
Ministry of Community and Social Services
Ministry of Children and Youth Services
Ministry of Government Services, ServiceOntario

May 2014 Report
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To conduct the review and prepare the report, Deputy Ministers appointed an inter-ministerial team comprising the following members:

Ministry of Community and Social Services:
- Rosa Carlucci, (Chair), Manager, Community and Developmental Services Branch
- Zahra Habib, Policy Analyst, Community and Developmental Services Branch
- Kate Cowan, Manager, Service Delivery and Supports Branch
- Kathi Callanan, Coordinator, Service Delivery and Supports Branch and Custodian of Adoption Information

ServiceOntario, Ministry of Government Services (ServiceOntario):
- Susan Webb, Manager, Policy Branch
- Alexandra Schmidt, Senior Policy Advisor, Policy Branch, now director of Thunder Bay Production and Verification Services Branch
- Murray Luck, Policy Advisor, Policy Branch, former manager of Adoption Disclosure Services

Ministry of Children and Youth Services:
- Gloria Varghese, Coordinator, Client Services Branch
- Jennifer Whittaker, Program Analyst, Client Services Branch

Also contributing to the development of the report were:
- Annmarie Hill, Operations Manager, Thunder Bay Production and Verification Services Branch
- Holly Johnson-Lindstrom, Operations Manager, Eastern Contact Centre Services Branch
- Susan Palijan, Research Advisor, Policy Research and Analysis Branch, Ministry of Community and Social Services
- Brittany Macdonald, Research Analyst, Policy Research and Analysis Branch, Ministry of Community and Social Services
- Christine Debruyne, Policy Advisor, Policy Branch, ServiceOntario
In 2008, Ontario enacted legislation to amend the Vital Statistics Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. V.4 (VSA) and the Child and Family Services Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.11 (CFSA) with regard to adoption information disclosure. This legislation provided adopted adults and birth parents with a means of accessing adoption information, while safeguarding the privacy of those involved in past adoptions.

Adopted adults and birth parents can request identifying information or protection for their privacy from ServiceOntario, which provides post-adoption birth information, disclosure vetoes, and notices of no contact and contact preference. Adopted adults, birth parents and, for some services, other adoptive and birth family members, can request information from the MCSS Custodian of Adoption Information, which provides non-identifying information related to private adoptions, operates the Adoption Disclosure Register, and conducts severe medical searches. ServiceOntario is the public’s window for obtaining these services.

If a Children’s Aid Society placed the individual for adoption, non-identifying information can be requested and obtained directly from that Society.

ServiceOntario, the MCSS Custodian of Adoption Information and Children’s Aid Societies may refer applicants to the ministry or Society that can better respond to a request for adoption related information, as may be needed.

The VSA and the CFSA require that a review of the operation of the adoption information disclosure provisions of each statute be conducted by May 31, 2014. The key objectives of the review were to:

- Seek the perspectives of key stakeholders in the adoption community, including adopted adults, adoptive families and birth families on the operation of the adoption information disclosure provisions, in particular in respect of service provision and roles and responsibilities;
▪ Seek the perspectives of internal ministry staff responsible for the processing and delivery of adoption information disclosure services;

▪ Analyze feedback from external stakeholders and ministry staff to determine whether the implementation of the adoption information disclosure provisions has achieved the policy intent of the legislation;

▪ Identify any opportunities for improvements related to the operation of the adoption information disclosure provisions, in particular regarding service delivery, and ministry roles and responsibilities; and

▪ Prepare a report on the feedback and analysis from the review.

The overarching policy intent of the adoption information disclosure provisions was to make open adoption records a cornerstone of Ontario’s adoption system, while safeguarding the privacy of those involved in past adoptions. Although the review was intended only to examine the operation of adoption information services, not policy issues, adoption information disclosure operational and policy issues are closely intertwined and many respondents provided feedback beyond the scope of the review. These contributions provided a source of information and advice from a variety of perspectives and have been listed in this report as responses received that are outside the scope of this review.

Feedback received from stakeholder groups, adopted adults, birth parents and families, adoptive parents and families, ministry staff, and disclosure workers at Children’s Aid Societies identified three areas where adoption information disclosure service delivery could be improved. These are:

1. Adoption information disclosure services provided by Children’s Aid Societies;
2. The client service experience accessing services from ServiceOntario and the provincial Custodian of Adoption Information; and
3. Clarity of communications to clients.

Regarding services offered by Ontario Children’s Aid Societies, respondents as well as Children’s Aid Society disclosure workers would like wait times for non-identifying information to be standardized. Also, Children’s Aid Society disclosure workers would like a service standard to guide the provision of non-identifying information and ways to respond to requests for other adoption information disclosure services.

Regarding services offered by the Custodian of Adoption Information and ServiceOntario, respondents and staff feel they could be improved by changing the application forms to reduce duplication. There was also a suggestion that a single, streamlined application package to allow applicants to access all services of the Custodian of Adoption Information and ServiceOntario could be developed.
With regard to communications with clients, respondents and staff alike have suggested making information more clearly available on the ServiceOntario website, Ontario.ca, and providing better access to forms and user guides to enhance the customer service experience.

In general, the review team heard that people involved in past adoptions in Ontario are pleased to be able to access information from their birth and adoption records, and have urged the government to further open adoption records by addressing policy related to inter-jurisdictional adoptions, information about birth fathers and access to information for siblings and grandparents. Despite requests to the public for feedback, the review team did not receive any input from people who have registered disclosure vetoes or those who do not want their information provided.

Based on feedback and analysis from the external and internal components of the review, the policy intent of the legislation has been met, as demonstrated by the number of people who have been able to access previously unattainable information from birth and adoption registrations, as well as those taking advantage of the disclosure veto and no contact notice to protect their privacy. In addition to completing over 17,000 disclosure requests, the ministries have received many letters of appreciation for receiving information helping to lead to happy reunions. As for the privacy aspect, over 8,000 people have registered to not be contacted or to keep their information completely private from others. The absence of comment or any formal complaints shows this is successful.

There are those who want more disclosure and those who want increased privacy, but currently, in spite of those opposing views, many people are taking advantage of and satisfied with adoption information disclosure services.
Ontario’s first adoption legislation was enacted in 1921. This legislation gave judges the power to make adoption orders extinguishing the birth parents’ rights, and making the child, for all intents and purposes, the child of the adopting parents.

Beginning in 1927, adoption records were sealed in Ontario. For more than 50 years only minor changes were made to child welfare legislation to modify the secrecy of adoption records. Several private members bills to open adoption records were introduced in the 1990s and early 2000s. None of these were passed by the Legislative Assembly, although public hearings were held in respect to these bills.

The Adoption Information Disclosure Act, 2005

In 2005, the government introduced legislation to open adoption records in Ontario. The Adoption Information Disclosure Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 25 received Royal Assent on November 3, 2005 and amended the Vital Statistics Act (VSA) and the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA) to significantly change the regime for adoption information disclosure in Ontario.

The intent of the Adoption Information Disclosure Act was to provide for more open access to birth registrations and adoption orders for adopted adults and birth parents, while balancing the rights of individuals who do not wish to be contacted. The Adoption Information Disclosure Act did not provide for disclosure vetoes.

Cheskes et al v. Ontario (Attorney General)

In September 2007, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice released its decision in Cheskes et al v. Ontario (Attorney General), a constitutional challenge brought by three adopted adults and a birth parent to sections of the VSA that were added by the AIDA, dealing with the unsealing of records and disclosure of identifying information to birth parents and adopted adults without consent.

The court found that sections of the VSA providing for disclosure of identifying adoption information without consent violated the applicants’ constitutional rights under section 7 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Charter).
The Access to Adoption Records Act (Vital Statistics Statute Law Amendment), 2008

In the fall of 2007, the government decided not to appeal the Court’s decision in Cheskes et al v. Ontario, (Attorney General), and instead introduced the Access to Adoption Records Act (Vital Statistics Statute Law Amendment), 2008, S.O. 2008, c. 5 (AARA) to amend the VSA to address privacy issues identified by the Court. The AARA received Royal Assent on May 14, 2008 and amended the CFSA as well as the VSA.

The amendments made by the AARA provided adopted adults and birth parents with a means of accessing personal information, while also safeguarding the privacy of those involved in past adoptions and added a provision to the VSA providing for disclosure vetoes for adoptions finalized before September 1, 2008. The AARA came into effect in stages and was in full effect by June 1, 2009.¹ Under the amended VSA, adopted adults could apply for uncertified copies of their Ontario birth registration and adoption order and birth parents could apply for information from the adopted person’s original Ontario birth registration, substituted birth registration and registered adoption order. Adopted adults and birth parents could also register a disclosure veto to prevent the disclosure of their information, if the adoption order was made prior to September 1, 2008.

¹See Appendix A for a summary of when legislative amendments came into effect.

Adopted adults and birth parents involved in past adoptions (completed prior to September 1, 2008) were given nine months to file disclosure vetoes, if they wished, prior to the disclosure of any adoption records under the VSA on June 1, 2009. The Ministry of Community and Social Services advertised extensively to inform the public of the right to protect their privacy and to access their adoption information.
Overview of Current Adoption Information Disclosure Services

The Custodian of Adoption Information with the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), ServiceOntario with the Ministry of Government Services (MGS), and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) all play a role in providing adoption information disclosure services in Ontario. Below is an overview of all adoption information services available.²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Ministry of Community and Social Services administers certain sections of the Child and Family Services Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adoption Disclosure Register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redacted Adoption Orders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe Medical Searches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-identifying information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure to governmental and other authorities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Ministry of Government Services, ServiceOntario administers the Vital Statistics Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-adoption birth information: adoption orders, original and substituted birth registrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notices of contact preference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure vetoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No contact notices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Ministry of Children and Youth Services administers most of the Child and Family Services Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MCYS funds CASs to provide services to children, youth and families across Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASs provide non-identifying information for adoptions finalized through a CAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCYS approves Adoption Practitioners and licenses adoption agencies to provide adoption services to Ontario residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASs, Adoption Practitioners and CFSA adoption licensees are responsible for informing birth parents and adoptive parents about their rights and protections under adoption information disclosure legislation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A CAS or adoption licensee must advise a birth parent upon his or her request whether or not the child was adopted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²See Appendix B for detailed descriptions of each service. In addition to the above services, ServiceOntario provides application forms, information and customer service for all adoption information disclosure services available from all three ministries.
Scope, Methodology and Communications

Scope

The VSA and CFSA require that the Lieutenant Governor in Council ensure that a review of the operation of the adoption information disclosure provisions of each statute be conducted by May 31, 2014. In December 2013, the Lieutenant Governor in Council, by Order in Council, ordered that such a review be conducted. The review was intended to examine whether there are any operational issues regarding the delivery of adoption information disclosure services. It was not to examine the overarching policy intent of the adoption disclosure provisions of the VSA and the CFSA, which was to make open adoption records a cornerstone of Ontario’s adoption system, while safeguarding privacy for those involved in past adoptions. For example, there was no intent to examine the possibility of closing adoption records or making disclosure vetoes available for adoptions that were finalized after September 1, 2008. Adoption services not related to the disclosure of information were also out of scope for this review.

Methodology

The review included two components:

1. An external consultation paper provided to the public and stakeholder groups; and

2. An internal component comprising:
   a. A questionnaire for staff;
   b. A review of incoming correspondence;
   c. A review of transactional correspondence sent to applicants for adoption information disclosure services; and
   d. A study of application and service volumes.
The external consultation paper asked stakeholder groups (listed below), Children’s Aid Societies, and the public to answer the following three questions, based on their experiences with adoption disclosure information services:

1. What adoption information disclosure services have you used?
2. How well did the adoption information disclosure services you used work for you?
3. What improvements could the government make to adoption information disclosure services so that they work better for the people who use them?

The internal component of the review sought the perspectives of ministry staff responsible for the processing and delivery of adoption information disclosure services, and to identify any opportunities for improvements related to the operation of adoption information disclosure provisions, in particular regarding service delivery roles and responsibilities.

The questionnaire sent to staff at ServiceOntario and the Custodian of Adoption Information comprised four questions:

1. Identify any operational issues you have encountered through your experience providing adoption information disclosure services to clients (web information, forms, instructions, correspondence, service levels, etc.). Suggested solutions?
2. Identify what is working well and any particular successes you’ve experienced.
3. Do you have examples of feedback from customers regarding the adoption information disclosure services they have received?
4. Based on your experiences providing adoption information disclosure services, what improvements do you think we can make to adoption information disclosure services so that they work better for the people who use them?

Staff members and management from the Custodian of Adoption Information and ServiceOntario, as well as staff at Children’s Aid Societies and private adoption agencies who are responsible for processing applications and/or providing customer service, provided feedback on the adoption information disclosure services they provide to the public.

**Communications**

A bulletin announcing the review was posted with the consultation paper on the MCSS website from January 20 to February 28, 2014. Letters were also sent to key stakeholders to announce the review. MCSS and ServiceOntario also broadcast information about the review using their social media channels on Facebook and Twitter.

As well, information for Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) was distributed prior to the release and posting of the consultation paper, so MPPs and their offices were able to convey information about the consultation to constituents.
Outcomes of the Review

The following stakeholder groups were asked for and provided feedback:
• Coalition for Open Adoption Records (COAR);
• Parent Finders;
• The Canadian Council of Natural Mothers;
• Origins Canada;
• Looking in Ontario;
• Justice for Mother and Child
• Adoption agencies
• Private Adoption Practitioners; and
• Children’s Aid Societies

The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner also provided a response. The Commissioner indicated that there was not much input they could provide as their concerns regarding the privacy of past adoptions were ultimately addressed in the legislation.

The review team received responses from 37 individuals, four ServiceOntario staff, 6 MCSS staff, 1 adoption agency and 10 Children’s Aid Societies. Volumes for correspondence, emails and inquiries regarding adoption information disclosure services were also reviewed. MCSS social media pages experienced 91 interactions, and ServiceOntario pages had 27 interactions.

In general, stakeholders, individuals and staff appreciated the opportunity to provide feedback, and felt that opening adoption records in 2009 was of great benefit to adopted adults and birth parents. However, many respondents, particularly stakeholder groups suggested that records are not as open as they could be.

“[The] AARA has had a positive impact on the lives of untold Ontarians. [Adopted adults] have learned their original identities and found peace in knowing their family background, ethnicity, and health history. Birth parents, primarily mothers, have discovered the names of their adult children; this in turn has brought them peace and often closure on what was a challenging time in their lives. Consenting adults have met and formed new family bonds and relationships... AARA has been a success.”

- Stakeholder organization
It is also important to note that while the responses to the consultations were overwhelmingly supportive of open adoption records, the review team is cognizant that there are many people who have used disclosure vetoes, and/or are opposed to opening adoption records who have not provided feedback about their experiences.

Issues most frequently identified in responses from adopted adults, birth parents and families, adoptive parents and families, ministry staff, Children’s Aid Society disclosure workers, and stakeholder groups who have accessed adoption information disclosure services, fell under three key themes, discussed in detail below:

1. Services provided by Children’s Aid Societies;
2. The client experience accessing services through ServiceOntario and MCSS; and
3. Clarity of communications to clients.

**Services Provided by Children’s Aid Societies**

Responses from certain individuals indicated concern with wait times for non-identifying information from Children’s Aid Societies. Feedback from Children’s Aid Society adoption information disclosure workers indicated that a guideline for the provision of non-identifying information by Children’s Aid Societies and standardization of practices across the province would be beneficial.

“While I quickly received my identifying information through the government website, I am not so happy with the situation regarding non-identifying information. I applied to the [Children’s Aid Society] over 1 year ago to receive my non-identifying information. I’m told I have another year and half to wait; this is a ridiculous amount of time. I’ve waited 50 years for this information.”
– Adopted adult

As each Children’s Aid Society has its own internal operating procedures, the wait time for non-identifying information varies by agency.

“Some Children’s Aid Societies provide non-identifying information to birth parents who are defined as the legal parent(s); that is, named on the child’s birth documents or court documents. Some societies will provide information to the offspring of adopted adults if the adopted adult signs a consent form to allow this. Other societies require proof of death before they will provide information to the offspring of [adopted adult]. Other societies will not provide information to the offspring of [adopted adults] in any circumstance.”
– Children’s Aid Society disclosure worker
One Children’s Aid Society disclosure worker recommended establishing a provincial guideline to identify service standard requirements to address response times, response types (such as requirements for formal vs. informal correspondence), and request redirects (to ensure that inquiries are appropriately redirected if the individual has contacted the wrong children’s aid society).

A few Children’s Aid Society disclosure workers expressed confusion about their own role in the provision of non-identifying adoption information. Children’s Aid Society disclosure workers suggested refresher training would be helpful to assist in understanding each ministry’s role and the role of Children’s Aid Societies in the disclosure of adoption information.

These respondents also suggested updating the Adoption Disclosure Services Manual in order to maintain consistency in providing non-identifying information by Children’s Aid Societies across Ontario.

**The Client Experience Accessing Services from ServiceOntario and the Custodian of Adoption Information**

Some respondents felt that application forms were too complex and burdensome to complete, and that instructions could be clarified to ensure all the required information is provided during the first completion attempt. In addition, respondents suggested that it would be helpful to have guides posted on ontario.ca to assist them in completing the forms.

A small number of respondents suggested that it would be helpful if customer service agents (both on the phone and in person) were able to help applicants complete forms, as this would also help ensure all the required information was being provided from the beginning, thereby cutting down on transactional correspondence with applicants.

“I would like to recommend a 1-800 phone number for help to complete the [application] forms, and also have the option of going to get live help at a ServiceOntario location if applications need clarification or support.”

- Individual

Another respondent suggested consolidating the application forms into one inclusive package so that the applicant would need to complete only one form that could then be used to access adoption information disclosure services from ServiceOntario and the Custodian of Adoption Information for which they may be eligible. One individual and a number of staff suggested providing an online application process to access adoption information disclosure services.

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3See Appendix C for examples of transactional correspondence and a review of volumes.
A number of individuals and stakeholders praised their interactions with staff from the Custodian of Adoption Information and ServiceOntario and the turnaround time in which adoption information is delivered. Despite this, a number of stakeholders reported confusion about the services offered by each ministry.

Feedback included questions about why services were offered separately by two ministries and Children’s Aid Societies, and reflected some confusion about which ministry or office to approach for service.

“The general information I received from ServiceOntario is consistent and met my general inquiry needs. There were a couple of occasions, however, where I contacted ServiceOntario to inquire on a specific procedure of the Adoption Disclosure Register, and my question could not be answered, and there were no telephone contact numbers available for the ADR. I was informed that all inquiries must go through ServiceOntario who in turn relay the information to the ADR, which may be a lengthy process for an individual to obtain the information he/she is searching for.”
– Children’s Aid Society disclosure worker

ServiceOntario staff echoed these concerns, stating that clients were occasionally confused about the different types of adoption information disclosure services available from ServiceOntario and the Custodian of Adoption Information.

“…we had to apply and follow up with three agency locations for different information. Thunder Bay, Toronto and also [local] Children’s Aid (to get the redacted info). Is there any way that we could apply to one agency and get all the info from one place? It was confusing and each time I called (Thunder Bay, Toronto or [local] Children’s Aid) I had to explain what my situation was and what I was looking for.”
- Individual

A few staff felt that a review of the processes, policies and legislation involved in adoption disclosure information services, and an overview of all the adoption information disclosure services offered by the two ministries and the Children’s Aid Societies (over and above their own realm of responsibility), would help them develop a better understanding of how the services complement each other, and would help them better respond to enquiries from the public.

Some staff also suggested they would benefit from updates on the content and layout of updated materials uploaded to the Ontario.ca site, to determine how to better assist applicants in navigating the information.
and links, and would appreciate regular communications regarding changes to application forms and guides.

ServiceOntario staff asked to be informed when the Ontario.ca website is updated so that they would be better positioned to answer questions from individuals seeking assistance accessing their adoption information.

**Clarity of Communications with Clients**

Stakeholder groups and individuals repeatedly said that the MCSS and Ontario.ca websites are complex and difficult to navigate. Comments indicated that finding one’s way from the general services pages to the specifics of adoption information disclosure services was confusing and misleading.

“...it seems there is a link on the MCSS [site] for adoption disclosure services (which is a good thing) but people won’t think to go to the MCSS site because they were told previously that there was nothing there about adoption disclosure services.”

– Adoption Stakeholder

One Children’s Aid Society disclosure worker also suggested that the three ministries establish a new communications strategy to ensure stakeholders are aware of the types of adoption information and services available to them. As an example, two stakeholder organizations noted in their respective responses that while siblings and grandparents may request to have their name added to the Adoption Disclosure Register (ADR), many people are unaware the service exists. Updated communications and staff training would help alleviate confusion about which ministry provides the service(s), eligibility for services, and reduce instances of individuals being redirected between ministries and Children’s Aid Societies.

During the consultation period, operations, policy and communications staff from MCSS and ServiceOntario, worked together to revise and clarify the information posted on the Ontario.ca site. Comments requesting that the online information be improved were received from external and internal sources through the consultation.

Information, instructions and application forms for adoption information disclosure have been on the web beginning with ServiceOntario.ca and were then migrated to Ontario.ca. With the move and combining of the pages, some clarity of instruction and links to user guides were lost.

As of the date of this report, the revised information is being prepared for posting on the Ontario.ca site. Complete information about the services available, links to application forms and guides and complete instructions will soon be available to the public searching adoption disclosure services.
Responses Outside the Scope of the Review

Respondents provided a variety of observations about the broader adoption information disclosure policy and legislation which were beyond the scope of the review. The comments included:

- Fathers not named on original birth registrations are not entitled to identifying information;
- Identifying information about fathers who are not named on original birth registrations is not available for disclosure to adopted adults;
- Persons born in one jurisdiction and adopted in another are not able to access information from birth and adoption records;
- Disclosure vetoes should be eliminated;
- Family members such as birth siblings and grandparents should be able to access identifying information related to an adoption;
- Post-adoption support/services, such as counselling services for individuals receiving adoption information should be provided; and
- There should be better access to medical information.

While these responses are outside the scope of this particular review, they will be noted to be considered if the ministries undertake policy work in the future.

Despite requests to the public for information, the review team did not receive any comments from people who have registered disclosure vetoes or who did not want their information provided.

Data Review

To provide an overview of adoption information disclosure services in Ontario, it is important to understand the levels of applications for service received by ServiceOntario, MCSS and Children’s Aid Societies.

As part of the internal review, the review team determined the total number of applications received, the volume of applications per service or registrant type, and examined their trends from 2007 to 2014 for adoption information disclosure services for both ServiceOntario and the Custodian of Adoption Information.

ServiceOntario provides:
- Processing of applications for post-adoption birth information (PABI);
- Registration of disclosure vetoes;
- Registration of no contact notices; and
- Registration of contact preference notices.

Through the Custodian of Adoption Information, MCSS processes the following applications related to adoption information:
- Adoption Disclosure Register;
- Copies of adoption orders;
- Non-identifying information; and
- Severe medical search.

Children’s Aid Societies are authorized to provide non-identifying adoption disclosure information.

These services are described in detail in Appendix B.
The data review of volumes and proportions of services requested shows applications for post-adoption birth information account for the greatest demand of all applications received and processed from 2007 to 2013.\(^5\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage(^5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PABI</td>
<td>17,489</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure Vetoes</td>
<td>6,774</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Contact Notices</td>
<td>1,552</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Preference Notices</td>
<td>3,165</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the volumes of applications for adoption information disclosure services, figure 1 shows the differences between the service types from 2007 to 2013.

The services were introduced at different times, and for each there was anticipation and pent-up demand. The latter half of 2008, continuing in 2009 saw the greatest number of disclosure veto applications. Once the initial influx was registered, the processing of post-adoption information requests began, with a high application rate continuing until the initial demand was satisfied. By 2012 incoming levels for all services were stabilizing.

Further detail about ServiceOntario services is provided in Appendix C.

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\(^4\)Additional applications processed through the Custodian of Adoption Information include: additional severe medical search, estate lawyer and “other”. Due to low application volumes for these services over the past seven years, these figures aren’t included in the report.

\(^5\)Data reported for each application type is by calendar year (January to December) however, due to varying implementations, the start dates for each application type are as follows: PABI - June 1, 2009; Disclosure Vetoes - September 1, 2008; No Contact Notices - January 31, 2007; and Contact Preference Notices - January 31, 2007).
Custodian of Adoption Information

The area of highest demand for the Custodian of Adoption Information from 2007-08 to 2013-14\(^7\) were requests to be added on the ADR in hopes of being connected with another party to the adoption.

Custodian of Adoption Information Requests from Birth Relatives and Adopted Adults:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request Type</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADR applications</td>
<td>7,642</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-identifying information</td>
<td>2,982</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>applications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption order applications</td>
<td>2,067</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe medical searches</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 demonstrates the changes in volumes for Custodian of Adoption Information services, for each of the service types from 2007-08 to 2013-14.

Further detail about Custodian of Adoption Information services is provided in Appendix C.

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\(^6\)Percentages were rounded to the nearest integer and therefore the total may not add up to one hundred percent

\(^7\)The annual data reported for each Custodian of Adoption Information component is from June 1 to May 31, except for the “2013-14” year which represents 10 months of data from June 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014.
Children’s Aid Societies

Children’s Aid Societies have not been required under the CFSA to collect or report on data related to the provision of adoption information disclosure services.

As part of the internal review, MCYS asked all 46 Children’s Aid Societies to share their data related to adoption information disclosure services. 45 of 46 CASs responded to MCYS’s request for data. 41 of the 45 Societies that responded were able to provide data reflecting the number of requests or the number of releases of adoption disclosure related information to applicants. The data collected varied by Society, however, generally the data indicates that the majority of requests Societies received are for non-identifying information.

For example, a Children’s Aid Society located in a large urban area of Ontario reports that in 2013-14, they received 151 requests for the disclosure of non-identifying information and 32 requests for the disclosure of identifying information. Similarly, a smaller Children’s Aid Society in a mixed urban/rural area reports that in 2013-14, they received 13 requests for the disclosure of non-identifying information and 9 requests for the disclosure of identifying information.

As each Children’s Aid Society has its own internal operating procedures, the wait time for non-identifying information may vary by agency.

After an adoption has been finalized, Children’s Aid Societies may disclose only non-identifying information to specific individuals as authorized by regulation. Children’s Aid Societies are not authorized to disclose identifying information. However, Societies do at times receive requests for identifying information; requests of this nature are generally redirected to ServiceOntario or the Custodian of Adoption Information, as appropriate.

Service Standards

As part of the internal component, the review team also examined service standards across the three ministries to ensure that existing criteria for customer service were being met.

Service standards for the Custodian of Adoption Information are to:

• Research and process matches to the ADR and disclose contact information within 60 business days;
• Update the ADR within 10 business days;
• Research and process applications for non-identifying information and applications for adoption orders within 30 business days; and
• Research and process requests for medical eligibility for severe medical requests within five business days.

All of these service targets are being met.

The ServiceOntario standard for processing applications is six to eight weeks; this target has been consistently achieved since February 2010.
The five-year review provided the people of Ontario an opportunity to tell the government how adoption information services were working for them, and the responses have indicated that people accessing adoption information disclosure services in Ontario want access to adoption information to be easier, particularly:

- Regarding services offered by Ontario Children’s Aid Societies, respondents as well as Children’s Aid Society disclosure workers would like wait times for non-identifying information to be standardized. Also, Children’s Aid Society disclosure workers would like a service standard to guide the provision of non-identifying information and ways to respond to requests for other adoption information disclosure services.

- Regarding services offered by the Custodian of Adoption Information and ServiceOntario, respondents and staff feel services could be improved by changing the application forms to reduce repetitiveness. There was also a suggestion that a single, streamlined application package to allow applicants to access all services via the Custodian of Adoption Information and ServiceOntario could be developed.

- With regard to communications with clients, respondents and staff alike have suggested making information more clearly available on the Ontario.ca site, and providing better access to forms and user guides to enhance the customer service experience.

While policy matters were out of the scope of the review, the review team heard that people involved in past adoptions in Ontario are generally pleased with being able to access information from their birth and adoption records, and have urged the government to address matters related to inter-jurisdictional adoptions, information about birth fathers, and access to identifying information for siblings and grandparents. The review team did not receive any comments from people who have registered disclosure vetoes or those who did not want their information provided.
The five-year review of the operations of adoption information disclosure services in Ontario has provided a valuable source of information for the government to consider in developing and implementing future improvements to the services it provides.

Based on feedback and analysis from the external and internal components of the review, the policy intent of the legislation has been met, as demonstrated by the number of people who have been able to access previously unattainable information from birth and adoption registrations, as well as those taking advantage of the disclosure veto and no contact notice to protect their privacy.

In addition to completing over 17,000 disclosure requests, the ministries have received many letters of appreciation for receiving information helping to lead to happy reunions. From the privacy aspect, over 8,000 people have registered to not be contacted or to keep their information completely private from others. The absence of comment or any formal complaints shows this is successful.

There are those who want more disclosure and those who want increased privacy, but currently, despite those opposing views, many people are taking advantage of and are satisfied with adoption information disclosure services.
## Appendix A: Timeline of Legislative Provisions and Amendments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 3, 2005</td>
<td>The Adoption Information Disclosure Act, 2005 (AIDA) received Royal Assent, amending the Vital Statistics Act (VSA) and the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA). The amendments made by the AIDA came into force in stages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 3, 2006</td>
<td>A transitional regulation came into effect that restricted new requests for searches to be conducted by the Registrar of Adoption Information to circumstances of severe physical and/or mental illness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31, 2007</td>
<td>The AIDA provisions permitting notices of no contact and contact preference, and orders prohibiting the disclosure of identifying information in order to prevent harm came into force.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>Three adopted adults and a birth parent argued a constitutional challenge to the amendments made to the VSA in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice (Cheskes et al v. Ontario) (Attorney General).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 17, 2007</td>
<td>The provisions of the AIDA allowing for the disclosure of identifying information came into force.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 19, 2007</td>
<td>The Ontario Superior Court of Justice released its decision in Cheskes et al v. Ontario (Attorney General). The Court found that the sections of the VSA providing for disclosure of identifying adoption information without consent violated the applicants’ constitutional rights under section 7 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>The government decided not to appeal the Court’s decision, and instead introduced new legislation, the Access to Adoption Records Act (Vital Statistics Statute Law Amendment), 2008 (AARA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 14, 2008</td>
<td>The AARA received Royal Assent. The AARA amended the VSA to address privacy issues identified by the Court. The amendments provide adopted adults and birth parents with a means of accessing personal information, while also safeguarding the privacy of those involved in past adoptions and included a provision to the VSA providing for disclosure vetoes. The amendments made by the AARA came into force in stages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1, 2008</td>
<td>Provisions to allow for the filing of disclosure vetoes if the adoption took place before September 1, 2008 came into force.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 2009</td>
<td>Final set of amendments made by the AARA to allow for the disclosure of identifying information came into force.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix B: Adoption Information Disclosure Services in Ontario

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Available from</th>
<th>Eligibility</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-adoption Birth Information</td>
<td>ServiceOntario</td>
<td>• Adopted adults</td>
<td>Adopted adults can apply for an uncertified copy of their original Ontario birth registration, if any, and any registered adoption order. Birth parents can apply for information from the adopted person’s original Ontario birth registration and substituted birth registration, if any, and any registered adoption order. They may not apply until the adopted person is at least 19 years old.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Birth parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redacted Copies of Adoption Orders</td>
<td>MCSS (Custodian of Adoption Information)</td>
<td>• Adopted adults</td>
<td>The original adoption order is provided to adoptive parents at the time of the adoption. Adoptive parents and adult adopted persons can obtain a copy of the adoption order with any information that would identify a birth parent or a former adoptive parent removed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Disclosure Vetoes, Notices of No Contact, and Contact Preference Notices

**Service Available from**
- ServiceOntario

**Eligibility**
- Adopted adults
- Birth parents
- Former adoptive parents (where there is more than one adoption order)

**Details**
- Disclosure vetoes prevent the release of identifying information about the adopted person, birth parent or former adoptive parent, and are available only if the registered adoption order was made before September 1, 2008.

- No contact notices indicate that the individual does not wish contact with the other party. Before the individual’s identifying information will be released, the person to whom the notice applies must sign an agreement not to contact or attempt to contact the individual, either directly or indirectly.

- Contact preference notices indicate how an individual would like to be contacted by the other party once post-adoption birth information is released (e.g., by phone, email, etc.).

- As applications are received by ServiceOntario, disclosure vetoes, no contact notices and notices of contact preference are processed before requests for post-adoption birth information. A disclosure veto cannot be registered until all the required information has been provided and it is matched with the birth registration and/or adoption order.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Available from</th>
<th>Eligibility</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Identifying Information</td>
<td>MCSS (Custodian of Adoption Information)</td>
<td>• Adopted adults</td>
<td>Non-identifying information is provided in the form of copies of all adoption-related documents with identifying information removed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children’s Aid Societies</td>
<td>• Adopted children (with the written consent of the adoptive parent)</td>
<td>Non-identifying information is provided by the Custodian of Adoption Information if the adopted person was placed for adoption by an adoption licensee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Adoptive parents</td>
<td>If the adopted person was placed for adoption by a Children’s Aid Society, the society that placed the person for adoption is responsible for the provision of non-identifying information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Adult descendants of deceased adopted adults</td>
<td>If it is not practicable to provide copies of documents, a summary may be provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Birth parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Birth grandparents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Birth siblings (at least 18 years of age)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Siblings of birth parents (at least 18 years of age)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption Disclosure Register</td>
<td>MCSS (Custodian of Adoption Information)</td>
<td>• Adopted adults</td>
<td>The adoption disclosure register is a voluntary service that matches adopted adults with birth relatives and discloses the identifying information each party has provided once a match is made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Birth parents</td>
<td>Both the adopted adult and the birth relative must have requested their name to be added to the register in order for a match to be made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Birth grandparents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Birth siblings of an adopted person (at least 18 years of age)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Available from</td>
<td>Eligibility</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe Medical Search</td>
<td>MCSS (Custodian of Adoption Information)</td>
<td>• Adopted adults</td>
<td>Severe medical searches may be conducted in cases of severe mental or physical illness where a direct medical benefit will be derived.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Adopted children (with the consent of the adoptive parent)</td>
<td>A direct medical benefit means a significant increase in the likelihood of diagnosing or treating a severe mental or physical illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Adoptive parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Descendants of adopted adults</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Birth parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Birth grandparents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Birth siblings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Any other birth family member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>AND</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Either the person requesting the search will derive a direct medical benefit should the search result in the location of the person being sought</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>OR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• There is reason to believe the person being sought will derive a direct medical benefit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other requests for information</td>
<td>MCSS (Custodian of Adoption Information)</td>
<td>Information requests relating to an adoption from governmental and other authorities are provided to agencies such as Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Review of ServiceOntario and MCSS Data

ServiceOntario Application Statistics from 2007-2014

Volume Trends in 2014
Requests for the adoption disclosure services at ServiceOntario continue to demonstrate normal levels of 150 applications per month for post-adoption birth information, 3 disclosure vetoes, 3 no contact notice and 15 contact preference notices per month.

Post-Adoption Birth Information (PABI)
From June 1, 2009 to December 31, 2013, a total of 17,489 PABI applications were processed by ServiceOntario. The proportional breakdown of applicant type is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Applicant</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adopted adults</td>
<td>13,860</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth mothers</td>
<td>3,055</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth fathers</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other⁹</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. Figure 3 depicts the volumes of applications over time.
Disclosure Vetoes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Registrant</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adopted adults</td>
<td>3,315</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth mothers</td>
<td>3,151</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth fathers</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.
In September 2008, the option of registering a disclosure veto became available. As a new option to adopted adults and birth parents, there was a sudden high volume of demand to register vetoes, which tapered off over time.

Data reported for each application type is by calendar year (January to December) however, due to varying implementations, the start dates for each application type are as follows: PABI - June 1, 2009; Disclosure Vetoes - September 1, 2008; No Contact Notices - January 31, 2007; and Contact Preference Notices - January 31, 2007).

The “Other” applicants are anyone who is not an adopted adult or birth parent; applicants with a Power of Attorney are eligible; siblings, offspring, grandparents, or other next-of-kin are ineligible.
No Contact Notices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Registrant</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adopted adults</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth mothers</td>
<td>836</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth fathers</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.

In the case where a no contact notice is in effect, the identifying information of the person who registered the notice cannot be given to the applicant until the applicant has signed and returned a no contact agreement to the office. By signing the agreement, the recipient agrees not to contact or attempt to contact the person who registered the notice.

Regarding the 2009 peak, it is possible that the publicity surrounding the approaching date of when disclosure would occur created interest in the other adoption disclosure services such as the no contact notice.
Contact Preference Notices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Registrant</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adopted adults</td>
<td>2,029</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth mothers</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth fathers</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.

With the introduction of the contact preference notice in January 2007, there was a rush of applications. In the case where a contact preference notice is in effect, recipients of post-adoption birth information are also given notice on the manner of preferred contact (e.g., by phone number, email address or street address).

Volumes for the service increased in 2009, possibly due to the publicity surrounding the approaching date of when disclosure would occur.
Applications for post-adoption birth information and to register a veto or notice are reviewed to evaluate entitlement to the service and for sufficient information to match with the appropriate birth and adoption registrations. If the applicant is not entitled, or if the application form is deficient or not signed, correspondence is sent to the applicant with an explanation or instruction on completing the form. When PABI is released, it is accompanied with a cover letter explaining the information that is enclosed (e.g., the uncertified copies of the registrations, any statement filed with a notice or a veto, any other pertinent information related to the registrations). These are examples of transactional correspondence.
The review of transactional correspondence since 2007 relating to adoption information disclosure services available through ServiceOntario showed that most correspondence falls into one of the categories below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Service</th>
<th># of correspondence since inception</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PABI: Adopted adult incomplete applications</td>
<td>1,552 letters</td>
<td>Represents 11% of all applications being deficient due to the information about the adopted adult not being completed. Current volumes of these applications average 130 per month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure veto incomplete applications</td>
<td>1,316 letters</td>
<td>Represents 16% of all applications that were deficient due to page 3 of the application form not being completed or the party to whom the veto applied was not identified. 3.4% of all applications were deficient due to page 2 of the application form not being submitted. Current volumes of these registrations average 3 per month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No adoption registration to match application information</td>
<td>440 letters</td>
<td>This would most frequently be due to applicants who think they were adopted but were not. They may have been looked after by relatives or a foster family and never formally adopted. Other applicants receiving this correspondence would be birth fathers applying who were not named on the birth registration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veto in effect preventing disclosure</td>
<td>378 letters</td>
<td>This letter explains to applicants for post-adoption birth information why information may not be disclosed to them. This had occurred for approximately 3% of applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth father not identified on the birth registration</td>
<td>279 letters</td>
<td>This letter is sent to adopted adults with the release of post-adoption birth information in the cases where no father’s information was included on the original birth registration. This explains to recipients that there was no information to provide. Less than 2% of post-adoption birth applicants received this letter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth parent applicant not on birth registration</td>
<td>277 letters</td>
<td>This letter explains that applicants not named on the original birth registration are not entitled to disclosure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>4,242 letters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the other correspondence categories amounted to less than 1% of related applications.
Proportion of ADR applications by Type of Registrant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Registrant</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adopted adults</td>
<td>4,231</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth mothers</td>
<td>1,750</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth fathers</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth sisters</td>
<td>642</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth brothers</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In figure 7, the number of ADR registrants in the period from 2007-08 to 2013-14 is graphed for the top five registrant types (based on a total of 7,179 registrations) - adopted adult, birth father, birth mother, birth sister, and birth brother.

![Figure 7. Volume of ADR Requests by Registrant Type from 2007/08 to 2013/14 (n=7,179)]
Adopted adults account for the largest proportion of ADR registrants (n=4,231 or 59%), followed by birth mothers (n=1,750 or 24%)\textsuperscript{12}. Except for a slight increase from 2010-11 to 2011-12 across all five groups (except for birth sisters\textsuperscript{13}), there has been a decline in the number of registrants since 2011-12 (except for birth brothers\textsuperscript{14}). For adopted adults, this represents a 58% decline (from 650 to 270) over the past three years.

As shown in Figures 8 and 9, the nature of services requested by adopted adults and birth relatives differs.
For both adopted adults and birth relatives, inclusion on the ADR is the most popular request. Adoption order requests by birth relatives are near zero because they are not entitled to those records.

While there was an increase in the volume of ADR requests followed by a decline, and then a slight increase in the volume of ADR requests from 2010-11 to 2011-12 (adopted adults: 599 to 650; birth relatives: 507 to 551), the volume of ADR requests has been declining since 2011-12.

**ADR matches by Type of Relationship:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Match</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child/birth relative</td>
<td>1,654</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child/child sibling</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In figure 10, the number of ADR matches from 2007-08 to 2013-2014 is graphed by relationship type (i.e., child/birth relative, and child/child sibling). Child/birth relative matches account for the largest proportion of ADR matches over the past seven years.

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10 The annual data reported for each Custodian of Adoption Information component is from June 1 to May 31, except for the “2013-14” year which represents 10 months of data from June 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014.

11 “The remaining 463 registrations over the past seven years were made by the following registrants: birth grandfather, birth grandmother, birth sister, child of deceased adopted adult, or “other”.

12 Trends in demographic profile data specifically for adopted adult ADR registrants reveal that the majority of these registrants over the past seven years are in the 31-50 year age range.

13 Between 2010-11 and 2011-12, there was a slight decrease in ADR requests by birth sisters (from 109 to 103).

14 Between 2012-13 and 2013-13, there was a slight increase in ADR requests by birth brothers (from 22 to 24).

15 Only adoptive parents and adult adopted persons are eligible to apply to the Custodian of Adoption Information for a copy of an adoption order.