

# How We Can Help You

- Scams and Safety
- Victims
- Students
- Parents, Caregivers, Teachers
- Businesses
- Law Enforcement
- More FBI Services and Information
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## Adoption Fraud

Unethical adoption service providers can take advantage of an emotionally charged process to deceive and defraud prospective adoptive parents or birth parents considering adoption.

### Common Schemes

**Double matching** occurs when a birth mother's baby is matched to more than one prospective adoptive parent.

**Fabricated matching** occurs when prospective adoptive parents are matched to a fictitious birth mother, a birth mother who is not pregnant, or a birth mother who is not genuinely interested in placing her baby for adoption.

**Fee-related adoption schemes** occur when adoption service providers require prospective adoptive parents to pay exorbitant fees upfront or on a recurring basis but fail to provide services promised.

### How to Protect Yourself

When choosing an adoption service provider, do your research. Be aware of what fraudulent providers may do or ask you to do.

- Misrepresent professional licenses or education
- Make unsolicited contact to sign up birth mothers or prospective adoptive parents
- Be difficult to reach via phone or email, despite multiple attempts
- Unnecessarily control communications between adoption participants
- Quote highly negotiable and inconsistent fees
- Encourage prospective adoptive parents to pay expenses immediately to avoid losing out on opportunity to adopt
- Demonstrate a pattern of requesting additional unexpected fees throughout the process
- Make guarantees about the adoption process, such as:
  - Matching within a specified timeframe
  - Birth parents' willingness to adopt
  - How quickly and easily the adoption will be legally finalized

Know other red flags to look out for during the adoption process.

- Lack of proof of pregnancy or proof with inadequate details, like missing dates
- History of failed adoptions due to unusual circumstances
- Adoption participants pressured to sign documents they don't fully understand
- Adoption participants encouraged to falsify statements and documents to finalize the adoption

Additionally, birth parents should recognize signs of an exploitative situation, which may include:

- Being coerced or manipulated into placing a child for adoption
- Getting assigned prospective adoptive parents without being involved in the choice
- Being pressured to follow through with an adoption or being told you will have to repay covered expenses if you change your mind



- Overview
- Common Schemes
- Protect Yourself
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#### Report Adoption Fraud

Visit [ic3.gov](https://ic3.gov), the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3), to report adoption fraud scams.

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