

**Report to the Utah State Legislature
Health and Human Services Interim Committee**

**2017 Annual Report
on the Effectiveness of the Utah Mutual
Consent, Voluntary Adoption Registry**

**Prepared by the Utah Department of Health
Office of Vital Records and Statistics**

October 31, 2017



INTRODUCTION

The Utah Department of Health, Office of Vital Records and Statistics (OVRS) is pleased to submit this annual report on the effectiveness of the Utah Mutual Consent, Voluntary Adoption Registry as required under Utah Code 78B-6-144 (5). This report highlights the registry's background, effectiveness, and future plans.

REGISTRY BACKGROUND

The Mutual Consent, Voluntary Adoption Registry exists to help adult adoptees, birth parents, and biological siblings locate one another without using the court system or spending excessive amounts of time and money. Participation in the registry is not mandatory and an adult adoptee and/or birth relative may refuse participation in the registry. A registry match occurs when an adult adoptee born in Utah and his or her birth parent or an adoptee's biological sibling voluntarily register their name with the registry. Since its inception in 1987, the registry has helped over 500 individuals reunite with members of their birth family.

REGISTRY EFFECTIVNESS

OVRS uses two performance measures to show the effectiveness of the Adoption Registry: number of names added to the registry and number of registry names matched with a birth family member. The table below reports performance between 2012 and 2016 in regard to both measures. 2017 numbers will be released in the 2018 Annual Report.

	Names Added to Registry	Registry Names Matched
2012	100	14
2013	99	20
2014	111	34
2015	99	26
2016	101	21

These statistics show that Utah's Adoption Registry continues to be used by adult adoptees and their birth families to reunite when the parties consent to be identified to one another.

2017 ACTIVITIES

OVRS has contracted with the Utah Department of Technology Services to make improvements to the electronic registry database and the online registry application. These improvements have helped staff spend less time doing data entry and manual searches of paper records and more time helping customers.

OVRs also contracted with EKR, an advertising and marketing company based in Provo, UT, to help implement a public education campaign for the adoption registry. Scheduled to roll out in December 2017, the campaign will educate the public about the adoption registry and how it helps adoptees and their biological families find one another.

FUTURE PLANS

As more people join the registry as a result of the adoption registry education campaign, OVRs is prepared to handle the additional workload. The electronic registry database and online registry application will help reduce the amount of time staff spend on processing applications and searching for matches.

For more information about Utah's Mutual Consent, Voluntary Adoption Registry, please contact Richard J. Oborn, MPA, State Registrar and Bureau Director at the Utah Department of Health, Office of Vital Records and Statistics, at (801) 538-6262 or roborn@utah.gov.
