

# Adoption of Children Amendment Act 1985, Western Australia

1986 – 1995

URL: [https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main\\_mrtitle\\_4081\\_homepage.html](https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_4081_homepage.html)

## Details

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The Adoption of Children Amendment Act 1985 (Act 1985/108) which came into effect on 24 October 1986, had a number of significant developments, relating to the registration of private adoption agencies, and access to adoption information.

The Adoption of Children Amendment Act 1985 provided that:

- ‘Private adoption agencies’ could register and arrange adoptions under the Act. Only those organisations which operated for ‘religious, charitable or welfare purposes’ could apply to register. Organisations that operated ‘for profit’ were excluded.
- People who had been adopted were allowed access to identifying information, with a requirement for counselling before being granted access (this came into effect from 24 April 1986).
- The Adoption Contact Register which had been operating since the early 1980s was brought into law (from 24 April 1986). Access to information would be denied if there was a ‘veto’ on the Contact Register.
- A registered social worker was required to report that ‘all reasonable endeavours’ had been used to ‘re-establish’ the child with his/her birth parents before an adoption order could be granted in some circumstances.

The amendments also included a suite of regulations about how the Act would operate, including the placement of children with ‘special needs’.

In granting approval to register a private adoption agency, the Minister was also given the discretion to inquire into the ‘qualifications, experience, character’ and number of staff and the governance structure of the proposed adoption agency. It was also necessary for organisations arranging adoptions to supply people with written alternatives to adoption before obtaining consent. In the case where a private adoption agency was de-registered, all records relating to adoptions arranged during their period of operation were to become the property of the Director-General for Community Services.

## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Related Events

- [Inquiry into Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices, Commonwealth of Australia \(2011 - 2012\)](#)

- [Select Committee appointed to enquire into the Adoption of Children Amendment Bill 1983, Parliament of Western Australia \(7 December 1983 - 11 October 1984\)](#)

#### **Related Organisations**

- [Department for Community Services, State of Western Australia \(1 January 1985 - 1 October 1992\)](#)
- [Adoption Jigsaw, Western Australia \(Inc\) \(1978 - 2023\)](#)

#### **Amends**

- [Adoption of Children Act 1896, Western Australia \(1896 - 1995\)](#)

#### **Related Concepts**

- [Adoption in Western Australia \(c. 1896 - current\)](#)

## Resources

- [Western Australian Government Gazette No. 112](#), Western Australian Government Gazette Online Archive, 5 August 1994. *Relevance:* The Adoption of Children Amendment Act 1985 introduced mandatory counselling for people who had been adopted and who were now seeking access to identifying information about the parties involved in adoption

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