

This week's CHI-TV topic is: **"Details of the US / Russia Adoption Agreement?"**



Anna Rister

"The agreement is definitely great news because it basically means both countries have agreed to continue adoptions, but it doesn't mean it will be a change right away. Russia still has to come up with their details as how the adoption process is going to change and they have to ratify their agreement. That's going to take some time before any of those changes are implemented. For families that have been in the process, nothing really is going to change right now. They will still continue to get the referrals, they will travel for the first trip as usual for the court. Some families that are currently in the process with probably even finalize before the Adoption Agreement is even ratified. So we don't really foresee any changes for current families; it will affect families later on down the process.

Right now probably some things start to change maybe some regions will start to open up again for the American families. So we see maybe that will help speed up the process for some families. But it is not going to create a huge change in the adoption process where new requirements will be implemented for current families.

Russia definitely wants more preparation for the adoptive parents. They see that not all parents have gone through education for the adoption. So they will require additional training and proof of the training received. Also, they will require families to go through psychological evaluation, which most of our families do anyway, but I guess not every agency did that before.

So we are seeing that that's something that is going to be new for families and then of course the change during the process is mainly the US government will review the referral information before the adoption is finalized. And that is something similar that they do with Hague countries. Even though Russia is not a Hague country, they will do that for Russia now. We don't know at what point they will want to review the child's information either before the first or second trip, but USCIS will have to give an approval for the referral information before the adoption is finalized.

Extremely happy that the adoption agreement has been signed between Russia and the US as they have been doing the adoptions for many years and this was been a long time coming. We're happy that they

both agreed to continue the adoptions. And this basically means that they will review the adoption process to make sure it is clear for everybody. But for families that are currently in the process, please do not expect changes right away. You will still go through the process as usual, you will receive referral, you will travel for the court – it will be all the same. It is going to take a few months before any of these changes are implemented in the process.”

* * *