

Kazakhstan Adoption Program

Dear Prospective Families:

Thank you for your interest in the MAPS Kazakhstan program. Our commitment is to improve the quality of life for children all over the world through adoption programs, humanitarian aid, and support services.

MAPS International has been completing adoptions from Kazakhstan since 1993. Since that time many wonderful children have come home to their forever families.

When you choose MAPS, you will work with a knowledgeable program coordinator who will walk you through the sometimes-complex adoption process. This person will coordinate the U.S. aspects of the program and will work closely with our in-country representatives who guide you while you travel. Together, these teams ensure a positive experience for your family and your new child, both before and during your trip.

When choosing to adopt a child internationally, an extra measure of patience and flexibility are required. In dealing with foreign governments, program and policy changes can occur during your adoption process. While these factors are out of any agency's control, our experienced staff will keep you informed of such changes and will navigate any challenges that arise during your adoption. MAPS provides you with the support and guidance you need throughout this journey, as we strive to bring you and your child together as soon as possible.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Libby Walch
Kazakhstan Program Coordinator

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www.mapsadopt.org

THE CHILDREN

The children available include infants, toddlers, and children up to 4-5 years of age. Sibling groups are very rare. Families must be open to children of Asian ethnicity. Some of the children have physical handicaps, mostly correctable, and a number have a degree of pre-maturity in their birth history. Others may have difficult medical or social histories (i.e. family neglect or alcoholism in both parents) All the children are classified as having orphanage delays and minor correctable conditions.

Families who will be adopting older children must be aware that these children have suffered some institutional and emotional deprivation during their early years of life. The children we work with are well cared for by warm, concerned caretakers. Characteristics of these children may be similar to those of any child with special needs stemming from lack of proper parenting, multiple caregivers, a loss of personal history and genetic connection, geographical moves, and developmental delays that often result from institutional care.

It is very common to not have background information on the child's birth parents. As long as Kazakhstan considers adoption to be a closed process, this will be difficult to change.

No child information is available before a family arrives Kazakhstan. Upon arrival in Kazakhstan, families will visit the baby home and choose their child. Full information (history and health) is available for the family to child is received upon arrival in Kazakhstan. There are experienced clinics in the U.S. available to examine your child's medical information while you are in Kazakhstan. MAPS will provide a list of international doctors before you travel so a consultation can be scheduled.

MAPS recommends that adoptive families make every effort to understand the issues of adoption from their child's point of view. Since adoption issues do not end with placement, it is suggested that families remain open to support from a variety of resources as their child grows into adulthood. These resources include adoptive parent groups, the home study agency, professional counseling, and an ever-expanding body of literature on adoptive parenting. MAPS is always available to refer parents to such resources.

FAMILY REQUIREMENTS

Couples and single women are accepted. There is a minimum age restriction of 25 years. There should be no more than 45 years between younger parent a child is the usual guideline, but there is some flexibility. There is no religious requirement. Married couples are preferred in Kazakhstan. Both adoptive parents must be US citizens.

Families applying for a child from Kazakhstan should demonstrate a sincere willingness to get to know and appreciate the culture of Kazakhstan and be prepared to impart that knowledge and affirmation to their child.

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

Both parents are required to travel and must visit the child for at least 2 weeks during their stay. After the 2 week visitation, both parents are required to attend a court hearing in Kazakhstan. The court hearing occurs 2-3 weeks after the mandatory 2 week visitation with the child. There is then a 15 day appeal period before the final court decree is issued.

The in-country adoption process will take approximately 8-11 weeks to complete. Families can choose to complete the adoption in 1 or multiple trips. If they choose to complete the process in one trip, the stay will be approximately 8-11 weeks (only 1 parent needs to stay after the court hearing). If they choose 2 trips, the 1st trip will last approximately 4-6 weeks and the 2nd trip will be approximately 3 weeks later and will last 5-7 days. Only one parent is required to return for the final trip. It may be possible to have an escort for the final trip.

Families are met in Kazakhstan by a MAPS coordinator and translator who will greet and accompany families for the duration of their stay. Families must travel to the U.S. Embassy in Almaty to process the immigrant visa for the child.

TIMEFRAME AND PROCESS

Once your family has applied to the Kazakhstan program, a MAPS program coordinator will advise and work with you to complete a dossier (2 sets of notarized and apostilled documents), according to the rules of the Kazakhstan government. MAPS estimates that an invitation to travel will be received 6-12 months after the dossier is submitted. Travel usually will occur 3-6 weeks later. This estimate can vary depending on factors

such as your specific child request, political and bureaucratic changes, and unexpected delays. Parents typically will have 2- 4 weeks to prepare for their trip. It is important to remember that variations in estimated time frames are possible.

MAPS staff, here and in Kazakhstan, work with the Kazakhstan central and local governments on pre-adoption steps that must be completed prior to travel. In addition, MAPS will assist you in obtaining your visas to enter the country. Administrative processing of the actual adoption occurs while the family is present in Kazakhstan. Immigrant visa procedures are completed in Almaty.

The Kazakhstan Government will issue the family a final decree of adoption of the child. You are required to register your child with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Astana before leaving the country. In many cases, a MAPS' coordinator in Kazakhstan can do this for you.

After your child's arrival in the U.S., there is a post-placement supervisory period and finalization or recognition in the court of your family's state of residence. During this time, families are required to send periodic reports and photographs to MAPS. Families are also required to provide an annual family letter, along with photos, of their child until they reach 18 years old. These reports are a critical part of all adoptions because they are translated and forwarded on to the foreign officials and orphanage directors who make international adoption possible.

Your patience and flexibility are essential to working with this, or any other international program. The adoption process, as well as communication and the concept of timeliness, is very different in Kazakhstan.

COSTS

The initial fee, submitted to MAPS with your application, is the application fee of \$600 and is not country-specific. MAPS agency fee for Kazakhstan is \$6,300 and is due upon acceptance to the Kazakhstan program. An embassy registration fee of \$180 and a dossier and post placement document processing and translation fee of \$2,000 is payable at the time of dossier submission. MAPS Kazakhstan foreign program fee is \$19,000. This includes MAPS costs both in the U.S. and Kazakhstan and is payable prior to

travel. For more information, please refer to the fee schedule for typical additional costs.

GETTING STARTED

The adoption process begins with the application packet. In this information we walk you through the materials needed to open your file. Your application to MAPS should be submitted as soon as possible, whether or not your home study has been completed. Your home study must be done by a licensed adoption agency in your state. We cannot accept studies done by licensed independent social workers and probate courts. We will be able to formally accept your completed file after full review of your home study and related application materials.

Your home study is valid for approximately one year (varies by state). If placement has not occurred within that time, your home study agency must provide MAPS with an original, notarized update. We recommend that you determine the fee for this service up front so that you may be prepared if the process takes longer than expected.

MAPS will also need one copy of your CIS I-600A approval/cable notice (Form I-171H). If not yet received, file your I-600A immediately and state that you would like the approval notice cabled to the American Consulate in Almaty. You should file your I-600A with CIS early in your home study process.

HUMANITARIAN AID

An important component of our adoption program in Kazakhstan is humanitarian assistance. Placed families are encouraged to participate at whatever level of involvement they can offer. Contributions can range from a donation of supplies to your child's orphanage to financially supporting a long-term orphanage assistance project. We take great pride that our families continue to contribute to the well-being of the children of Kazakhstan.

Please review the enclosed material and let us know if you have any further questions regarding adoption through the MAPS Kazakhstan program. I would be delighted to speak with you about the many children who are waiting for homes and your plans to build your family through adoption.

Sincerely,

Libby Walch
Kazakhstan Program Coordinator
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FEE SCHEDULE FOR ADOPTIONS FROM KAZAKHSTAN

MAPS application fee (payable with application)	\$600
MAPS agency fee for Kazakhstan (due upon acceptance into Kazakhstan program)	\$6,300
MAPS foreign program fee (paid in full before travel)	\$19,000*
Family registration fee for Kazakhstan embassy (payable with dossier)	\$180
Family re-registration (if necessary)	\$150
Dossier & Post Placement Processing and Translation fee (payable with dossier)	\$2,000

Some reductions possible for siblings on a case-by-case basis.

*Typically 85% of this fee covers the in-country adoption program expenses/services and 15-20% may be used for humanitarian aid.

The above fees and costs are estimated and, due to the nature of international adoptions, are subject to change without notice.

Other expenses to plan for:

Immigration application (I600A)	\$670
USCIS fingerprints (per adult in home)	\$80
Passport/visa fees	Approximately 100-\$200 per person per trip
Travel to and from Kazakhstan	Approximately \$1,800-\$2,200 per person per trip
Travel within Kazakhstan	Approximately \$300-\$500 per person per trip
Travel for child/children	Approximately \$800-\$1,400 per child
Lodging, food, necessities for parents and child/ren accommodation	Approximately \$100-\$150 per day depending on
Fee for translator	Approximately \$500 plus weekend rate of \$35-\$50 per day add'l
Fee for car and driver	Approximately \$200 per week
Child's physical	\$170 + any lab work
Photographs of child	Approximately \$25-\$30 per child
Child's U.S. visa	\$400
Child's registration	\$100
Escort fee (optional)	\$7,150

Miscellaneous expenses that vary case by case:

Home study and post-placement fees	Approximately \$2,000-\$6,000
Notarization & certification/authentication	Approximately \$1,500-\$2300
Maine Secretary of State fees	Approximately \$110
Physical exams for parents for dossier	Approximately \$200-\$500
Medical exams/lab expenses for child as requested by adoptive parents	Approximately \$100-\$200
Orphanage donation	\$300
Miscellaneous personal expenses	