

CAFCASS PATHWAY FOR WITNESSING CONSENT IN AGENCY AND NON-AGENCY ADOPTION

PATHWAY FOR WITNESSING CONSENT FOR RELINQUISHED CHILDREN (OUTSIDE COURT PROCEEDINGS)

Upon request direct from an adoption agency for a nominated officer of the service, Cafcass allocates.

When appointed as an officer of the service:

- interview parents or guardians with parental responsibility
- confirm consent and countersign forms.

When it is not possible to take consent and countersign the forms, send a letter to the adoption agency giving an explanation.

STAGE 1

Receipt and Allocation (weeks 1–2)

Upon request from the court, Cafcass allocates a Reporting Officer.
See page 16 of Cafcass Placement Guidance.

STAGE 2

Witnessing Consent in a Placement Order (weeks 2–3)

Check the local authority Annex B report and ensure all relevant information is provided. Highlight any outstanding information with the local authority adoption agency.
See page 17 of Cafcass Placement Guidance.

When in receipt of full information, meet with the parents with parental responsibility to determine if consent is given unconditionally and with a full understanding of the nature and effect of the Placement Order. Also be alert to local authority attempts to contact fathers with parental responsibility.
See pages 18 and 19 of Cafcass Placement Guidance.

If consent is given, a brief report should be submitted to court about the giving of consent.
See pages 18 and 19 of Cafcass Placement Guidance.

If a parent is unwilling or unable to consent, refer the case to court, which may lead to the appointment of a Guardian.
See pages 18 and 19 of Cafcass Placement Guidance.