



Building Families Through Adoption

DyKEMA

Exceptional service. Dykema delivers.

About Dykema

Dykema is a national law firm with offices in California, Michigan, Illinois, Texas, Minnesota, and Washington D.C. In addition to our Adoption Law Practice, Dykema offers a full range of legal services to support your adoption parentage arrangement.

Types of Adoptions Handled

We can represent you in any of the types of adoptions recognized in Michigan:

- Direct placement adoptions (within Michigan or interstate)
- Special needs adoptions
- Step-parent adoptions
- Intra-family adoptions
- Guardian adoptions
- Adult adoptions

We may represent either birth parents or prospective adoptive parents, but we are prohibited from representing both in the same adoption. Each party to an adoption in Michigan has a right to independent representation by an attorney. We urge all parties to obtain independent legal representation to protect their rights and to enhance the stability of the adoption.

Services That We Provide Directly

We provide all legal services associated with an adoption in Michigan. Specific services will vary depending upon whether you are a birth parent or prospective adoptive parent, and depending upon the adoption plan. Some of the legal services we provide are:



- Counsel regarding adoption options and your adoption plan;
- Counsel regarding pre-placement assessments;
- Counsel and legal assistance in the search for an adoption partner;
- Counsel regarding payment of birth parent prenatal expenses and record maintenance for these payments;
- Counsel and legal assistance in early placement of the newborn adoptee in the adoptive home;
- Counsel and legal assistance in bringing the newborn adoptee to Michigan from another state, or in sending a newborn adoptee to another state from Michigan for adoption by prospective adoptive parents who reside there;
- Preparation and filing of all court documents necessary to adopt;
- Litigating birth father issues, when needed;
- Negotiation of agreements regarding pre- and post-adoption contact among the adoption partners, if desired.



Referral Services

You will need some services to accomplish your adoption plan that are not legal in nature. We can refer you to appropriate providers for these services, such as:

- Pre- and post-adoption counseling by licensed or certified psychologists and social workers. We believe that pre-adoption counseling is key to a successful adoption, and we urge you to take advantage of these services;
- Performance of required pre-placement assessments;
- Adoption support groups.

Adoption Philosophy

We believe that adoption is a highly personal matter. We will work with you to fashion the kind of adoption that meets your needs, within the constraints of the law. An important issue is how open you want your adoption to be. We believe that you are the one to decide key issues regarding openness, such as:

- Whether or not you want to share identifying information (last names and addresses) with your adoption partner;
- Whether or not you want to have personal contact with your adoption partner during the adoption, after it is completed, or both.

We also believe that stability is critical to successful adoptions. We analyze each adoption plan to identify the necessary and appropriate procedural steps to be taken to enhance the legal stability of your adoption in the shortest possible time.

Post-Adoption Services

Most of our post-adoption services involve parents who have chosen an open adoption where continuing contact is maintained among the parties. If you wish, we can:

- Keep birth parents informed about the progress of the adoptee;
- Keep the adoptee informed about his or her biological background and birth parents;
- Facilitate face-to-face meetings between the adoption partners;
- Renegotiate agreements relating to post-adoption contact as your life circumstances may change.

For adoptions that are not open, or for adoptions which occurred in the past, we can perform searches for adult biological family members.

Fees

Our fees for adoption services are competitive with other attorneys and agencies. We charge for the time that we spend on your case, and for out-of-pocket expenses that we pay on your behalf. Our hourly rate varies from year to year. Please contact us for current information. We require our clients to pre-pay a portion of the anticipated fees at the beginning of our work. We charge our hourly rate against this prepaid amount. When it is almost used up, we require our clients to prepay a second portion, and so on. If we do not use the whole prepaid amount, we refund the balance to our clients when the adoption is finished. It is typical for the prospective couple to pay the legal fees for birth parents that we represent. Accordingly, birth parents who wish to work with us typically can do so without any out-of-pocket cost to them.

Should your legal needs extend beyond adoption services, Dykema also offers expert representation in the following practice areas:

- Bankruptcy & Restructuring
- Employee Benefits
- Family Law
- Health Care
- Employment
- Real Estate
- Corporate Finance
- Environmental
- Government Policy
- Intellectual Property
- Litigation
- Taxation and Estates

Contact Information

For further details about the adoption services of Dykema, contact one of our adoption attorneys:

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Exceptional service. Dykema delivers.

For over 90 years, Dykema has provided exemplary legal and consulting services to North America's greatest companies, business leaders, entrepreneurs and individuals. As our clients have grown, so have we, expanding from Midwestern roots to become one of the nation's largest law firms, with offices from coast to coast.



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