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MEDIA RELEASE

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BIRTH CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE RECOGNISING ADOPTION

Adopted people in NSW can now have birth certificates that include both their birth and adopted families following the commencement of landmark reforms.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said new laws came into effect this week allowing integrated birth certificates (IBC) to be issued to adopted people for the first time in NSW's history.

"This marks the beginning of a new era in the recognition of adopted people's history before and after adoption," Mr Speakman said.

"NSW continues to lead the nation in best practice open adoption policy, and the introduction of IBCs is an important step in encouraging connections between adopted children and their background and heritage."

IBC's record the names of both birth and adoptive parents and older siblings on a single certificate. Their introduction follows the passage of the *Adoption Legislation Amendment (Integrated Birth Certificates) Act 2020* by the NSW Parliament in September this year.

Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services Gareth Ward said the NSW Government has listened to calls for reform from the community.

"IBC's will enable adopted people to have greater control over their own story, history and identity, and we're proud to take this significant step forward," Mr Ward said.

"Open adoption is a critical component of the work we're doing to provide permanent, safe and loving homes for children in out-of-home care, and the introduction of IBC's reinforces NSW's nation-leading approach to open adoption."

Consultation has been undertaken with the community and organisations that rely on these documents for identification purposes to ensure a smooth transition.

There will be no additional cost for an IBC at the time of adoption. A person who is issued a post-adoptive birth certificate with an IBC will only be required to pay the fee for one certificate.

IBC's are also available for adoptions that occurred prior to 16 November 2020. To find out more information about the application process, please visit <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/adoption/introducing-integrated-birth-certificates> and www.bdm.nsw.gov.au.