

Where to Get More Information

Adoption

Every state has a state adoption officer. These officials usually have offices in the state capital. The state government information operator can help you locate the officer for your state. For information about agency adoptions, contact the Child Welfare League of America, 440 1st Street NW, Third Floor, Washington, DC 20001. Its telephone number is 202-638-2952. FAX 202-638-4004; website, www.cwla.org/

You also may wish to contact the National Council for Adoption, 1930 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009. Its telephone number is 202-328-1200; fax 202-332-0935; website, www.ncfa-usa.org/

For information on independent adoption, check with your state, county, or city bar association. Ask if independent adoptions are legal in your state. Also ask if the bar association will refer you to lawyers who handle independent adoptions.

Battered Spouses

Many communities offer shelters for battered spouses and their children. Details on these shelters are available from the police, crisis intervention services, hospitals, churches, family or conciliation courts, local newspapers, or women's organizations. A resource is the National

Coalition Against Domestic Violence, P.O. Box 18749, Denver, CO 80218. The telephone number of this national information and referral center is 303-839-1852, fax: 303-831-9251, website, www.ncadv.org/

The local or state chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) also should be able to provide information to help battered spouses. Website, www.now.org/

Child Support

Every state has Child Support Enforcement Units that help custodial parents establish and enforce child support orders and locate absent parents. (These offices are sometimes called IV-D Offices because they are required by Chapter IV-D of the Social Security Act.) You can locate the offices by looking under county or state government listings in the telephone book or by asking the state government switchboard. Another resource is the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, which can help parents find their state's enforcement officers. Access website www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cse/index.html; there's the national electronic child support resource system website at www.ocse.acf.dhhs.gov/necsrspub/

Divorce

Most local public libraries offer books written about divorce. Ask the librarians for help. For information about how to find a family law attorney, [see chapter 14](#) of this book.

Another source of family law attorneys is the **American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers**. The academy is a private organization. It has about 1,500 members. In order to become a member of the academy, a lawyer needs to have devoted 75 percent or more of his or her practice to family law for a period of at least ten years. Written or oral examinations are required along with recommendations from judges and other lawyers. Membership in the academy does not automatically guarantee that the lawyer is good, but it does mean the lawyer has substantial experience in family law.

A person looking for a referral to a member of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers can contact the academy at 150 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 2040, Chicago, Illinois 60601; telephone: 312-263-6477; fax, 312-263-7682; e-mail, office@aaml.org; Web site www.aaml.org The academy also has chapters in many states.

Mediation

A source for information on mediation is the Academy of Family Mediators, 5 Militia Drive, Lexington, MA, 02421; telephone: 781-674-2663; fax 781-674-2690; website www.mediate.com/afm/ The academy lists family mediators in every state by training and experience. Local courts (including the court clerk's office) also may have information regarding mediation services.

Missing Children

Various agencies can offer help in finding children who are missing. They include: Missing Children Help Center, 410 Ware Boulevard, Suite 710 Tampa, FL 33619-4457; Telephone: 813-623-KIDS or 800-USA-KIDS (toll-free); website, www.800usakids.org/

or

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Charles B. Wang International Children's Building, 699 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-3175; telephone: 800-843-5678 (toll-free), website www.missingkids.com/

Pensions

One resource on pensions is the U.S. Department of Labor. The address is: Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, Division of Technical Assistance and Inquiries, Room N5658, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20210, website, www.dol.gov/dol/pwba/; copies of their publications can be ordered by calling their toll-free brochure request line at 1-800-998-7542

The Pension Rights Center informs employees of their rights involving pensions. This private organization also offers booklets that explain related topics. Write to: Pension Rights Center, 918 16th Street, NW, Suite 704, Washington, DC 20006. Or call 202-296-3776, fax: 202-833-2472, website, www.aoa.dhhs.gov/AOA/dir/210.html

Social Security

Your local Social Security Administration office can provide information and literature on benefits. You can find its address and telephone number in your local telephone directory-- usually under "U.S. Government." And check out its website at www.ssa.gov/

Taxes

The basic resource on federal income taxes is the Internal Revenue Service (IRS.). You can find your regional office in the phone book under "U.S. Government." You also may wish to contact an accountant or a tax lawyer.

Free publications on family taxes available from the IRS include Community Property and the Federal Income Tax (Publication 555), Tax Information for Divorced or Separated Individuals (Publication 504), and Tax Rules for Children and Dependents (Publication 929). They--and much more--are online at www.irs.gov/

Women's Issues

For questions about your rights or a referral, contact the Legal Defense and Education Fund of the National Organization for Women (NOW), 395 Hudson Street, New York, New York 10014, telephone (212) 925-6635, fax 212 226-1066, email lir@nowldef.org; Also, access

www.nowldef.org/; their publications and resources are on page
www.nowldef.org/html/pub/index.shtml.