

# Adopt a stepchild

You want to adopt your stepchild? The adoption center advises and accompanies you through the next steps. Here you can learn more about the process.

## Competent Department

- [Adoptionsstelle Bremen](#)

## Basic information

In a stepchild adoption, the biological child of the partner is adopted. Adoption can make sense if, for example, there has been no contact with the separated parent for years, the other parent is deceased or unknown, or stepchildren are to be placed on an equal footing in terms of inheritance and maintenance law. In order to guarantee the well-being of these children, the requirements and suitability of the adopting parent are also examined in these cases.

Through adoption, your stepchild becomes your child from a legal point of view. You then bear the same responsibility for the child as for a natural child.

All persons involved must seek advice from an adoption agency. The discussions will also focus on whether the child is doing well after the adoption.

Certificates of this counseling must be presented to the family court in the adoption proceedings. There is an exception to the obligation to provide counseling if the birth mother's partner applies for the adoption and both were already married to each other at the time of the child's birth or live in a registered civil partnership or a permanent cohabitation.

## Requirements

Prerequisites include:

- You must be married to each other as a couple, live in a registered civil partnership or in another permanent cohabitation. A stable cohabitation is defined as living together for at least four years or having a child together and living together as a family.
- They should already have lived together with the child for a reasonable period of time, so that a parent-child relationship has been established.
- Both parents must agree to the application. If the child has reached the age of 14, he or she must also consent himself or herself.

- The child must be informed about the existing stepparenthood, as perhaps the family court will also talk to the child.

Otherwise, the same requirements apply as for the adoption of a foreign child.

## Procedure

- The adoption agency advises all parties involved
- The application is filed with the family court
- The need for adoption and suitability are examined
- The family court decides on the adoption

## Legal bases

- [Rechtsgrundlagen § 9a Adoptionsvermittlungsgesetz](#)

## More information

Different-sex couples and same-sex couples can adopt a stepchild.

It is also a stepchild adoption if in a lesbian partnership the partner of the birth mother - for example after an artificial insemination or sperm donation - wants to obtain the legal parenthood for the common desired child and applies for the adoption of the child for this purpose.