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Attorney General

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

**Gareth Ward**

Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Wednesday, 5 August 2020

### **NEW BIRTH CERTIFICATES TO RECOGNISE ADOPTION**

Adopted people in NSW will be able to have both their birth and adopted families included on a birth certificate for the first time in the State's history following new reforms introduced to Parliament.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said the new integrated birth certificates (IBC) will modernise this important legal identity document by including an adopted person's full history.

"For many adopted people, their current birth certificate does not reflect their life story, who they are and where they came from," Mr Speakman said.

"These reforms will give adopted people across the State the choice to use a birth certificate that includes information about their parents and siblings at birth, as well as their parents and siblings after they have been adopted.

"We have listened to the calls from adopted people and legal experts, and are delighted to be introducing the first change to birth certificates for adopted people in 55 years."

Under the current law, a birth certificate issued by the Registrar of Births Deaths & Marriages (BDM) after a person is adopted can only record the child's adoptive parents and any adoptive siblings, making no reference to the birth parents.

Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services Gareth Ward said making an integrated birth certificate available to adopted people aligns with contemporary "open" adoption practices.

"Today we mark a further step away from the secrecy associated with the adoption policies of the past," Mr Ward said.

"Open adoption means that adoptive and birth families now know about each other, exchange information and often have direct contact to enable children to connect with and understand their background.

"This announcement will build on NSW's nation-leading open adoption policy to enable a person to use a birth certificate that records their connection to their birth family and their cultural heritage."

The Bill amends the *Adoption Act 2000* and the *Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995* to authorise the issuing of an IBC.

Following the proposed amendments, newly adopted people will be issued with an IBC along with the existing post adoptive birth certificate that is provided after adoption. Both will be legal identity documents, allowing the adopted person to use whichever one they prefer.

People adopted prior to the commencement of the reforms can contact the Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages to find out how they can apply for an IBC.

To read more about the Bill visit [link](#).