

**KNOW YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS.  
THEY ARE IMPORTANT.  
PERIOD.**

The information in this brochure is designed to give you an overview of the co-parent and step-parent adoption laws in the State of Connecticut. You are strongly advised to consult with a licensed attorney to receive an in-depth explanation of the adoption process and your legal rights.

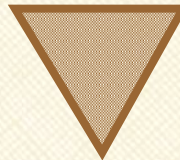
Attorney Irene C. Olszewski has facilitated co-parent and step-parent adoptions for lesbian and gay couples across the State of Connecticut. If this law firm can be of service, please do not hesitate to contact us to schedule a consultation.

The Law Offices of Irene C. Olszewski, LLC has been proudly serving the lesbian and gay community since 2002.

*The information presented here is not a substitute for professional legal advice and is not intended to form an attorney/client relationship.*

**Proudly Serving the  
Lesbian & Gay Community  
Since 2002**

***“Client-Focused Legal Solutions”***



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**Co-Parent & Step-Parent  
Adoption  
For Lesbian and Gay  
Couples**



**In Connecticut**

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On October 1, 2000, Connecticut signed into law Public Act 00-228, amending C.G.S. § 45a-724, which created a legal process for "second parent adoption." This law allows an existing parent (biological or adoptive) to agree to the adoption of his/her child by another person "who shares parental responsibility for the child." Under this legislation, your same-gender partner may become a second parent to your child.

The adoption process falls under the jurisdiction of the Probate Courts. If you have entered into a valid marriage (or civil union, which converted to marriage on October 1, 2010), your partner may become a step-parent to your child. If you have not entered into marriage or civil union, your partner may become a co-parent to your child.

Some of the advantages of co-parent or step-parent adoption ("second parent adoption") from a legal standpoint, are:

- The child will have two legal parents for all purposes;

- The co-parent or step-parent will not need special permission to seek medical care for the child or to attend school meetings;
- The co-parent or step-parent will have the legal ability to make decisions for the child in both emergency and day-to-day matters;
- If one parent dies, the other parent will automatically assume custody of the child;
- The child would have the automatic right to inherit from the deceased parent even if there is no will;
- In the event of a separation of the couple or a dissolution of their marriage or civil union, a Court will base its decisions on what is in the best interest of the child rather than on which parent is the legal parent. Both parents would have the right to custody and visitation.

If you and your partner have not entered into civil union or marriage and one of you desires to become the legal co-parent of the other person's biological child in the State

of Connecticut, the Probate Court will require that a home study be conducted in order to determine issues such as the needs of the child and the ability of the proposed adoptive parent to meet those needs.

If you are married to your partner or have entered into civil union (which converted to marriage on October 1, 2010), the Probate Court may still require a home study, but the judge has the discretion to waive such a home study in a step-parent adoption.

**If You Use A Known Sperm Donor:** It is important to understand that if the sperm donor is known to you, he is considered the legal father of the child until such time that the Probate Court issues a decree (order) to terminate his parental rights (whether or not you list his name on the child's birth certificate). This procedure must occur before an adoption petition can be heard by a Probate judge.

**We Can Help You Understand  
Your Legal Rights and Responsibilities  
in the Connecticut Adoption Process.**

**Attorney Irene C. Olszewski  
is licensed to practice law  
in the State of Connecticut.**

**We handle same-sex adoptions throughout  
the State of Connecticut.**