

**CODE OF ETHICS
OF DREAMS FOUNDATION**

**Chapter One
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Art.1 (1) The best interest of the child requires for him or her to live in a permanent home. When re-integration in the biological family is impossible, the next best option is adoption.

(2) The purpose of each adoption is achievement of the best interests of the child thus they govern the seeking of an appropriate family who is prepared and capable to satisfy meet interests. The starting point is that the child is adopted in the appropriate family and not that the appropriate child is found for the specific adoptive parents.

(3) For a child who is legally available for adoption, all efforts for placement in a family of adoptive parents shall be made, notwithstanding his or her age, race or special needs.

Art.2 (1) The members of the governing body of Dreams Foundation, hereinafter referred to as “the Foundation”, as well as the individuals working in it, cannot work in specialized institutions, or social services for children of residency type, or in territorial offices of the Social Support Agency.

(2) The individuals under Paragraph 1, regardless the time limits, must exercise their rights and responsibilities with good will; they owe loyalty and respect to the Foundation’s clients and are forbidden to disseminate facts and circumstances that they have been made aware of while or with respect of the activity they carry out in the Foundation.

(3) The individuals under Paragraph 1 shall not and are not allowed to demand and receive remuneration that is incommensurable with the services provided and/or with the typical remuneration for the same services in Bulgaria. The same persons are only allowed to receive reasonable remunerations for the services provided by them.

(4) The Foundation’s team is comprised of multi-disciplinary specialists (pediatrician, psychologist, attorney, social worker) who have benefited a special training in the area of adoption and child’s rights and who are guided by ethical standards in the best interest of the child.

(5) The individuals under Paragraph 1 who are responsible for the adoption procedures and/or for their different aspects, ought to hold professional or other appropriate education and/or training.

Chapter Two PROHIBITIONS

Art.3 (1) The individuals under Art.1, Paragraph 1 are forbidden to directly and/or indirectly provide money, material goods or any other type of reimbursement to the child's parent(s) or other persons who have legal rights over the child, which aim at stimulation of surrendering the rights over the child for the purposes of adoption.

(2) The individuals under Art.1, Paragraph 1 are forbidden to request and/or receive incentive fee or proportional fee based on the number of children adopted. The remunerations paid by the Foundation could only be in the form of salaries and hourly fees for services actually provided or for accomplished workload to the Foundation's benefit.

(3) For the individuals under Art.1, Paragraph 1, it is impermissible to deny a request from the Foundation for training and orientation in international adoption secured by the Foundation.

Chapter Three BIOLOGICAL PARENTS

Art.4 (1) The Foundation assures that the following requirements are met:

1. In cases when the child's parent has given a preliminary consent to the adoption under Art.89, Paragraph 1, Para 2 of the Family Code, the parent must have received the entire necessary information regarding the consequences of his or her decision, as well as reasonable time to consider it.
2. The mother's consent cannot be given prior to the thirtieth day after the birth.
3. The parent's consent must be given only after receiving the necessary consultations about its consequences.
4. Consent prior to the child's birth is forbidden.

(2) The parent always has the option to change his or her decision to give consent for the child's adoption, until the adoptive parent determined by the International Adoptions Committee according to Art.114, Paragraph 7 of the Family Code, has given his or her consent to the adoption.

(3) The expenses incurred by the Foundation or the adoptive parents with respect of the child could not be used as an obstacle for the parent to change his or her option or decision.

Art.5 Provided that at a later stage after the adoption was finalized in Bulgaria and in the receiving state, the adoptive parents would like to financially help the biological family, such a thing should not happen through a direct contact but instead through an appropriate authority or person, excluding Dreams Foundation.

Art.6 (1) At no stage of the adoption procedure in Bulgaria, there should be a direct contact between the biological family of the child and the future adoptive parents.

(2) Provided that at a later stage the contact between the biological family and the adoptive family appears to be desirable, this should be carried out after a court decree of the Sofia City Court according Art.105 of the Family Code.

Chapter Four CHILD BEING ADOPTED

Art.7 (1) Prior to making a decision whether a child should be adopted abroad, the Foundation should be well satisfied that no other appropriate resolution for permanent and consistent care of the child in Bulgaria could be found and that the international adoption is in his or her best interest.

(2) In all cases of undertaken efforts or actions for the child's adoption, the Foundation should be well satisfied that the case had been studied by a person qualified in social work to provide details from the past of the child, the reasons for the parents' consent to be given for his or her adoption, the child's characteristics and special needs. It is not the Foundation who is liable to carry out such a study of the case but the Foundation should be convinced, according to its abilities, that a study of the case has been carried out, taking into consideration all aspects, and that all possible efforts have been made in order to educe the entire necessary information.

Art.8 If an individual working in the Foundation has a direct contact with a child's family who might need adoption, this individual must not actively participate in the adoption procedure of the child. Instead, the Foundation ought to inform the respective Social Support Division.

Art.9 Children in procedures of being adopted or those, for whom efforts are made for such procedures to be initiated, must have had a medical examination. The Foundation ought to assure that a child, who is in an adoption process, receives care of good quality until the adoptive parents resume the care for him or her.

Art.10 (1) The representatives of the Foundation ought to clarify the opinion and the attitude regarding the adoption of each child for whom the Foundation seeks adoptive parents, when that child is at nine or more years of age.

(2) While the adoption procedure is ongoing, the Foundation makes all necessary efforts for the children past early childhood age to become prepared for the change awaiting them.

(3) Provided that the legislation of the receiving state allows adoption of children above 10 years of age, these children must give their option, respectively – consent, for the adoption.

Art.11 (1) The Foundation ought to be satisfied that the well-being of the child is protected for the time of travel to the receiving state.

(2) The Foundation encourages the future adoptive parents, if possible, to travel to Bulgaria in order to take the child to their home, especially in the cases when he or she is past the early childhood age.

(3) The escort could not travel with more than two children. The Foundation ought to avoid organizing escorts of large groups of children at the same time. The change in the escorting person should be avoided, also.

Art.12 The biological siblings must be placed with the same adoptive family. Cases when this is impossible ought to be considered exceptional. It is the Foundation's responsibility to encourage the future adoptive parents to develop a positive attitude to the contact between siblings.

Art.13 The child has the right to maintain, retain and learn about his or her ethnic and cultural identity. The Foundation is responsible to provide the adoptive parents with information regarding the specific ethnic and cultural identity of the child.

Art.14 (1) Each adopted child has the right to access information about his or her past. The Foundation is responsible to accumulate the available information about the child's past and to provide the adoptive parents with access to this information. This information should be introduced to the child depending on his or her age and level of understanding, unless this contradicts his or her best interest.

(2) The information according to the preceding article pertaining to the child's biological parents, could and should be provided to him or her and the adoptive parents solely according to the procedure of Art.105 of the Family Code.

(3) The Foundation preserves on an electronic carrier copies of the entire written information about the child, indefinitely.

Chapter Five ADOPTIVE PARENTS

Art.15 (1) Prior to granting the adoption in Bulgaria, the future adoptive parents must be approved subjects of social study regarding their suitability to adopt a child.

(2) The responsibility for carrying out the study is of the national competent authorities of the adoptive parents and/or their authorized adoption agency there. In all cases, a detailed psychological – medical – social report must be prepared.

(3) The Foundation is responsible to the child who shall be adopted, as well as to the respective authorities and institutions in Bulgaria, with respect of the prospective adoptive parents and their suitability to care for an adopted child.

Art.16 The Foundation shall obtain guarantees from its partners and representatives abroad that the prospective adoptive parents shall receive adequate preparation, education and training for the adoption prior to its finalization. This preparation ought to be organized either by the adoption agency abroad, or by another competent authority, or by both of them.

Art.17 (1) The Foundation informs its partnering organizations who represent the future adoptive parents about the progress of their adoption procedure, as well as the reason for them to be denied as adoptive parents, if this is the case.

(2) Prior to entering the intermediation agreement, the Foundation informs the adoptive parents about the expenses for the adoption and preserves the accounting evidence for the expenses incurred, within the terms as provided by the Accounting Act of Bulgaria.

(3) The Foundation encourages the adoptive parents to stay in contact with it – while their adoption procedure is pending, as well as after the child arrives in the receiving state.

(4) The Foundation ensures through its partnering organizations abroad that the family shall have access to post-adoption services and consulting.

Art.18 The Foundation cannot receive directly from the adoptive parents, in any way, funds for the adoption in cash. The same shall be only transferred through bank wires (payments in cash are strictly prohibited), by the respective partnering organization.

Art.19 (1) The Foundation assures that the adoptive parents complete the adoption in the shortest possible terms, apply for new citizenship of the child, and provide post-adoption reports in accordance with the Bulgarian requirements.

(2) After the adoption procedure is finalized, the child should be financially secured (will, insurances, health and social insurance, etc.) The adoptive parents, who fail to perform these duties, would not be able to count on assistance from the Foundation in cases of new application for adoption.

Art.20. The Foundation shall deny assistance to the adoptive parents who apply for a next adoption in case of failure on their behalf to perform the duty for provision of post-adoption reports.

Chapter Six

COOPERATION WITH OTHER AUTHORITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Art.21 (1) The Foundation may enter into cooperation with other Bulgarian or foreign organizations only in cases of having assurance that they shall always work in the best interest of the child and in a way corresponding to the provisions in this document.

(2) The Foundation shall sign an agreement which compulsory contains the respective rules for ethical practices, with each foreign partner with whom the Foundation entered into cooperation.

Art.22 (1) The Foundation, through its programs, works for prevention of abandonment of children in Bulgaria, finding new families for the abandoned children in the country, and, lastly, in other countries.

(2) The Foundation has a working regional program for prevention of abandonment of children. The officers of the Foundation make efforts to disseminate and reproduce this program in other regions of Bulgaria, also.

Art.23 (1) The contacts of cooperation of the Foundation in the receiving state must be authorities, organizations or institutions accredited to intermediate in the field of international adoption, according to the legislation of that country.

(2) The Foundation ought to accumulate detailed information about the activity of the contacts under the preceding paragraph and to determine that their activities, beyond any reasonable doubt, follow the international legislation and standards for adoption and this Code of Ethics.

Art.24 The Foundation informs the respective authorities in Bulgaria and the receiving states about the principles and practices through which the Foundation intends to work.

Art.25 (1) The Foundation provides with information the competent authorities both in Bulgaria and in the receiving country regarding the selling and/or traffic of children, abduction and/or exploitation of children, breach of law (crimes), abuse of the birth mothers (parents) and all other law offences. The Foundation actively works against these practices.

(2) The Foundation ought to encourage the adoption through licensed or accredited agencies.

Art.26 The Foundation develops and maintains an active program for adoption of children with special needs in order to improve their chances to be placed with appropriate adoptive families.

Art.27 The Foundation carries out its activity in a way avoiding competition for children or contacts.

Art.28 The Foundation encourages cooperation regarding studies, consultation groups, adoption groups, social serves etc., as well as dissemination of information.

Art.29 The Foundation consults and exchanges information with organizations that have or intend to have the same contacts in the same country as the Foundation.

Art.30 In case the Foundation makes a decision to stop the cooperation with a contact in the receiving state due to turning out that the same is in breach of the Convention on the Rights of the Child of the UN or the Hague Convention, or is ethically questionable in other ways, the Foundation ought to inform the Ministry of Justice of Bulgaria and the other organizations.

Art.31 This Code of Ethics was validated by the management body of Dreams Foundation on December 30, 2014, signed by all its members and sealed with the seal of the Foundation.

Dreams Foundation