Steps in the Adoption Process

1. Assessment

2. Adjudication

3. Determination

The following three flowcharts give you a step-by-step guide to the adoption process in Ireland. We provide a glossary for reference, as several terms are abbreviated in the charts. Also, some terms we have to use are quite formal, so we have explained them in the glossary for clarity.

We provide a colour key to show which person or agency is responsible for particular actions. We hope you find this helpful.
**Glossary:**

**Abbreviations:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAI</td>
<td>The Adoption Authority of Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>AAI Board</td>
<td>The board of the Adoption Authority of Ireland who adjudicate on adoption matters where necessary</td>
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<tr>
<td>AAI ICA</td>
<td>The Intercountry Adoption Unit within the AAI who administer the intercountry adoption process</td>
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<tr>
<td>AAI DOM</td>
<td>The Domestic Adoption Unit within the AAI who administer the domestic adoption process</td>
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<tr>
<td>AAI SW</td>
<td>The social work team within the Adoption Authority of Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACT</td>
<td>An adoption agency accredited by the AAI to carry out assessments for prospective adoptive parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tusla</td>
<td>Child and Family Agency, carries out assessments for prospective adoptive parents</td>
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**Terms:**

- **Adjudication:** Examination and assessment of all the information supplied by the applicants, assessment agency, social workers, and so on.

- **Determination:** The decision of the Board or the Intercountry Adoption Unit whether or not to issue a Declaration of Eligibility and Suitability.

- **Minded to decline:** If the Board are ‘minded to decline’, it means they are not satisfied to let the application proceed without further information from the applicants.

**Flow Chart Key**

- □ = Applicants
- ▪ = Assessing Agency / Local Adoption Committee
- ● = AAI ICA
- ◼ = AAI Board
1. Assessment

Applicants apply to be assessed by TUSLA / PACT

TUSLA / PACT assess applicants and prepare Assessment Report with a Recommendation

Local Adoption Committee review Assessment Report and make a Recommendation

AAI ICA and SW verify that Assessment and Recommendation paperwork is complete

- Incomplete
- Complete

Request additional documents or clarification

Move on to Step 2 - Adjudication
2. Adjudication

Assessment and Recommendation both Positive

Either Assessment or Recommendation Negative

AAI SW Positive

AAI SW Negative

AAI SW Positive or Negative

Board assess case sheet compiled by DOM or ICA. This includes:
• TUSLA / PACT assessment and recommendation
• LAC recommendation
• AAI SW assessment and recommendation

Further information may be requested from assessing agency

Written documents may be submitted to AAI and/or an Information Sharing meeting may be held with AAI Board

The AAI Board considers:
• Assessing Agency Assessment
• Local Adoption Committee Recommendation
• AAI SW Recommendation
• Any additional documents submitted
• Proceedings of the Information Sharing meeting (if held)
The Board then satisfies itself as to the eligibility and suitability of the applicants.

Satisfied

Not satisfied

Move on to Step 3 - Determination
3. Determination

- **Satisfied**
  - Board review all available information
  - Board are **satisfied** as to eligibility and suitability
  - **Issue Declaration** of Eligibility and Suitability

- **Not satisfied**
  - AAI DOM or ICA write to applicants advising that the AAI Board is ‘minded to decline’. The letter from AAI will give reasons, and invite applicants to make a written submission and / or attend an oral hearing
  - Applicants wish to make a written submission and /or attend an oral hearing
  - AAI issue applicants with copies of all documentation considered by them
  - The Board considers written submission and / or the oral hearing held
  - Board are **not satisfied** as to eligibility and suitability
  - **Refuse Declaration** of Eligibility and Suitability, giving reasons for the decision
  - Applicants either decline or don’t respond in the time-frame given