

Example 7. Legal services exemption. Attorney X (not employed with an accredited agency or approved person) provides advice and counsel to Prospective Adoptive Parent(s) Y on filling out DHS paperwork required for a Convention adoption. Among other papers, Attorney X prepares an affidavit of consent to termination of parental rights and to adoption of Child W to be signed by the birth mother in the United States. Attorney X must be approved or supervised because securing consent to termination of parental rights is an adoption service. In contrast, Attorney Z (not employed with an accredited agency or approved person) assists Adoptive Parent(s) T to complete an adoption in the State in which they reside, after they have been granted an adoption in Child V's Convention country of origin. Attorney Z is exempt from approval or supervision because she is providing legal services, but no adoption services.

Example 8. Post-placement monitoring. A court in a Convention country has granted custody of Child W to Prospective Adoptive Parent(s) Y pending the completion of W's adoption. Agency X interviews both Prospective Adoptive Parent(s) Y and Child W in their home in the United States. Agency X gathers information on the adjustment of Child W as a member of the family and inquires into the social and educational progress of Child W. Agency X must be accredited, temporarily accredited, approved, or supervised. Agency X's activities constitute post-placement monitoring, which is an adoption service. In contrast, if Person Z provided counseling for Prospective Adoptive Parent(s) Y and/or Child W, but provided no adoption services in the United States to the family, Person Z would not need to be approved or supervised. Post-placement counseling is different than post-placement monitoring because it does not relate to evaluating the adoption placement. Post-placement counseling is not an adoption service and does not trigger the accreditation/approval requirements of the IAA and this part.

Example 9. Post-adoption services. Convention Country H requires that post-adoption reports be completed and sent to its Central Authority every year until adopted children reach the age of 18. Agency X provides support groups and a newsletter for U.S. parents that have adopted children from Country H and encourages parents to complete their post-adoption reports annually. Agency X does not need to be accredited, temporarily accredited, approved, or supervised because it is providing only post-adoption services. Post-adoption services are not included in the definition of adoption services, and therefore, do not trigger accreditation/approval requirements of the IAA and this part.

Example 10. Assuming custody and providing services after a disruption. Agency X provides counseling for Prospective Adoptive Parent(s) Y and for Child W pending the completion of Child W's Convention adoption. The adoption is eventually disrupted. Agency X helps recruit and identify new prospective adoptive parent(s) for Child W, but it is Agency P that assumes custody of Child W and places him in foster care until an alternative adoptive placement can be found. Agency X is not required to be accredited, temporarily accredited, approved, or supervised because it is not providing an adoption service in the United States as defined in § 96.2. Agency P, on the other hand, is providing an adoption service and would have to be accredited, temporarily accredited, approved, or supervised.

Example 11. Making non-judicial determinations of best interest of child and appropriateness of adoptive placement of child. Agency X receives information about and a videotape of Child W from the institution where Child W lives in a Convention country. Based on the age, sex, and health problems of Child W, Agency X matches Prospective Adoptive Parent(s) Y with Child W. Prospective Adoptive Parent(s) Y receive a referral from Agency X and agree to accept the referral and proceed with the adoption of Child W. Agency X determines that Prospective Adoptive Parent(s) Y are a good placement for Child W and notifies the competent authority in W's country of origin that it has found a match for Child W and will start preparing adoption paperwork. All of Agency X's services are provided in the United States. Agency X is performing an adoption service and must be accredited, temporarily accredited, approved, or supervised.

Example 12. Securing necessary consent to termination of parental rights and to adoption. Facilitator Y is accredited by Convention Country Z. He has contacts at several orphanages in Convention Country Z and helps Agency X match children eligible for adoption with prospective adoptive parent(s) in the United States. Facilitator Y works with the institution that is the legal guardian of Child W in order to get the documents showing the institution's legal consent to the adoption of Child W. Agency X is the only U.S. agency providing adoption services in the case. Agency X must be accredited, temporarily accredited, or approved and must either treat Facilitator Y as a foreign supervised provider in accordance with § 96.46(a) and (b) or verify the consents Facilitator Y secured, in accordance with § 96.46(c).

§ 96.16 Public domestic authorities.

Public domestic authorities are not required to become accredited to be

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able to provide adoption services in Convention adoption cases, but must comply with the Convention, the IAA, and other applicable law when providing services in a Convention adoption case.

§ 96.17 Effective date of accreditation and approval requirements.

The Secretary will publish a document in the FEDERAL REGISTER announcing the date on which the Convention will enter into force for the United States. As of that date, the regulations in subpart C of this part will govern Convention adoptions between the United States and Convention countries, and agencies or persons providing adoption services must comply with § 96.12 and applicable Federal regulations. The Secretary will maintain for the public a current listing of Convention countries.

Subpart D—Application Procedures for Accreditation and Approval

§ 96.18 Scope.

(a) Agencies are eligible to apply for “accreditation” or “temporary accreditation.” Persons are eligible to apply for “approval.” Temporary accreditation is governed by the provisions in subpart N of this part. Unless otherwise provided in subpart N, the provisions of this subpart do not apply to agencies seeking temporary accreditation. Applications for full accreditation rather than temporary accreditation will be processed in accordance with § 96.20 and § 96.21.

(b) An agency or person seeking to be accredited or approved as of the time the Convention enters into force for the United States, and to be included on the initial list of accredited agencies and approved persons that the Secretary will deposit with the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law, must follow the special provision contained in § 96.19.

(c) If an agency or person is reapplying for accreditation or approval following cancellation of its accreditation or approval by an accrediting entity or refusal by an accrediting entity to renew its accreditation or approval,

it must comply with the procedures in § 96.78.

(d) If an agency or person that has been accredited or approved is seeking renewal, it must comply with the procedures in § 96.63.

§ 96.19 Special provision for agencies and persons seeking to be accredited or approved as of the time the Convention enters into force for the United States.

(a) The Secretary will establish and announce, by public notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER, a transitional application deadline. An agency or person seeking to be accredited or approved as of the time the Convention enters into force for the United States must submit an application to an accrediting entity with jurisdiction to evaluate its application, with the required fee(s), by the transitional application deadline. The Secretary will subsequently establish and announce a date by which such agencies and persons must complete the accreditation or approval process in time to be accredited or approved at the time the Convention enters into force for the United States (deadline for initial accreditation or approval).

(b) The accrediting entity must use its best efforts to provide a reasonable opportunity for an agency or person that applies by the transitional application deadline to complete the accreditation or approval process by the deadline for initial accreditation or approval. Only those agencies and persons that are accredited or approved by the deadline for initial accreditation or approval will be included on the initial list of accredited agencies and approved persons that the Secretary will deposit with the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law.

(c) The accrediting entity may, in its discretion, permit an agency or person that fails to submit an application by the transitional application deadline to attempt to complete the accreditation or approval process in time to be included on the initial list; however, such an agency or person is not assured an opportunity to complete the accreditation or approval process in time to be included on the initial list. The accrediting entity must give priority to applicants that filed by the transitional