

## Colombia

Updated: 6/1/2019

Bethany Christian Services is pleased to offer adoption from Colombia as an option for families. Colombia is a Hague-certified country with a stable, efficient adoption system run by Colombia's Central Authority for adoptions, the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare (ICBF). Due to factors such as poverty, domestic violence, and drug abuse, many children in Colombia are in need of homes. Bethany is committed to finding permanent, loving families for these precious children!

ICBF determines a child's eligibility for international adoption. Currently, children eligible for intercountry adoption are typically children of all ages with varying special needs, individual children over the age of 9, and sibling groups. Sibling groups typically include at least one teen or pre-teen child. Families seeking to adopt children under the age of 9 must be open to more significant medical and developmental needs. Though older children and sibling groups may be predominately healthy, families should be prepared to address developmental, psychological, and emotional challenges. Families of Colombian heritage may be eligible to adopt a healthy child of any age, depending on the age of the prospective adoptive parents.

Children waiting for adoption may have been relinquished, abandoned, or had parental rights terminated due to abuse or neglect. They are cared for in foster care homes or institutions (also called orphanages or adoption houses known as "IAPAs"). To process adoptions, Bethany works closely with ICBF and also partners with IAPAs, including La Casa de la Madre y el Niño, CRAN, Chiquitines, and FANA.

Family Requirements	
<b>Age</b>	Parents must be at least 15 years older than the child to be adopted. Applicants over the age of 50 are accepted on a case by case basis.
<b>Marriage</b>	Applicants must be married or in a permanent domestic partnership for at least two years. Previous marriages/divorces allowed.
<b>Singles</b>	Single applicants are accepted. Must be a minimum of 25 years of age.
<b>Income</b>	Must meet USCIS Poverty Guidelines and demonstrate sufficient income for household size.
<b>Children at Home</b>	Accepted with documentation of sufficient resources to care for additional children. Current children must support the adoption plans.
<b>Criminal</b>	Mild/minor offenses or dropped charges may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Criminal history generally not accepted.
<b>Health of Adoptive Parents</b>	Medical conditions that do not affect lifespan or parenting ability may be accepted. Mental health history may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Current mental health diagnosis and treatment generally not accepted. Families with a history of substance abuse and/or pornography use are not accepted.
<b>Concurrent Adoptions</b>	Not allowed.

## Travel

One trip of 3-4 weeks. Both parents must travel and be present to meet the child and for court approval of the adoption. If needed, one parent may return to the U.S. after the adoption is complete while the family is waiting for issuance of the child's immigrant visa.

## Process

Families in the general program should expect to wait 4-10 months for a referral. This wait time may vary based on the family's openness to older children or special needs.

Wait times will vary for families in the Colombian Heritage Program, based on the age and needs of the child they are open to. The wait for a child ages 0-5 is estimated to be 2-3 years. The wait for a child ages 5-9 is estimated to be 1-2 years.

Please note that the entire process in the general program will take an estimated 12 to 18 months from the time a family begins their home study until they are bringing their child home. There are many factors that determine how long the full process takes, including paperwork approval times, characteristics of the child desired, and visa processing times at the Embassy.

The adoption is finalized in Colombia and children receive automatic citizenship upon arrival in the United States.

Post-adoption placement reports are required at: arrival, 3, 6, 12, 18, and 24 months.

## \*Estimated Fees and Expenses

Country Fee	\$11,950 - \$17,486
Third Party Fee	\$1,485 - \$2,464
Travel Fee	\$6,863 - \$11,526
Bethany Fee <i>*Below is a breakdown of Bethany estimated fees and expenses.</i>	\$18,350 - \$19,350
Preliminary Application	Free
Formal Application	\$550
IAAME Accreditation Fee	\$2,000
Global Services Fee	\$500
Home Study Services	\$2,500 - \$3,500
Program Fee 1	\$6,050
Program Fee 2	\$4,150
Post-Adoption Services <i>*This fee includes four post-adoption visits. Additional fees will be assessed if additional visits are required.</i>	\$2,600
<b>*Total Estimated Cost</b>	<b>*\$38,648 - \$50,826</b>

\*Please use our [fee calculator](#) to get an estimate of fees based on your zip code for adopting from Colombia.