



The South African Association for  
Social Workers in Private Practice

## SOCIAL WORKERS SPECIALISING IN ADOPTION

### **What do we do:**

An adoption social worker is responsible for facilitating the adoption process for both the family that is adopting; the parents placing the child in adoption and the child who is being adopted. These specialist social workers work with children who are not supported by and are legally separated from their biological parents.

### **Do we work alone?**

Social workers that specialise in adoptions can work together in the private sector as a unit and with government organisations and/or adoption agencies to place children in adoptive families.

### **What are the types of services offered?**

- We identify suitable matches when it comes to matching and placement of children with the right adoptive family. This task will typically involve:
  - Undertaking adoption counselling and;
  - Undertaking investigations on both the child and their family's circumstances.
  - Screening the suitability of prospective adoptive parents.
  - Undertaking and facilitating all the legal court processes.
  - Pre and post placement services.
- We assist with counselling the child's birth family on the adoption process and what rights they are forfeiting and we help assess and attend to the child's needs.
- We serve as a liaison between the child and their natural and adopted family.
- We work on research and policy development issues related to advocating for vulnerable children's placement in permanent care.
- We liaise with an adopted child's school to ensure that the child is performing satisfactorily academically and is receiving any special assistance that is necessary as part of post adoptive services.



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## **What qualifications do we have?**

Adoption is a specialised field of social work. Social workers interested in specialising in this field of practice require an accreditation by the respective Provincial Departments of Social Development. The period of Accreditation is for 5 years and renewed after each 5 years. The prospective adoption specialist must then register a Speciality with the SA Council for Social Service Professions. New Regulations are being formalized by SACSSP to register this speciality.

Once this is all completed, the social worker can then use the title of Specialist in Adoption Work (SIAW).