

South Korea

Updated: 6/4/2019

Bethany Christian Services has a full-service South Korean adoption program, which began in 1982. Bethany adoptions in South Korea are processed through a partnership with Holt Children’s Services in Seoul. Children are relinquished to Holt Children’s Services, which then matches a child with each waiting family. On average, the children are under 3 years old at placement, and typically, more boys are referred than girls. Most children have special needs, ranging from minor to more significant.

Bethany is authorized to place children via direct referral in nine states—Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin—and waiting children in any state where there is a Bethany office.

| Family Requirements | |
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| Age | Minimum age of 25 for both parents, and no older than 43 years when the preliminary application is submitted. There is flexibility with the maximum age for families of Korean heritage or who have adopted from South Korea previously. |
| Marriage | Three years minimum. No more than one divorce per spouse is allowed. |
| Singles | Not accepted. |
| Income | Must meet USCIS Poverty Guidelines and demonstrate sufficient income for household size. The South Korea program prefers a minimum household income of \$30,000. |
| Children at Home | No more than 4 children in the home. The youngest child must be 1 year old by home study completion. |
| Criminal | Families with arrest or criminal history are not eligible. |
| Health of Adoptive Parents | Minor medical health issues may be considered. Body Mass Index (BMI) must be less than 40. Current mental health diagnosis not allowed. Families with a history of substance abuse and/or pornography use are not accepted. |
| Concurrent Adoptions | Not allowed. |
| Travel | |
| Two trips of 7-10 days and 4-7 days respectively with 1-2 months in between trips OR one trip of 5-8 weeks | |
| Process | |
| The wait for a referral averages 12-24 months after home study approval. Following referral, the time frame to placement varies, but is generally from 8-24 months. | |
| The adoption is finalized in South Korea and children receive automatic citizenship upon arrival in the United States. | |
| Post-adoption placement visits and reports are required at: arrival, 3, 6, and 12 months. | |

Special Considerations

The South Korean government limits the number of children that are placed for international adoption on an annual basis, which may directly impact wait times for referral and travel.

*Estimated Fees and Expenses

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| Country Fee | \$19,015 |
| Third Party Fee | \$1,485 - \$2,464 |
| Travel Fee | \$6,400 - \$11,200 |
| Bethany Fee <i>*Below is a breakdown of Bethany estimated fees and expenses.</i> | \$18,350 - \$19,350 |
| Preliminary Application | Free |
| Formal Application | \$550 |
| Global Services Fee | \$2,000 |
| IAAME Accreditation 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 |
| *Total Estimated Cost | \$45,250 - \$52,029 |
| <i>*Please use our fee calculator to get an estimate of fees based on your zip code for adopting from South Korea.</i> | |