

Registering a veto

Adopted adults want different levels of contact with birth relatives. Some want their lives to be private from all birth relatives, others don't want contact from certain people.

The Adoption and Children Act 2002 recognises the right of adopted adults to control contact approaches made to them by adoption agencies on behalf of their birth family, and introduced the idea of the veto.

This is information placed with the local adoption agency that arranged the adoption, (or that holds the adoption file, if different). The information specifies that the adopted adult has decided that they do not want to be contacted or that there are conditions around that contact.

There are two forms of veto: an 'absolute' veto and a 'qualified' veto.

An **absolute veto** means that an intermediary agency cannot approach the adopted adult under any circumstances. Your adoption agency will wish to meet with the adopted adult to discuss the implications for themselves and others of placing an absolute veto on file. This meeting is designed to ensure that the adopted adult fully understand the implications of their decision.

A **qualified veto** specifies the circumstances where the adopted adult is happy to be approached by an intermediary service, as well as specific circumstances where they are not. Again it is important to discuss these matters with your adoption agency to fully explore the significance for all those involved.

The veto only applies to the work of an intermediary service. It does not prevent birth families themselves approaching their adopted family members.

Things we have to do before accepting your veto form

- Check your identity and find out why you want to register a veto.
- Tell you that you can alter or cancel the veto at any time and explain how you can do this.
- Make sure that you consider the effects a veto could have on your children (including children you might have in the future).
- Discuss with you the effect that a veto will have on any brothers or sisters you have from your birth family who are in the same adoptive family as you.

Please contact the Achieving for Children Adoption Team if you would like any information or further support on 020 8547 4620.