only:** Discuss the adoptive applicants' sensitivity to, and feelings for children's experiences of separation from, and the loss of, their biological families. Discuss the applicants' personal experiences with separation and loss. Assess the applicants' acceptance of the process of grief and loss for children and assess their ability to help children through the grieving process. (ex. John was very close to his grandfather who passed away a few years ago and the couple has dealt with infertility issues in the past. They learned about the full emotions of grief and loss through these situations and they hope to use their experience with loss/grief and disappointment to nurture their child through their feelings of the loss of her birth family. They have a great deal of empathy for their child's loss.)
- N. **For Texas families only:** Discuss the adoptive applicants' sensitivity to and feelings about, a child's biological family, their sensitivity to a child's feelings about his parents, their sensitivity to sibling relationships and their willingness to support ongoing family contact and relationships. (ex. The family is sensitive to their child's sense of loss over their biological family. They understand that due to the nature of China adoption, contact with the birth family is highly unlikely. However, they would support their child if their child desired to make contact with her birth parents or birth siblings. They have respect, compassion and love for the birthmother for her choice to do what she felt was best for her child. John & Jane also plan to talk openly with their child about the choice that their mother made.)
- O. **For Texas families only:** Discuss the adoptive applicants' expectations of the child and the flexibility of their expectations in relation to the child's actual needs and abilities. Discuss the applicants' ability to recognize and emphasize the strengths and achievements of the child. (ex. John & Jane have no preconceived expectations of their child and plan to love and nurture their child and raise them to be a happy and healthy adult. They realize that all children are different and have unique needs and abilities. They are willing to seek outside resources or interventions as needed.)

XI. GUARDIANSHIP STATEMENT

- A. Statement designating the child's guardian should the applicants encounter an accident or premature death. The CCCWA does not have any requirements regarding the selected guardian for the child, as long as the social worker finds the guardian to be a suitable selection.
- B. The statement should include: name, age, profession, marital status, status of children, health and income in \$USD.
- C. The home study preparer must assess the suitability of the applicants' choice of guardian for the child. **(A summary statement of suitability is required for each section of the HS.)**

XII. SUPPORT NETWORKS

- A. Expected involvement of family members and their support of the adoption.
- B. Friends and other support systems available in the community. (ex. FCC group, church, etc.)
- C. Ex. "John & Jane's family and friends fully support and are thrilled about the adoption. In addition to extended family members' support, planned involvement and affirmation of the applicants' adoption plans, John & Jane indicate they have friends and neighbors with young children whom they can turn to for support."
- D. **For Texas families only:** The social worker must address and state the attitude of extended family regarding the adoption.

XIII. REFERENCES – The original signed, dated & notarized reference letters must be attached to the original signed home study which is certified and authenticated for the dossier. The letters must be signed, dated, notarized and delivered directly to the person or agency preparing the home study. Letters should state the relationship between the referrer and the applicant and length of time they have known the applicants. They should include information about the applicants' personality, merits, shortcomings, mental health, maturity, family atmosphere, stability, applicants' behavior in the community and interpersonal relationships with others; address applicants' ability to parent, suitability to adopt and any

reasons not suitable. Must have at least 3 reference letters from: adult children (if applicable), from teacher of current minor children, good friends, neighbors, employers, colleagues, minister, family doctors, etc.

- A. Three non-family references.
- B. Summary of their statements. Include direct quotes. (Ex. “This social worker contacted three non- family references. They all describe John & Jane as loving parents to their other daughter. One reference says that “they are the happiest married people I have ever known.”)
- C. **For Texas families only:** Include names of references. (ex. “Jill Smith says they are ...”)

XIV. PREVIOUS HOME STUDY EVALUATIONS

- A. The social worker must ask each applicant and other adult household member (age 17+) whether he or she:
 - 1. **Has a prior home study that was completed**
 - 2. **Began a home study process** in relation to an adoption or to any form of foster or other custodial care of a child **that was not completed** (whether or not the prior home study related to an inter-country adoption)
 - 3. **Were rejected or received an unfavorable home study**
 - 4. **Ex. “John & Jane answered ‘yes(no)’ when asked if they had ever had a home study in relation to an adoption, foster care or custodial care that was either completed, started and not completed, or completed with an unfavorable result?”**
- B. If **YES** that a family has been involved in a prior, favorable, or terminated home study, **identify the agency involved in each prior or terminated home study, when the prior home study process began, the date the prior home study was completed and whether the prior home study recommended for or against finding the applicant or additional adult member suitable for adoption, foster care or other custodial care of a child.** If a prior home study was terminated with out completion the current home study must indicate when the prior home study began, the date of termination and the reason for termination. (ex. “John & Jane stated that they had a previous home study completed in 2005 by ‘XYZ Agency’. The favorable findings of that home study resulted in the placement and finalized adoption of Little Jane in January 2006.”)
- C. If **YES** that the applicants had been rejected or received an unfavorable home study, a copy of the previous home study that did not favorably recommend the applicant or adult member must be attached to any home study submitted with the form I800A. If these documents are no longer available, the current home study must explain why the prior home study is no longer available. It must include the reasons for the rejection or unfavorable home study.
- D. An assessment by the social worker must evaluate the relevance of any prior unfavorable or uncompleted home study to the suitability of the applicant as the adoptive parent of a child. **(A summary statement of suitability is required for each section of the HS.)**
- E. **For Texas families only:** Request and assess the following background information (if provided) from any child placing agency that previously conducted a foster screening, pre-adoptive home screening, post placement adoptive report, or home study: **(YOU MUST STATE THAT YOU ACQUIRED/ ATTEMPTED TO ACQUIRE THESE DOCUMENTS)**
 - The screening, report, home study, and related documentation
 - Documentation of supervisory visits and evaluations
 - Any record of deficiencies and their resolutions and
 - 8. The most current fire and health inspections
- F. If **YES** that a family has had a previous home study completed **AND** this home study is an **UPDATE or ADDENDUM** to that home study, the following must be included:
 - A copy of the original home study being updated or amended, including all prior updates and amendments.
 - A statement from the preparer that he or she has reviewed the home study that is being updated or amended and is personally and fully aware of its contents

XV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS- **Feel free to copy and paste as applicable to the family.**

Social worker must assess the suitability of the applicant as the adoptive parent based on the applicant's background, family and medical history (including physical, mental and emotional health), social environment, reasons for adoption, ability to undertake an inter-country adoption and the characteristics of the child(ren) for whom they would be qualified to care. **This should be an overall statement of the suitability of the family to adopt a child considering all areas assessed within the home study.**

- A. Applicants' desired/request for **number of children, age range, health, gender, and ethnicity** of child. **This should exactly match the application letter to the CCCWA in their dossier.** (Ex. John & Jane Doe are requesting a healthy female, 06-24 months, from China.)
- a. If the family is open to adopting a child with special needs, please use the phrasing "including but not limited to" to describe the special needs the family is open and willing to accept. This does not need to be an all inclusive list but it will certainly give an idea of the needs the family is considering. (Ex. "The family is open to adopting a child with special needs including but not limited to cleft lip/palate, club foot, developmental delays, cerebral palsy, spinal bifida, tethered spinal cord, hydrocephalus, and other special needs on a case by case basis.")
- B. Formal **APPROVAL** of the applicants as adoptive parents from the placing country (*it is not sufficient for the Social Worker to state you recommend the family for adoption*) This must include approval of the **number of children, age range, health status, gender and ethnicity.** (ex. It is with great pleasure that I approve John & Jane Doe for the adoption of one healthy female, age 06-36 months, from China.)
- a. The age range that the SW approves for the applicants should encompass the family's request and also be greater than the family's desire. For example, if the family is requesting a child 00-36 months, we highly recommend that the SW approve the family for a child 00-48 months.
 - b. To approve a family for a child with special needs, please make a general special needs approval. (Ex. "This social worker approves the family for a healthy child or a child with special needs")
- C. Statement of authority to conduct a home study. Statement that the home study preparer certifies that he or she is authorized to complete home studies for Convention adoption cases. The certification must specify the State or country under whose authority the home study preparer is licensed or authorized, cite the specific law or regulation authorizing the preparer to conduct home studies and indicate the **license number, if any and the expiration date,** if any of this authorization or license. (Ex. "I, Social Worker, am authorized to complete home studies in XXX state under statute 123.456.789 (XXX State License # 123456789, non-expiring (or expires 1/1/2010).")
- D. Certification under 22 CFR part 96 - State that the home study preparer and home study agency are **Hague Accredited** to conduct convention adoption home studies. (Ex. "The home study preparer and XYZ agency are authorized to conduct Convention adoption home studies as a Hague Accredited Agency under 22 CFR Part 96.")
- E. Statement of previous international home study experience. (Ex. This social worker has 18 years of international home study experience.)
- F. Statement that the family is adopting the child through Great Wall China Adoption, a Hague accredited agency under 22 CFR Part 96, and Great Wall China Adoption has reviewed and approved the home study. (Ex. "John & Jane Doe are adopting a child through Great Wall China Adoption, a Hague accredited agency under 22 CFR Part 96. Great Wall China Adoption has reviewed and approved this home study.")
- G. Statement that the home study preparer informed the applicants of their duty to disclose all information and the consequences should they fail to disclose any information for questions that are asked. This is different than the statement that the family understands their duty of candor regarding anything that may require an updated or amended home study.
- H. **Must include the following Hague required eligibility statements:**

“The adoptive family meets all the requirements to adopt from China. John & Jane Doe who are adopting a healthy or special-needs child, are between 30 and 50 years old at the time of application to the *China Center for Children’s Welfare and Adoption* and have been married for more than two years. *(If either or both are divorced, the present marriage must have lasted at least 5 years.)* They are physically and mentally healthy, and neither has taken any psychotropic drugs in the past two years. Each has a Body Mass Index under 40. Their net assets are greater than \$80,000, and they have a minimum salary of \$10,000 per family member, including the child to be adopted. Both have earned high school diplomas. There are no more than four children living in the home and all children are older than one year old. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Smith has a serious or recent criminal history.” **ALL PHRASES MUST BE INCLUDED!!!**

- I. The home study preparer’s signature must include a declaration, under penalty of perjury under U.S. law that:
 - a. The signer personally and with professional diligence reasonably necessary to protect the best interest of any child whom the applicant might adopt, either actually conducted or supervised the home study, including personal interviews, home visits and all other aspects of the investigation needed to prepare the home study and if the signer did not personally conduct the home study the person who actually did must be identified.
 - b. The factual statements in the home study are true and correct to the best of the signer’s knowledge, information and belief; and
 - c. The home study preparer has advised the applicant of the duty of candor, specifically including the ongoing duty concerning disclosure of new events or information warranting submission of an updated or amended home study
 - d. Certify that this home study is true and accurate and the same home study provided to the prospective adoptive parents or DHS, USCIS and placing country and that it meets all requirements for the state, federal and inter-country.
 - e. **Example: I, "social worker" verify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States, that I have with professional diligence reasonably necessary to protect the best interest of any child whom the applicant might adopt have conducted this home study, including personal interviews, home visits and all other aspects of the investigation needed to prepare the home study. The content and statements within this home study are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I have notified the applicants and all household members of their duty of candor, specifically including the ongoing duty to disclose any information or new events warranting submission of an updated or amended home study. I certify that this is a true and accurate copy of the Home study as provided to the Prospective Adoptive Parents or DHS, USCIS and China or Placing Country. I verify this Home study meets all state, federal and inter-country requirements.**

1. SIGNED BY THE SOCIAL WORKER AND NOTARIZED.

XVII. ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Accreditation Certificate from Hague or COA
- B. Home Study Agency’s License
- C. Social Worker’s License, if applicable (check with your Home Study Agency on this, as each state has different licensing requirements for the social workers)
- D. Non-profit Letter for the Home Study Agency, *only* if the non-profit status is not mentioned in the Home Study Report.
- E. Home study Adoption Agreement (see Appendix). This should be signed by the social worker or representative of the Home study Agency. This form is not needed for Texas families.
- F. **ORIGINAL SIGNED/ DATED reference letters must be attached to the original signed home study which is certified and authenticated for the dossier**
- G. **For Texas families only:** Sketch/ floor-plan of the home with room purpose and dimensions and photos of outside area of the home.

Before your home study can be finalized by your social worker, the draft of the home study must be emailed to Great Wall for approval. ALL revisions/re-drafts, MUST be reviewed by Great Wall until final approval is issued. Upon sending back the revisions, please bold, highlight, or otherwise note the corrections that have been made so as to quickly and easily locate the changes.

Home Study Guidelines for Texas Social Workers Only

This section is for Texas residents only! The Home Study Guidelines included on these three pages are for families using *Great Wall* contracted social workers. **Non-Texas families: please refer to the preceding section entitled Home Study Outline for ALL social workers. Be aware that you must still meet the requirements for your State of residence.**

If your social worker has any questions regarding the Home Study requirements, please have them contact your Dossier Consultant at *Great Wall*. **All Home Studies should be emailed to Great Wall at [home study@gwca.org](mailto:homestudy@gwca.org) for review.**

Step 1: Autobiography – You should have already received your **Autobiography Packet** via email when your social worker was assigned. This will be helpful to the social worker and should be completed by each adoptive parent and sent to the social worker *before* s/he visits your home.

Step 2: Social Worker Documentation – Please provide the following documentation to your social worker:

- **Birth Certificate** for each family member. (Photocopy)
- **Marriage Certificate**, if married. (Photocopy)
- **Divorce Decree(s) or Death Certificate of spouse**, if applicable. (Photocopy acceptable)
- **Police Report(s)** from your local police department verifying that you do not have a criminal record. (Photocopy)
- **Medical Form verifying** that you are in good health. (Photocopy) (See Appendix)
- **Employment Letter** stating your position, salary, length of employment and likelihood of continued employment. (Photocopy)
- **Three Letters of Reference from non-relatives**. Please tell each person providing a reference that he or she will receive a phone call from your social worker. There is a release of information statement in the autobiography form to be signed by each applicant. Please ask your social worker before having references provide letters on your behalf. The social worker may have his/her own reference form.
- **Monthly Budget and Financial Statement** The information is listed in your Autobiography outline and in the Certificate of Financial Status (see Appendix).
- **Sketch of the floor plan of the home showing dimensions and purposes of all rooms.**
- **Sketch or photo of the outside areas showing all areas of the grounds to be used by the child.**
- **Summary of Extended Family's View on Adoption** is required for your home study. Please be prepared to share your extended family's attitudes and feelings towards the adoption process. The

social worker will be required to interview all children living in or out of the home, and must document all attempts to contact adult children.

- Please provide information about your **health insurance coverage** your adopted child will be covered by after the adoption.

Step 3: Children – If you have children living in the home, or children living outside the home who visit regularly, please provide the following documentation. *This documentation is necessary for the Home Study, not for your dossier.*

- **Photocopy of adoption decree, foster care authorization, or birth certificate** for each child.
- **Doctor’s verification of absence of communicable disease** for each child.
- **Contact information** for each child living outside the home, including adult children.

Step 4: Adults Living in the Home – If any other adult lives in the home you must provide the following to your social worker.

- **Certificate of General Physical Examination** Form (see Appendix)
- **Criminal Clearance** letter from local police department
- **Criminal Background Check:** *Great Wall* will verify that the adults do not have a child abuse history, or Central Registry Check. *Great Wall provides this service to Texas residents only.*

Step 5: Criminal and Child Abuse History Checks – Each parent’s information will be submitted to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services by *Great Wall*. Criminal Clearance and Child Abuse Registry checks in the state of Texas can take up to 6 weeks. This is subject to change according to TDPRS standards. *Great Wall* will notify your Social Worker once we receive the results.

Step 6: China Home Study Requirements – If the information is well organized by the applicant, it is possible to complete the Home Study in a very timely manner. The CCCWA requires at least **four (4) face-to-face visits.**

- At least one visit is required in your residence with all members of the household present.
- At least one individual interview with each applicant must be held
- At least one interview with the applicants jointly or as a family group.
- Children living in the household full or part-time with the family must be interviewed by the social worker.
- All children living outside of the home must be interviewed by the social worker. **If there are adult children who are no longer living in the home, the social worker must document at least one contact by telephone, in person, or by letter with him or her.**
- All adults living full or part-time with the family must be interviewed by the social worker.

Step 7: Directions to Your Home – Please send your social worker **directions to your home** before the home visit.

Step 8: Make sure that you provide your social worker with the “Home Study Outline for ALL Social Workers”.

List of Documents for Dossier

More information on each of these documents and how to obtain them starts on page 22.

Sample dossier documents can be viewed in the Family-Only section on the GWCA website.

All of your dossier documents must be notarized! To notarize a document means to sign the document in the presence of a notary public. To find a traveling notary, please go to www.123notary.com. **Please use a notary public whose commission will not expire before your documents are sent to the Chinese Consulate for authentication.** If you live overseas, it may be easiest to use a notary/ Consulate Official at the local American Embassy. If you live overseas and are in the Military, it may be easiest to use a Military/ JAG notary. Some states have very specific requirements on the wording and proper method of notarization. **Please check with your Secretary of State's office to see if there are any State specific notary requirements.** The Secretary of State's office will not certify your documents if they are not notarized properly!

Note: Your medical form, employment letters & police letters require that a signature other than your own is notarized. If the offices that complete these forms do not have a notary on site, you will need to bring a notary with you to witness the author's signature. You can find a traveling notary in your area by going to www.123notary.com.

ALL documents must be under 6 months old to be eligible for certification AND authentication. They must also be less than one year at the time your dossier is logged-in to China. Because of the 6-month rule, you may need to send a set of your documents off for certification and authentication before your home study is finalized. You will then send off a second package of documents after you receive USCIS approval (which most of the time will only include your home study and the USCIS approval notarial statement and photocopy).

Notarize, certify and authenticate items 1 – 9

1. **Application Letter**
2. **Birth Certificates** for each Adoptive Parent
3. **Marital Status Document** – present Marriage Certificate.
4. **Medical Form(s)** – One (1) for each parent – You must use the required form found in the Appendix. Also available on the “Downloads” section of the GWCA website.
5. **Employment/Unemployment Status Letter(s)** – **One (1) for each parent** – This includes letters for students and/or homemakers, and retired workers.

6. **Financial Statement** – You must use the form found in the Appendix. Also available on the “Downloads” section of the GWCA website.
7. **Police Report (s)** – One (1) report for each parent
8. **Home Study Report**
9. **CIS Approval (NOTICE OF FAVORABLE DETERMINATION)** – An original signed statement attesting that the attached photocopy is a true authentic copy of the CIS Approval. This statement and attached approval must be notarized, certified, and authenticated. Sample Notarial Statement found in the Appendix.

Do NOT notarize, certify, or authenticate items 10 – 14, but include them in your dossier.

10. Three (3) clear copies of picture page and signature page of each parent’s passport/s.
11. Two (2) passport photos of each adoptive parent,
12. Six (6) to ten (10) daily life family pictures (hobbies, vacations etc.)
13. **Client Contact Information**
14. **Attachments to the Home Study**
15. **Cover Sheet**
16. **One Set of Copies-** Clients must include one set of copies of their dossier documents. This includes copies of the original documents, certification pages, and authentication stickers.

Application Letter

The letter should be written by the applicants personally. It should not be a standardized format but will need to include several key points required by the CCCWA as listed below.

Write a 1-2 page DATED letter expressing these points:

- Addressed to “*The Officials of the China Center for Children’s Welfare & Adoption*”.
- The full name (first, middle, and last), date of birth, and birthplace **for each parent**
- State country of citizenship (i.e., I am a United States citizen) **for each parent**.
- The reason(s) you wish to adopt from China. When discussing the reasons for why you chose to adopt from China, please remember to be respectful, courteous, positive, and, most importantly, humble in your reasons. Avoid the negative or political aspects of the process, such as the number of abandoned children, as that is a very sensitive subject.
- A statement of intent to adopt a Chinese child.
- State any requests or requirements regarding the child to be adopted, e.g., age range that you are requesting, special needs or healthy, and gender of the child. If you have any particular requests, please include this information. **Do not mention specific physical characteristics of the child you wish to adopt, such “round eyes, pretty, light skinned”, etc. This is extremely offensive to the CCCWA officials.**
- **Families who are requesting twins or a particular province should note their request in the Application Letter.**
- **You *must* include the following statements in your letter promising that:**
 - You will NOT abandon or abuse the adopted child,
 - The child will enjoy the same rights and privileges as a biological child(ren),
 - You will raise and educate the adopted child to be a healthy adult.
 - You will accept post-adoption follow-ups and offer post adoption reports as required
- You should personally sign the application letter in front of a notary. Both spouses must sign the letter. As the purpose of the notary is to witness the execution of a document, the date of the notary should match the date that both applicants signed the document.

- Applicants eligible to request an **expedited referral should make their request in their application letter**. The CCCWA has final approval for all expedited requests. Great Wall cannot guarantee expedited status. Expedition is allowed for the following reasons:
 - At least one of the adoptive parents was born in China *and* is Chinese by ethnicity. **You will need to show the following proof of your birth: Birth certificate or legal/official naturalization document. The proof of birth MUST be certified and authenticated.**
 - At least one of the adoptive parents are currently working or studying and living in China for more than one year. **You will need to provide original employment letter from the Chinese company and original residence certificate in China or photocopies of Chinese visas to prove your length of stay in China.**
 - BOTH parents of one applicant were born in China and BOTH are Chinese by ethnicity.
 - ❖ **If you are requesting an expedited referral because both of your parents were born in China: You must send proof of their place of birth. You may use a copy of their citizenship papers, or birth certificates from China. They must be certified and authenticated. If your marriage certificate states your parents' place of birth you do not need to obtain their citizenship papers or birth certificates. For instructions on obtaining copies of your parent's naturalization documents please consult to USCIS website.**

- **Please note that we cannot guarantee the expedition of a referral. CCCWA grants expedition on a case by case basis and they can change their expedition requirements at any time.**

Make the application letter your own! Use your own wording in the letter and make it heartfelt. It does not have to be poetry or a novel, but it does need to be a sincere statement of who you are, why you want to adopt, and other things that you would personally like China to know. Be concise, but think of it as an essay of who you are, and why you want to adopt; you are trying to promote yourself to the Chinese officials and make them see what wonderful parents you will be.

Birth Certificate(s)

You will need to provide a proof of birth document in your dossier. If you were born in the United States, ordering your birth certificates is one of the first steps in your dossier preparation & paper chase. If you have not completed this step yet, please do so as soon as possible! Call the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the capital city of the state of your birth for a “certified” birth certificate or go to www.vitalcheck.com to order a “certified” birth certificate from any state. Please note that the birth certificate must be a “certified copy” (issued from the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state capital of your birth). For most states a birth certificate issued by the hospital or county is **NOT** acceptable by the Secretary of State for certification. If you are working on a 2nd adoption, please be sure to order *new* birth certificates for this adoption. For more detailed information on birth certificates/proof of birth documents please turn to page 4 “Collecting documents for the I-800A”.

The “certified copy” of your vital record is considered notarized by a State/County official. This is NOT considered certified by the Secretary of State. Your birth certificate will still need to go the Secretary of State’s office of the state it originated from for certification.

Please verify with the Secretary of State in the state where your birth certificate originates for any State specific requirement *before ordering the certification*. You may visit our Family-Only section of the website for direct links to each Secretary of State. Some examples of exceptions include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Texas** residents can obtain birth certificates from the County level.
- The **California** Secretary of State will certify birth certificates obtained from the County level as long as they bear the signature of a County Clerk. A local registrar’s signature will not suffice.
- If you were born in one of the 5 Burroughs of **New York City** you must obtain a “Vault copy long form with letter of exemplification”. You will not be able to order your birth certificate through Vitalcheck or online at the New York City Dept of Health.
 - You must contact the New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene directly. The telephone number for their automated ordering line is (212) 788-4520. We have found that ordering your birth certificate by fax is the most reliable way to obtain the correct form. Their fax number is (800) 908-9146.
 - To make sure you obtain the correct form, be sure to tell them that you are using this birth certificate for an International adoption AND that you need a letter of exemplification.
 - When you receive your birth certificate, make sure that the letter of exemplification is attached. If your birth certificate is only one page, then NYC has not sent you the correct form.
- **New York State** vital documents should be signed by Peter M. Carruci if they are ordered from the NY State department of Health. They do not need to be certified at a county level if signed by Peter M. Carruci. If they are signed by someone other than Peter Carruci they will need to be certified at a county level.
- The **New Hampshire** Secretary of State requires notarization for birth certificates as well as a certified raised seal.
- The **Georgia** Secretary of State requires a live public official’s signature on the birth certificate.
- Please note that the birth certificate must be a “certified copy” issued from the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state capital of your birth. A birth certificate issued by the hospital is **NOT** acceptable by the Secretary of State for certification.

If you were born outside of the United States, you will still need to provide a proof of birth document. You may use:

- An original copy of your birth certificate as issued by the US Department of State.
 - This will only apply if your birth was registered with the US upon entry. Please see pages 4-5 for more information.
- A copy of your original foreign birth certificate.
 - If you are using your foreign birth certificate, please follow this procedure.
 - Make a copy of your foreign birth certificate.
 - Prepare a notarial statement. You can find a sample notarial statement in the Appendix which can be modified for your situation. Attach this statement to the copy of your foreign birth certificate. This form swears that this birth certificate is a true and correct copy of the original document.
 - Sign the form and have this statement notarized by a local notary public.
 - If your birth certificate is not in English, you will need to provide a translation. You may do this translation yourself on a separate sheet of paper. Attach this translation to the birth certificate before notarization.
- A Naturalization/Citizenship document certified by USCIS. USCIS can copy your naturalization document and certify it as a true copy (form G-24). It can then be authenticated by the US Department of State and the DC Chinese Consulate (see authentication instructions). Please see the USCIS website for instructions on obtaining the certified true copy of your naturalization certificate or contact your Dossier Consultant.

Marital Status Document

Ordering your marriage documents is one of the first steps in your dossier preparation & paper chase. If you have not completed this step yet, please do so as soon as possible!

Marriage Certificate

Contact the Bureau of Vital Statistics or the record office in the County where you were married for a “certified” marriage certificate. For more detailed information on ordering marriage certificates please turn to page 5 “Collecting documents for the I-800A”. Remember, the certified copy is considered officially notarized by a State/County official. This is NOT considered certified by the Secretary of State. Your marriage certificate will still need to go the Secretary of State’s office of the state it originated from for certification.

Certificate of General Physical Examination for Adoption Applicant

You will find the Certificate of General Physical Examination in the Appendix of this manual. You can also download the form from our website.

Here are some important points to keep in mind:

- All tests **MUST** be completed. **Not Applicable is an unacceptable answer.** If we receive a medical form with Not Applicable or N/A as a **test result or date**, your dossier will be held until updated information is received.
- The **China Center for Children's Welfare and Adoption** requires that all dates must be filled in and all questions must be answered or circled.
- If any operations are listed, **your physician must include the date the operation was performed.** The year of the operation will suffice.
- We recommend that the adoptive parent fills out the medical history portion of the medical form. This may speed things up during your exam and you can be certain that the information listed is correct. If you've had minor corrective surgery within the past year, and are no longer receiving treatment for the condition, please contact your dossier consultant before your exam so we can discuss with how to handle this information.
- Make sure that the handwriting is legible. CCCWA has stated that if any part of the medical form is illegible, they will return it. This could delay you for months!
- **All dates on the medical form must be less than 12 months old when your dossier is logged-in to China.** This includes all test dates as well as the exam date.
- Make sure that there is a notary onsite at the doctor's office. If not, then you will need to arrange for a traveling notary to accompany or meet you there. You may find a traveling notary at www.123notary.com. **The notary must witness the doctor's signature and sign and notarize the document properly on the same day (the dates MUST match exactly)!** Most likely, the doctor will not sign the form on the day of your exam is performed, as the doctor will need to wait on your test results to sign the form. Check with your doctor's office to verify what date your tests will be completed and the doctor will sign the form so a notary will be present
- **The notary date and doctor's signature date must be the last dates on the document.** The doctor cannot sign and date the document until all other dates are filled in.
- **The Certificate of General Physical Examination must be completed by an MD or DO.** The CCCWA policy prohibits forms completed by a Nurse Practitioner or Physician's Assistant.

Doctor's Letters

Certain conditions will necessitate obtaining a notarized letter from your doctor to further explain your medical information:

- If there are **any** illnesses listed on your medical form.
- If you have had **any** surgery within the past 5 years.
- **If you take medication for anything other than allergies or birth control.**
- If **ANYTHING** is circled Yes or Abnormal on the medical form, **even if the doctor has written an explanation on the form.**

Doctor's letters must include the following:

- The doctor's letterhead
- A date
- The doctor's signature
- The letter **MUST** be notarized. It does not need to be certified and authenticated.
- The letter must address the treatment, prognosis, any current treatment, and if it will affect your parenting abilities.

When in doubt, please ask your Dossier Consultant or go ahead and have the doctor write a supplemental letter. It is better to be proactive in these situations than to have the CCCWA request additional documentation once your dossier has been submitted. This could delay your referral!

Certificate of Financial Status

You must submit a completed financial statement in your dossier. Please make a copy of the required form found in the appendix or you print off the template found in the Family-Only section of our website.

- The annual income listed in the financial statement **MUST** match the annual income in the employment letter. For this reason, it's usually best to wait until you receive your employment letters to complete this form.
 - For the previous year's income, please state the actual amount earned (what is listed on your tax documents or your employment letter). For the current year's income, please insert exactly what is stated on your employment letter as projected for current year.
 - If you receive overtime pay, bonuses or commissions, and these are not stated in your employment letter, then you may **NOT** include this income as part of your annual income.
 - If your financial picture has changed since you've submitted your application, please list your current information as stated on your supporting documents. Keep in mind to maintain financial eligibility, your household income must be at least \$10,000 for each household member, plus \$10,000 for the child you are adopting.
- Other Annual Income includes things such as rental property, annuities, and child support. You do not need to provide proof for the income in this section. However, if you need any of this type of income to meet financial eligibility, then you must provide proof of this income and include it under "Annual Income". If your "other" annual income is listed on the certificate of financial status, you must obtain a letter for it.
- Assets and Liabilities do not need to be listed separately. For your home study you may have been required to provide more detailed information, but for this dossier form you can include one lump sum under each required section.
- The Net Worth is determined by subtracting your Liabilities total from your Assets total. **The minimum net worth required for China is \$80,000.** If your net worth does not meet this standard, please contact your case manager immediately.

You will be required to provide documentation for all income, assets and liabilities listed for your social worker. We recommend that you print off all statements (checking, savings, credit cards, mortgage, etc.) as you complete the Financial Statement to provide to your social worker to verify all amounts listed. The information on this form MUST match what is indicated in the home study.

Employment/Unemployment Status Letter(s)

Please obtain one letter for each parent.

Note: Each spouse must have an individual letter of employment. Even if both spouses work for the same employer or both spouses are self-employed at their own company, the dossier must still include a separate employment letter for each spouse.

If you are employed, you must submit an employment letter on your employer's letterhead with the following information:

- Your profession
- Position
- Annual salary
- Length of employment
- **Prospect of continued employment. (If your employer is unwilling to make this statement, they can state that they do not make statements of continued employment or that it is against company policy to provide a prospect of continued employment.)**

If you are self-employed or receiving income from retirement, ask a Certified Public Accountant to prepare a letter of employment on their letterhead stating:

- Your position,
- Profession, and
- Length of employment,
- Annual salary and
- Prospect of continued employment or the likelihood that the retirement/disability/employment income will continue. If you are a self-employed accountant, have another accountant write a letter for you. If you are both self-employed by the same company, each applicant will need a separate letter.

If you are unemployed you must submit a letter stating this fact. This letter must contain

- A statement indicating your situation: that you are a homemaker, student etc.
- A statement that you are not contributing to the income of your household.
- The financial source for the present means of subsistence
- A statement regarding your plans for future employment.
- This letter must be typed, dated and signed by the person who is unemployed.

All of the above information is *required* to be in the letter. If any of the above statements are not included, your dossier cannot go to China. If you have difficulty with your employer, please contact your Dossier Consultant for assistance.

Police Letter/Report(s)

The police background check can be obtained from the police or sheriff's office at the local, county, or state level. We recommend that you start first at the city/county level and move up to the state if necessary. **Note: Each spouse must have an individual Police Letter even if the Police Department puts both spouses name on the report; the dossier must still include a separate Police Letter for each spouse.** Please keep in mind that the background check can be referred to in many different ways, including the following: Background/Record Check, Police Report, Police Clearance Letter, Good Conduct Certificate/Letter, Criminal check/Clearance, Database Check, etc.

- The requested letter must conclude that you have **no criminal record**. If an incident is reported on your clearance letter, **please have your social worker provide a detailed explanation of the event in your home study**. If a description is not included in the home study, CCCWA may request additional documentation once your dossier is submitted. *This will cause a delay in your referral.*
- CCCWA requires that each parent have her/his own letter that is **separately notarized, certified and authenticated**.
- The background check should be typed on police letterhead.
- The letter must be signed by a police officer or an employee of the police station and notarized at the police department. The signature on the form should be an original pen-in-hand signature by an official at the police station to be eligible for certification at the respective Secretary of State.
- State specific information
 - i. **Maryland** clients can obtain the “Gold Seal Letter” from the Dept. of Public Safety and Correctional Services. It must be signed by Deborah Hasan, LaVerne R. Hughes (or current Manager of the Response Unit). These do not have to be notarized or County certified. They can be sent directly to the Secretary of State for certification.
 - ii. **North Carolina** residents can obtain a Criminal/Infraction Record Check from the Clerk of Superior Court of their county. It must bear a raised seal and the live signature of the either the Deputy Clerk of Superior Court, the Assistant Clerk of Superior Court, or the Clerk of Superior Court.
 - iii. **Chicago** residents can obtain a police letter from the Department of Police, City of Chicago. The Illinois Secretary of State will certify these letters as long as they are attested by the City Clerk or Deputy City Clerk. These do not have to be notarized – but need a raised seal. If you have any questions – you can contact the Illinois Secretary of State.
 - iv. Good Conduct Certificates issued by the **New York City** Police Department do not require notarization. New York County will certify the **live signature** of Joseph Esposito, Blanca E. Figueroa, or one of the current sergeants.

****Please call to confirm this information with the Secretary of State before sending documents for certification procedures, as this might change with office personnel. ****

- **If you have lived in another country during the past five years**, you must submit a police letter from every country that you've lived in during the past 5 years. For example:
 - You currently live in Germany. 3 years ago you lived in Virginia and 5 years ago you lived in Florida. You will obtain a police letter from Germany and a police letter from Virginia.
 - You currently live in California, but 3 years ago you lived in Italy. You will obtain a police letter from California and a police letter from Italy.
- For military families, a clearance letter written by the military police from the base you were stationed at will suffice as long as it is signed and notarized by a military notary, Judge Advocate, or Consul at the American Embassy.
- Many families inquire as to whether or not they can use the background check obtained for their home study agency. You can use the same background check **as long as it meets all CCCWA requirements AND this document is notarized**. Please keep in mind that you must submit the ORIGINAL with your dossier, a photocopy will not suffice. If your home study agency will not release the original, you must obtain a new background check or request an additional letter.

CIS Approval (Notice of Favorable Determination)

Most families receive USCIS approval within 60 to 90 days of submitting their I-800A with all supporting documents, fingerprints, and a favorable Home Study report. You will receive this approval by way of form “Notice of Action Approval Notice” (I-797).

You will not use the original Notice of Favorable Determination (I-797) **for your dossier.** You will carry the original Notice of Favorable Determination (I-797) with you to China. To prepare a Notice of Favorable Determination form for your dossier, please do the following:

1. Make a photocopy of the Notice of Favorable Determination (I-797). You do not need to make a photocopy of the supplemental documents provided by USCIS.
2. Revise the notarial statement found in the Appendix of this manual as applicable for the Notice of Favorable Determination (I-797).
3. **Take the photocopy of the** Notice of Favorable Determination (I-797) **with the Notarial statement attached and sign the notarial statement in the presence of a notary. Either applicant parent can sign the statement.**

Please remember that the completion date on the Notice of Favorable Determination must not be more than 9 months old when your completed dossier is sent to *Great Wall*. The Notice of Favorable Determination is only good for 15 months from the "date of completion." If it expires before you travel, then you must renew it.

Additional Items Required for your Dossier

1. **Passport copies** – You will need three (3) clear photocopies of the photo & signature pages of your passport(s). These do not need to be notarized.
 - Please make sure that the photocopy is light enough that your facial features can be seen clearly.
 - Even if your spouse is not traveling, his/her passport page is still required for the dossier. The traveling spouse must also take copies of the passport pages of the non-traveling spouse to China.
 - **Make sure your passport is signed before making copies to send with your dossier.**
2. **Passport photos** – Adoption applicants must each submit two (2) passport-sized pictures for each parent. Many stores (CVS, Wal-Mart, Walgreen's, photograph stores, etc) provide this service.
 - Place the passport pictures in an envelope or leave them in the sleeve they come in. Do not attach the passport pictures to paper.
 - **These cannot be photocopied or printed from a computer.**
3. **Lifestyle photos** – Six (6) to ten (10) pictures of the adoptive parents in daily life. Though it is nice if a few of the pictures are posed, it is perfectly acceptable for several candid shots to be included. Professionally taken pictures are NOT required.
 - You will need at least 6 lifestyle photos. These photos must include at least 1 picture of both spouses and 5 more pictures with at least one spouse. There is no problem if other people are included in these pictures as well; in fact we recommend that at least one picture includes all household members.
 - Families often want to include photos of their home, other children and extended families. 6 photos is the minimum CCCWA requirement, but you are more than welcome to send up to 10 pictures as long as the first requirement is met.
 - The images must be clear. Keep in mind that CCCWA will use your photos to match some of your physical characteristics to the children they have available. If you compose the pictures on your computer and print them out they must be printed on Photo Paper (not regular copy/ printer paper), and the images must be clear.
 - It is not necessary to get professional photos made. 4"x 6" or 3"x 5" are good sizes for your photos, but you may use any size photos up to 8" x 10".
 - Mount your photos (or print them out on photo paper) on 8 ½" x 11" paper. You can use regular plain paper or colored paper. Use as many pages as you need. You are welcome to be as creative as you wish, however please note that captions will not be translated. Avoid using regular glue to adhere your photos to the paper. Use tape or glue stick as glue often makes the pages of your dossier stick together.
 - Please refrain from submitting photographs in which you are in revealing clothing or bathing suits, provocative poses, or photographs with alcohol or medications pictured. The photos should be family friendly.

- CCCWA likes to see photos of your home as well. If possible, include a photo of yourselves in either the interior and/or exterior of your home. This is not mandatory, but a preference of CCCWA.
 - If possible, include a couple of photos that show you doing something active, such as hiking, gardening, sports, etc.
 - Please make sure that you are not wearing sunglasses in a majority of the photos as part of the goal of the pictures is to show your facial characteristics.
 - This is your opportunity to impress the CCCWA, so put your best foot forward. Submit happy, flattering photos. Use the photos to your advantage.
4. **Home study attachments** - Your dossier will require several attachments for your home study. These attachments do not need to be certified or authenticated. **All of the following must be included or your dossier cannot be sent to China.** These attachments include:
- A copy of your **home study agency's current license**. These usually do not need to be notarized, but your state may have special regulations about this. Your home study agency will know what is needed for your state. (Not needed for TX, FL, and MI families)
 - A copy of your **social worker's current license**, if applicable. Again, check with your home study agency for your state's licensing requirements for social workers.
 - The **Home Study Adoption Agreement** (see Appendix) signed by the social worker or representative of the home study agency. (Not needed for TX, FL, and MI families)
5. **Client Contact Sheet & Hague Verification Form**– Please complete the Client Contact Form found in the appendix.
6. **Dossier Cover Sheet** – Please complete the Dossier Cover Sheet found in the appendix. **Include 3 copies with your dossier.** Include both spouses information on one cover sheet. Please see the instructions on the next page. **This page should be typed and should appear all on one page.** A template is also provided on the GWCA website. **If this is not included, your dossier cannot be sent to China**

Dossier Cover Sheet Instructions

(Please complete the form in the appendix or using the template on the GWCA website-
MUST BE TYPED)

Name: First and Last name: example: **Jane Smith**

Age: List your age and then birthday in parentheses: example: **34 (April 14, 1971)**

Occupation: List your occupation as it appears in your employment letter: example: **Teacher**

Education: This information should match the information given in your home study, and **should only list the highest level obtained.** Examples include: High School, Some College, Associate's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, Juris Doctor, Medical Doctor, and PhD.

Marriage Status: **Married**

Children: Please list the number of children currently living in the home: **None, One, Two, etc.**

Criminal Record: If your police letter states you have no criminal record, please put **“None.”** If you have incidents listed on your police letter or in your home study please write them here. Example **DUI (1987)**

Annual Salary: Please list your annual salary as it appears in your employment letters, home study, and certificate of financial status. **If there are any discrepancies, please write the salary as it appears on your financial status form:** example: **\$40,000.00 annually**

Request: If you are **requesting twins or a particular Province**, write “Twins” or the name of the Province. **Expedited** families should write **“Expedited.”** If you are adopting a **Waiting Child**, write “Waiting Child,” the child’s name and DOB. If you are not requesting any of these status changes listed above, please leave this blank.

Gender: **Female/Male/Either**

Age: Please include the age range as it appears in your **application letter: 0-12 months**

Health: **Healthy or Special Needs**

The cover sheet does not have to be a color copy, black and white will suffice.

Certification

You have completed notarizing the documents for your dossier. Now it is time to have the notarized documents certified by the Secretary of State in the state where the document originated.

- For example, you live in Texas, but were born in Kansas. You request your birth certificate from the state of Kansas. Therefore, you will send the birth certificate to the Kansas Secretary of State's office for certification.

Certification means that the Secretary of State certifies that the notary (or clerk of court in the case of birth & marriage certificate as well as divorce decrees) is valid. For each document you send, the Secretary of State will attach a certification page that includes the Seal of the State. We suggest that you begin certifying documents while you are still waiting for USCIS approval. **Please remember that documents need to be authenticated (the step after certification) before they are 6 months old.**

Please note that some states call this process the Great Seal, while others refer to it as Authentication. **Please note you do NOT want an Apostille as this will not be accepted by the appropriate Chinese Consulate (next step after certification).** To find Secretary of State Certification, fee and contact information for all 50 states, go to: http://www.hcch.net/index_en.php?act=authorities.details&aid=353.

When sending your documents for Certification, include a cover letter listing the documents that you are sending and explaining that you wish for them to **certify** the documents for adoption from China. Also include your contact information, telephone number and email address. Be sure to include the appropriate payment and a pre-paid, pre-addressed return envelope.

Some states require documents be certified by a county official before being certified by the Secretary of State. These include, but are not limited to, AL, DE, KY, MD, OH, GA, NY, and TN. Residents of North Carolina need to contact their Secretary of State shortly before sending in their documents for certification because North Carolina changes its policies from time to time. **Some states, including Florida, Montana, and California, require specific wording by the notary public.** Please check with the Secretary of State that is certifying your documents for any state specific notary requirements.

****Certified birth, marriage, and divorce decree certificates are considered notarized for the dossier. They will still need to be certified by the Secretary of State. ****

Certification Checklist

- ___ **Application Letter**
- ___ **Birth Certificate(s)** for Adoptive Parents.
- ___ **Marital Status Document**
- ___ **Medical Form(s)** – One (1) for each parent.
- ___ **Employment/Unemployment Status Letter(s)** – One (1) for each parent. Includes letters from employer, CPA for self-employed, retired or receiving disability and letters of unemployment.
- ___ **Financial Statement**
- ___ **Police Report(s)** – One (1) for each parent
- ___ **Home Study**
- ___ **CIS I-797 Approval** (Remember you are having the photocopy and notary statement certified, NOT the original).

Because of the “**6 month rule**” by the **Chinese Consulates for authentication**, you may want to send a batch of documents before you receive USCIS approval if you think they are approaching the “deadline”. Many families choose to send everything (except the HS and USCIS approval) as soon as they are completed. They will then send off a second package (which includes the HS and USCIS approval) after they receive their I-797 from USCIS.

****After certification is a good time to make copies of your original documents. DO NOT UNSTAPLE YOUR DOCUMENTS. Remember, Great Wall does not make copies of your dossier. If you want a copy for your records, please make your own copies before mailing your dossier to Great Wall.****

Authentication

PLEASE NOTE MOST CONSULATES NOW REQUIRE THE DOCUMENTS BE DELIVERED IN PERSON (by applicant, courier, trusted person , etc)

After certification, authentication is the last thing to do before your dossier is sent to Great Wall and then heads to China. Authentication means that the State seal is authenticated as true and correct by the Chinese government. The officials at the Consulate will validate the Secretary of State's seal and add an authentication sticker to each document. You will send your original notarized, certified documents to the proper Chinese Embassy or Consulate here in the U.S. Your notarized and certified documents go to the Chinese Consulate that serves the State from which the documents originated. If you have documents from different states that need to go to separate consulates, contact your dossier consultant to figure out the most cost efficient way to process your documents. **Please remember that documents need to be less than 6 months old when sent to the Chinese Consulate or Embassy.**

Washington D.C Consulate	New York Consulate	Chicago Consulate	Houston Consulate	Los Angeles Consulate	San Francisco Consulate
*Delaware	*Connecticut	*Colorado	*Alabama	*Arizona	*Northern California
*Idaho	*Massachusetts	*Illinois	*Arkansas	*Southern California	*Oregon
*Kentucky	*Maine	*Indiana	*Florida	*Hawaii	*Nevada
*Maryland	*New Hampshire	*Iowa	*Georgia	*New Mexico	*Washington
*Montana	*New Jersey	*Kansas	*Louisiana	*Pacific Islands	*Alaska
*Nebraska	*New York	*Michigan	*Mississippi		
*North Carolina	*Ohio	*Minnesota	*Oklahoma		
*North Dakota	*Pennsylvania	*Missouri	*Texas		
*South Carolina	*Rhode Island	*Wisconsin	*Puerto Rico		
*South Dakota	*Vermont				
*Tennessee					
*Utah					
*Virginia					
*West Virginia					
*Wyoming					

*Washington D.C					
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For example, if the Georgia Secretary of State certifies your birth certificate, then you need to send your certified birth certificate to the Chinese Consulate in Houston for authentication.

Please see the Appendix for a listing of Consulates and their contact information. Please not the consulate information can changes frequently with no prior notice. PLEASE VERIFY THE INFORMATION ON THE SPECIFIC CONSULATE WEBSITE BEFORE SENDING YOUR DOCUMENTS. PLEASE NOTE MOST CONSULATES NOW REQUIRE THE DOCUMENTS BE DELIVERED IN PERSON (by applicant, courier, trusted person , etc)

For authentication, along with your original notarized, certified documents, you'll need to send.

- One Authentication Application Form (G1). You may download this from the family-only section of the GWCA website. Please note that some Chinese Consulates are now requiring a G1 form for each PAP.
- Photocopy of your passports. Please note that some Chinese Consulates are now requiring a passport photocopy for each PAP.
- COMPLETE Photocopy of the documents (including the certification pages)
- A cover letter. You can make the appropriate revisions to the letter you sent for certification. A sample can also be found on the GWCA website.
- Self-addressed paid envelope for return (recommend secure, trackable mail such as Fed EX)
- Fees for authentication (see below)

The cost of authenticating each document is \$20. plus a \$5. mail “batch fee” for handling the package. If the documents are taken to the consulate via courier (NOW REQUIRED BY MOST CONSULATES), the batch fee is not required. Standard processing time is 7-10 days. Some Consulates will express process the documents for an additional fee.

- \$10 additional fee per document for 72 hours,
- \$20 additional fee per document for 48 hours and
- \$30 additional fee per document for 24 hours
- **Please call your local Embassy or Consulate (or visit their specific website) for cost verification and expediting options, as prices and policies may change without warning!**

Note: All documents to be authenticated by the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C. **must first be authenticated by the U.S. Department of State.** Once the documents are authenticated by the U.S. Department of State, you will then send them to the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C. to be authenticated. The U.S. Department of State information is included on the page for the Washington DC consulate. The fee is \$8 per document.

The listing of Consulates in the Appendix also includes information about courier services for each area. This may be especially helpful for the Washington D.C. Chinese Consulate/U.S. Dept of State, as the courier is able to hand deliver your documents to both of these agencies. Please contact the couriers for information about pricing.

Authentication Checklist

- ___ **Application Letter**
- ___ **Birth Certificate(s)** for Adoptive Parents.
- ___ **Marital Status Document**
- ___ **Medical Form(s)** – One (1) for each parent.
- ___ **Employment/Unemployment Status Letter(s)** – One (1) for each parent. Includes letters from employer, CPA for self-employed, retired or receiving disability and letters of unemployment.
- ___ **Financial Statement**
- ___ **Police Report(s)** – One (1) for each parent
- ___ **Home Study**
- ___ **CIS I-797 Approval** (Remember you are having the photocopy and notary statement certified, NOT the original CIS approval).

Because of the “6 month rule” by the Chinese Consulates for authentication, you may want to send a batch of documents before you receive USCIS approval if you think they are approaching the “deadline”. Many families choose to send everything (except the HS and USCIS approval) as soon as they are completed. They will then send off a second package (which includes the HS and USCIS approval) after they receive their I-797 from USCIS.

Great Wall's Dragon Dossier Service

Great Wall is very excited to offer our families the Dragon Dossier Service. With the Dragon Dossier Service, our Dossier Specialists will take over the time-consuming and sometimes stressful process of certifying and authenticating your dossier documents, as well as assembling the completed dossier for submission to **China Center for Children's Welfare and Adoption (CCCWA)**. *Great Wall* has over ten years experience in international adoption from China, and our Dossier Specialists are experts in preparing and reviewing dossiers to meet CCCWA's requirements. Families can feel confident that they will receive accurate and timely service from our Dragon Dossier Services staff.

CCCWA requires families to submit dossiers consisting of at least 13 documents. Once these documents are obtained they must be:

- Notarized and, in some states, certified by the county of origin
- Certified by the Secretary of State
- Authenticated by the correct Chinese Consulate

This process is detailed, tedious and time-sensitive. Locating the correct government agencies and speaking with someone in person can be extremely difficult and time consuming. Certifying and authenticating your documents involves determining the correct government agency to send your documents to, as well as the proper forms, payment method and amount to send with them. If you or your spouse is currently living in a state other than where you were born and/or married, it can take up to 25 mailings to complete the certification and authentication process. *Great Wall* sends your documents with the required processing fees to the appropriate county, Secretary of State, and the Chinese Consulate locations for certification and authentication. We also track your documents and follow up on their progress. *Great Wall* Dragon Dossier Service completes all of this work for you for a small service fee.

The chart on the next page is an example of the steps needed to certify and authenticate your documents and shows the steps that the Dragon Dossier Service will take care of for you. (This list may not be exhaustive. You may have more or less steps than detailed).

Document	Obtained By	Notarized By	Sent to County By (if applicable)	Certified By	Sent to Dept. of State By (if applicable)	Authenticated By
Application Letter	You	You	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
Home Study:						
Texas Residents	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>GW Social Worker</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
Non-Texas Residents	HS Agency	HS Agency Social Worker	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
Birth Certificate (per parent):						
Parent 1	You	You	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
Parent 2	You	You	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
Marital Status (select one):						
Marriage License	You	You	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
Death Certificate	You	You	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Divorce Decree	You	You	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Medical Form (per parent):						
Parent 1	You	You	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
Parent 2	You	You	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
Employment Letter (per parent):						
Parent 1	You	You	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
Parent 2	You	You	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
Certificate of Financial Status	You	You	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
Police Report (per parent):						
Parent 1	You	You	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
Parent 2	You	You	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>
NOTICE OF FAVORABLE DETERMINATION	You	You	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>	<i>Great Wall</i>

As you can see, *Great Wall's* Dragon Dossier Service will greatly cut down on the amount of work **you** will have to do to complete your dossier!

The certification and authentication process requires that you stay aware of several expiration dates and deadlines. Our Dossier Specialists are knowledgeable about these dates and strive to make sure none of your documents expire. Built into the Dragon Dossier Service are deadlines for families to submit their dossier documents to *Great Wall*. Along with the family's cooperation, these deadlines help ensure that documents do not have the chance to expire. These deadlines are easily met by most *Great Wall* families.

Explanation of Fees

- \$900 fee for *Great Wall* dossier preparation services.
- \$1,200 Expense Retainer for all authentication and certification fees, as well as Federal Express and courier fees. You will incur this cost regardless of using *Great Wall's* Dragon Dossier Service, an independent dossier preparation service outside of *Great Wall* or doing it yourself.

Great Wall will track the usage of the \$1,200 in your Expense Retainer. Any monies remaining after your dossier is sent to China will be refunded to you. If your Expense Retainer is depleted we will notify you of the shortage amount you will need to remit to *Great Wall*. We will also provide you with a statement and breakdown of how the money is spent. *Remember, you will incur these costs regardless of who compiles your dossier.*

The Dragon Dossier Service requires two scheduled mailings to *Great Wall* which are designed to save families money, ensure that documents do not expire and help the dossier process to run smoothly. *Great Wall* will provide a checklist for each mailer you send to us along with a pre-addressed FedEx envelope with postage already applied. (USPS Express Mail for our overseas families). The envelopes and checklists are even color coded to make the process easier!

You may sign up for Dragon Dossier Service at any time after you are approved by *Great Wall* to adopt.

Early Bird Reward: Families that sign up for the Dragon Dossier Service at the same time they sign their *Great Wall* Adoption Agreement save *Great Wall* the work of setting up two files for the family. These families will receive a \$25 Early Bird reward.

Grace period: If for any reason a family decides within 2 weeks of signing the Dragon Dossier Service not to use the service, their service fee and remainder of the Expense Retainer will be refunded, minus a small processing fee

Please contact your case manager (Dossier Consultant) for more information or if you have any questions about this service.

Compiling Your Dossier

Now that you have all of the necessary documents notarized, certified, and authenticated, you are ready to compile your dossier. Please see the appendix of this manual for a dossier checklist to make sure you have all of your documents and they have all been certified and authenticated correctly.

Make at least two (2) sets of copies of your completed dossier. This should be a full set of copies including the original notarized document, the certifications, and the authentications. **Do NOT unstaple the documents;** you may make the copies as they are assembled. You do not need to make copies of your lifestyle photos or passport photos. When you are ready to send your dossier to *Great Wall* **you must include one set of copies with your completed dossier.** If a copy of your original dossier documents is not sent with your dossier, you will be billed \$50 which is due before we can send your dossier to China. Furthermore, staff time in making the copies could prevent your dossier from being sent to China on schedule!

You do not need to use any special folders for your documents. Dossiers must be presented to CCCWA in a standard manner which we will take care of here at *Great Wall*. The easiest way to package your dossier is to put one binder clip on the originals & pictures and another binder clip on the copies.

Important! When you have completed your dossier, send to Great Wall the following:

- ONE (1) set of notarized, certified, and authenticated original documents
- ONE (1) set of photocopies (described above)
- Home study attachments
- 6-10 lifestyle photos
- 2 passport photos of each parent
- 3 copies of each parent's passport
- Payment for the second half of your Great Wall agency fees, plus \$1090 for CCCWA registration, translation and wiring fees. If you have already received your Pre-Approval for a waiting child, the registration, translation and wiring fees are \$670. You may pay this by check, money order or credit card.

Please mail the dossier using a service that provides a return receipt or tracking service. We send **approved** dossiers to China every Friday. To properly process your payment, review your dossier, and approve it for China by Friday, **your dossier MUST arrive at our office before 10 a.m. Wednesday.** Your Dossier Consultant will contact you if a problem is found while reviewing it. **Please be aware that if there is a problem with your dossier, we cannot send it to China the same week that it arrives.** Please also be aware that CCCWA's requirements may change over time, so unforeseen problems may arise when the dossier is reviewed. All dossiers must meet **CURRENT** CCCWA requirements when they are sent to China. If your dossier meets CCCWA standards, your Dossier Consultant will contact you no later than Friday to inform you that your dossier is being sent to China that week.

****Please check and double-check all your dossier materials before they are sent to Great Wall. This will**

help to ensure that your dossier is perfect and will prevent delays!**

Congratulations on finishing your Dossier!

The Conventional Plan Adoption Agreement Expires in One (1) Year

- The Conventional Plan Agreement is valid for one (1) year.
- The Client is responsible for sending their completed dossier to *Great Wall* within one (1) year of the execution of the Agreement.
- The Agreement will terminate one (1) year from the date of execution if the Client fails to submit the complete dossier to *Great Wall*. Then, your file will be closed by our agency.

Additional Fees when putting the adoption on hold

- The Client may place the adoption “on hold” for up to one (1) year from the date a written notice is received by *Great Wall*, thereby abating the term of this agreement for up to one (1) year. The request to place the adoption “on hold” must be submitted to *Great Wall* in writing.
- To resume the adoption process, Client will submit a new Agreement. New fees will apply to any unpaid program fees, if applicable.
- Client placing the adoption “on hold” prior to submitting a Dossier to China will pay \$500.00 Adoption Restart Fee.
- For Texas Resident Client, there is additional \$900.00 charge if a new home study is needed.
- Client placing the adoption “on hold” after the Dossier is submitted to China, and the dossier is not expired will pay \$250.00 Adoption Restart Fee.
- In the even the Dossier is expired after submission to China, Client will pay \$500.00 Adoption Restart Fee, and will be responsible for all the costs of assembling a new Dossier.

We hope you will start to work on your dossier and get it to us as soon as possible. By completing your dossier on time, the closer you are to completing your Forever Family. Please keep in mind that our goal is the same as yours -to bring your child home

Appendix

Certificate of General Physical Examination for Adoption Applicant

TO EXAMINING PHYSICIAN:

Your medical report is of paramount importance to the China Center for Children's Welfare and Adoption (CCCWA) in its examination of the adoption qualification of the adopters. The date of exam and all dates for blood and urine tests must be under 12 months old when the dossier is registered at the CCCWA. You are kindly requested to fill in all blanks. Thank you for your cooperation.

Applicant's Name: _____ DOB: _____

Address: _____

Date of exam: _____ (must be less than 12 months old when dossier is registered at the CCCWA)

MEDICAL HISTORY: (circle one)

EXPLANATION AND RESULT:

Have you ever had Tuberculosis?	No/Yes	_____
Tumor?	No/Yes	_____
Heart Disease?	No/Yes	_____
Liver Disease?	No/Yes	_____
Sexual Disease?	No/Yes	_____
Neuropathy?	No/Yes	_____
Mental Disease?	No/Yes	_____
Other Communicable Disease?	No/Yes	_____
Alcoholism or Abuse of Substance?	No/Yes	_____
Any Genetic Disease?	No/Yes	_____
Any Operation?	No/Yes	_____

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Height: _____ inches Weight: _____ lbs BMI: _____

Vision: Left _____ Right _____ Blood Pressure: _____

Hearing: Left	Normal / Abnormal	Right	Normal / Abnormal
Heart:	Normal / Abnormal	Liver:	Normal / Abnormal
Lung:	Normal / Abnormal	Lymph:	Normal / Abnormal
Thyroid:	Normal / Abnormal	Nerve System:	Normal / Abnormal

Blood Test: (DATE OF TEST) _____

Routine Blood Test: Normal / Abnormal HbsAG: Negative/ Positive

Liver Function: Normal / Abnormal

Urinalysis (DATE OF TEST) _____

Routine Urine Test: Normal / Abnormal

HIV Test: (DATE OF TEST) _____ Negative / Positive

Is the patient taking any medication?

What is the medication?

For what purpose?

PHYSICAL TEST RESULT:

Are there any physical, mental or psychological unfavorable elements of the adoption applicant, which will affect the upbringing of the child?

Is the adoption applicant's state of health suitable for raising a child?

Physicians Signature: _____ Date: _____

Physicians Printed Signature: _____

Physicians License # _____

State of _____

County of _____

Subscribed and sworn before me this _____ day of _____ 20_____.

Notary Public

(Attention Notary: Please stamp this document with your notary stamp that includes your name exactly as commissioned, the county of your commission and your commission expiration date.)

Certificate of Financial Status

Applicants' Names:

		<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Annual Income:	Self/Wife	\$	\$
	Self/Husband	\$	\$
Other Annual Income:	Self/Wife		
	Self/Husband		
Life Insurance:	Self/Wife	\$	
	Self/Husband	\$	

ASSETS:	VALUE
Personal Property (Vehicles and Others)	\$
Real Estate: Residence and Other	\$
Stocks/Bonds	\$
Savings Account(s)	\$
Checking Account(s)	\$
Other Investments	\$
TOTAL ASSETS: (Not including income & insurance)	\$

LIABILITIES:	MONTHLY PAYMENT:	TOTAL OWED:
Credit Cards	\$	\$
Home Mortgage	\$	\$
Other Liabilities	\$	\$
TOTAL LIABILITIES:		\$
NET WORTH:		\$

I/We attest that the above information is an accurate summary of my/our assets, liabilities and other information.

Signature and Date

Signature and Date

State of _____
County of _____

Subscribed and sworn before me this _____ day of _____ 20_____;

Signature and seal

Home Study Adoption Agreement

Contract between *Great Wall China Adoption* and Home Study Service Agency

This agreement is made by and between *Great Wall China Adoption*, a licensed, non-for-profit, child-placement agency located in the state of Texas, hereinafter referred to as "*Great Wall*", and _____ a not-for-profit agency, located at, _____ hereinafter referred to as "*home study agency*".

Part I

The *home study agency* agrees to provide a home study report that meets the requirements set forth by the China Center for Children's Welfare and Adoption (CCCWA), the Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS), and the state where the *home study agency* is located for the following client(s) _____.

The *home study agency* agrees to provide and attach a copy of the following: non-profit status certificate, agency license, social worker license, and, if applicable, any other documentation requested by the CCAA.

The *home study agency* agrees to provide *Great Wall* with formal documentation should the client(s) receive an unfavorable home study at any time during the process or if the home study agency rescinds their approval. This documentation includes a copy of the unfavorable home study or a written addendum to explain why approval has been rescinded.

Part II

Great Wall agrees to provide the guidelines set forth by the CCCWA to the *home study agency*.

The *home study agency* agrees that they have read and fully understand the contents of this agreement and agree to the terms thereof.

This agreement signed on this the _____, day of _____, 20__.

By _____, and _____
Home Study Agency Representative Great Wall China Adoption Representative

P. R. CHINA EMBASSY OR CONSULATES GENERAL INFORMATION

Necessary for Authentication:

- Choose the Chinese Consulate/Embassy serving the State where your document was certified.
- Though most Consulates will accept a check, we recommend that you use a money order for payment.
- You may use mailing service or a courier service to deliver your documents to the Chinese Consulates.
- Download Authentication Application forms for all Consulates from the *Great Wall* Family log-in site.
- Please review your state Consulate's website for specific instructions regarding your state. Some Consulates require extra documentation or forms to fill out.
- You may want to call to verify the following addresses as they are subject to change.
- Enclose a cover letter to list all the documents enclosed that should be authenticated.
- Some Consulates will no longer accept Fed-Ex. These are notated below but it would be best to call and verify all accepted mailing methods before sending the documents.
- **Please note that documents must be less than 6 months old for authentication**

Chinese Embassy in Washington D.C.

Consular District – DE, ID, KY, MD, MT, NC, ND, SC, SD, NE, TN, UT, VA, WV, WY, DC, PR (Puerto Rico)

Visa Office of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China
2201 Wisconsin Ave., NW, Suite 110
Washington, D.C. 20007
Attn: Authentications

P: 202.338.6688
F: 202.588.9760
W: www.china-embassy.org/eng

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM, 1:00 - 3:00 PM

Web Authentication Info: www.china-embassy.org/eng
(Click on the Visa & Passport tab, scroll down to "Authentications" and click on it for further information about the authentication process, mailing instructions and the authentication application.)

Prefer: UPS, and FedEx.

We do not recommend using the US Post Office, as your package may be delayed due to Homeland Security procedures.

*You must send a photocopy of each document to be authenticated along with the originals.

Note: You must have your documents authenticated by the U.S. Dept. of State in Washington DC BEFORE having them authenticated by the Chinese Consulate in Washington DC. The fee is \$8 per document. Their address is:

U.S. Department of State
Authentication Office
518 23rd. St. NW, State Annex 1
Washington, D.C. 20520
P: 202.647.5002 Phone Recording: 800.688.9889

You may use a courier service, such as the ones listed below, to send your documents to the U.S. Department of State and to the PRC Embassy. Please contact the courier service for pricing.

Courier Service:

Carol Fredericks
7805 Pinewood Drive
Clinton, MD 20735
P: (301) 297-9531
W: www.dependable-ac.com

Caring Hands
Colleen Rooney
430 M Street SW Unit N106
Washington, DC 20024
P: 202/554-2277
hndscaring@aol.com

New York Chinese Consulate

Consular District – CT, MA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT

The Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China
520 12th Ave.
New York, NY 10036
Attn: Authentications

P: 212.244.9392
F: 212.564.9373
W: www.nyconsulate.prchina.org/eng

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM, 12:30 - 3:00 PM

Web Authentication Info: www.nyconsulate.prchina.org/eng
(Click on “Passport & Visa”, then click on “Authentication” and select from the menu of these two titles: *How to Apply for Authentication* and *Frequently Asked Questions* to find out more about the authentication process.)

Courier Service:

Legal Eaze
366 Amsterdam Ave.
New York, NY 10024
P: **845-642-2990**
W: <http://www.legal-eaze.com/>

Note: *Send an original and a photocopy of each document and a photocopy of your driver's license(s) or passport(s).*

Chicago Chinese Consulate

Consular District – CO, IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, WI

The Consulate-General
of the People's Republic of China
One East Erie Street, Suite 500
Chicago, IL 60611
Attn: Authentications

P: 312.803.0122 (9:00 AM - 12:00 PM)

F: 312.803.0122

W: www.chinaconsulatechicago.org/eng

Office Hours: M-F 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM, 1:00 - 2:30 PM

Web Authentication Info: www.chinaconsulatechicago.org/eng

(Click on the tab "Visa & Passport", then click on the "Authentication" tab and select from the menu of these three titles: *Information for Authentication*, *Application Form* and *Adoption from China* to obtain further information about authenticating your documents.)

(Only walk-in documents are being expedited at this time, please call for verification.)

Courier Service:

Denise Hope

E: info@theres-always-hope.com

W: www.theres-always-hope.com

Note: The Consulate requires a separate certification for any document that is notarized. (For example, any attachments to the Home Study that are notarized need a separate certification and authentication.)

Note: *Send an original and a photocopy of each document and a photocopy of your driver's license(s) or passport(s).*

Houston Chinese Consulate

Consular District – AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, OK, TX, PR (Puerto Rico)

MAIL/OVERNIGHT services are sent to mailing address:

The Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China
3417 Montrose Blvd.
Houston, TX 77006

Inquiry phone: 713.520.1462 (M-F 9:00-10:00 AM)

E: visa@chinahouston.org

W: www.chinahouston.org

Office Hours: M-F 9:00 - 11:30 AM, 1:30 - 3:00 PM

Web Authentication Info: www.chinahouston.org

(Click on English for English version then click on the “Visa & Passport” tab and then scroll down to “Notarization & Authentication” and click on it for these two selections: *Authentications* or *Download Forms*, to receive further information about the Authentication process and the authentication application.)

Note: Please use a money order or Cashier's Check.

Note: Send documents using USPS Express Mail. Use USPS Express Mail for the returning document service as well.

Note: *Send an original and a photocopy of each document and a photocopy of your driver's license(s) or passport(s).*

Courier Service:

Cindy and Steve Marut

P: 281.342.7026

W: www.mychinadocs.com

Los Angeles Chinese Consulate

Consular District – AZ, Southern California, HI, NM, Pacific Islands

The Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China
443 Shatto Pl.
Los Angeles, CA 90020
Attn: Authentications

P: 213.807.8018
F: 213.380.1961
E: visachina@aol.com
W: <http://losangeles.china-consulate.org/eng>

Office Hours: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM (Live Answer between 2:00 - 4:30 PM)

Web Authentication Info: <http://losangeles.china-consulate.org/eng>
(Click on the “Visa & Passport” tab, then click on “Authentication” for information about the authentication process and click on *Application by Mail* for the Authentication Application and mailing instructions.)

LA Consulate refers to authentication as “Document Legalization” on their website.

Note: Please use a money order or Cashier's Check.

Note: Send documents using USPS Express Mail. Use USPS Express Mail for the returning document service as well.

Note: *Send an original and a photocopy of each document, a photocopy of your passport(s), and the completed authentication application form.*

Courier Service:

Janice Moore
Red Tape Solutions
P: 951.805.3008
E: gggandjmoore@aol.com
W: <http://www.redtapesolution.com/pages/1/index.htm>

San Francisco Chinese Consulate

Consular District – Northern California, OR, NV, WA, AK

The Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China
1450 Laguna St.
San Francisco, CA 94115
Attn: Authentications

Automated Phone: 415.674.2900
Direct Line: 415.674.2940
F: 415.563.4861
W: www.chinaconsulatesf.org/eng

Office Hours: M-F 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM; 1:30 - 3:30 PM

Web Authentication Info: www.chinaconsulatesf.org/eng
(Click on "Visa" and then click on "NOTARIZATION & AUTHENTICATION" to find more information about the authentication process and a link to download the authentication application.)

Courier Service:

International Adoption Dossier Services
Jill Touloukian
3790 El Camino Real, #114
Palo Alto, CA 94306
P: 650-465-0137
F: 650.329.9907
E: jill@papermidwife.com
W: www.papermidwife.com

Note: Send documents using USPS Express Mail. Use USPS Express Mail for the returning document service as well.

Note: *Send an original document and a photocopy of each document, a photocopy of your passport(s), and the completed authentication application form.*

Dossier Checklist

Document	Obtained	Notarized	County or N/A	SoS Certified	State Dept or N/A	CC Authenticated	Complete for Dossier
Application Letter							
Home Study							
Birth Certificate:							
Parent 1		N/A					
Parent 2		N/A					
Marital Status (select one):							
Marriage License		N/A					
Medical Form:							
Parent 1							
Parent 2							
Employment Verification Letter:							
Parent 1							
Parent 2							
Certificate of Financial Status							
Police Report:							
Parent 1							
Parent 2							
NOTICE OF FAVORABLE DETERMINATION							

Dossier Attachments	Obtained
Home Study Adoption Agreement	
Social Worker License (if applicable)	
Home Study Agency License	
Home Study Agency Non-Profit Status Letter	
Original signed reference letters	
Lifestyle Photos (6-10)	
2 Passport Photos (for both parents)	
3 Passport Signature Pages (for both parents)	
Set of photocopies including all documents, certification and authentication pages	

Female

Name:

Age:

Occupation:

Education:

Marriage Status:

Children:

Criminal Record:

Annual Salary:

Application Letter **1**

Birth Certificate **2**

Marital Status **3**

Doctor Letter **4**

Male

Name:

Age:

Occupation:

Education:

Marriage Status:

Children:

Criminal Record:

Annual Salary:

Assets **5**

Employment Letter **6**

Police Record **7**

Home Study **8**

I-797 **9**

Request

Gender:

Age:

Health:

Passports **10**

Client Contact Information & Hague Topic Training Verification

(This form may be filled out by hand.)

Name of each adoptive parent: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Home Phone Number: _____

I verify I have read and understand the following literature provided by Great Wall that provides information and training on the following designated Hague topics:

- Great Wall China Adoption Information Guide .5 hours: 96.48 (B) (1); (B) (6); (C) (1);
- Great Wall Dossier or Dragon Dossier Guide .5 hours: 96.48 (b) (6)

Adoptive Mother Signature

Date

Adoptive Father Signature

Date

- It is imperative that this form be returned to *Great Wall* with your dossier.

Please notify your Case Manager if your contact information changes at any time.

USCIS Sample Cover Letter

<<Insert Date>>

USCIS- Department of Homeland Security

Attn: Orphan Petitions Officer

<<Insert USCIS Address>>

Dear Adoption Unit Officer:

Please find the enclosed I800A application, supplemental documents and appropriate fees to adopt international from China. Documents included with this packet include:

- Completed I-800A application
- Birth Certificate for <insert name>
- Birth Certificate for <insert name>
- Marriage License
- Divorce Decree (s) <insert name(s)>
- Home Study with agency approval letter if applicable (must be included unless prohibited by your state regulations)
- Money order/Cashiers Check for application fee and fingerprint fees <insert amount> made out to "US Department of Homeland Security"

Any copies of documents submitted are exact photocopies of unaltered original documents and I understand that I may be required to submit original documents at a later date.

If you have any questions or need additional information you may contact me at the address and phone number listed below.

Sincerely,

Signature

Date

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____