



**Mark Speakman**

Attorney General

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

**Gareth Ward**

Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NEW BIRTH CERTIFICATE GIVES ADOPTED PEOPLE CHOICE**

For the first time in NSW history adopted people will now have the option to have both their birth and adopted families included on a birth certificate.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said this is a significant milestone for adopted people in NSW, as yesterday evening the Parliament passed legislation enabling a person's history before and after adoption to be recorded on an integrated birth certificate (IBC).

"This reform is not just symbolic; it reflects NSW's contemporary open adoption policy," Mr Speakman said.

"Connections between birth and adopted families are encouraged under modern practices so that children are able to better understand their background and heritage.

"An IBC reflects this approach as it records the names of both the birth and adoptive parents and siblings on the one document."

The *Adoption Legislation Amendment (Integrated Birth Certificates) Act 2020* amends the *Adoption Act 2000* and the *Births Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995* to introduce the certificates.

The introduction of IBCs is the result of reviews and extensive consultation with key government bodies, the adoption community and members of the public.

Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services Gareth Ward said the reform demonstrates NSW Government's ongoing commitment to implementing best practice adoption policies.

"Providing adopted people with a choice as to which certificate they use gives them greater control over their own story, history and identity," Mr Ward said.

"We understand transparency is crucial and how important it is that the events of an adopted person's life are appropriately recorded and recognised."

"We have listened to the community and we are pleased to take this important step forward to ensure open adoption practice is reflected in official documentation."

[Barnardos](#) CEO Deirdre Cheers welcomed the reform and said it would benefit children adopted from out-of-home care.

“It is vital for children to know who they are and where they come from through birth family connection, and this reform is another positive step forward,” Ms Cheers said.

“We know from experience that openness, knowledge and understanding around adoption assists the child in the formation of a healthy sense of identity, which is essential for their development and also ensures better life outcomes.”

People adopted after the commencement of the legislation will now be issued both an IBC and the current post-adoptive birth certificate at no additional cost.

For adoptions after 1 January 2010, an application for an IBC can be made through Births, Deaths & Marriages (BDM) at [www.nsw.gov.au/bdm](http://www.nsw.gov.au/bdm) or via 13 77 78. The BDM website will also have information about the application process for adoptions that occurred before 1 January 2010 once the bill commences.

For information on adoption visit [www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/adoption](http://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/adoption).

To read the Act visit this [link](#).