



MATCHING WITH A REFERRAL

Matching with your referral is an exciting time and an important milestone in the adoption process. But it can also be a challenging time. There is a lot of waiting during this phase. It can sometimes seem as if “nothing is happening”. Below is an outline of what is happening behind the scenes while you wait for your referral and what to expect when we present you with a potential referral.

Up to this point you have spent time together reviewing the special needs list with multiple resources – hopefully a medical professional, your social worker, and our International Program Director. The list of special needs you are willing to consider has been listed in your home study report and reviewed by USCIS. Very soon, if not already, you will have another lengthy conversation with our International Program Director about special needs so that she can accurately communicate your limitations with our China Facilitator, Hou Jing Dong aka Doris.

<p>What’s Next:</p> <p>Finding a Referral Deciding to Match Acceptance Documents</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Helpful Reminders</p> <p>CCCWA – China Center for Children’s Welfare and Adoption USCIS – U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services China Facilitator – Hou Jing Dong (Doris) China based staff member IPD, International Program Director – Pat Lee Your Adoption Coordinator – MaryBeth Rouse Referral – Child available for adoption</p>
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Finding a Referral

- China Facilitator begins to search on the CCCWA shared list of referrals for a potential match meeting your requirements.
- Once the China Facilitator finds a potential referral, she prints out medical, child study, and photographs & locks in the potential referral with the CCCWA.

**At the point of locking in a potential match, there is a 72 hour time frame in which adoptive can decide if they are interested in pursuing this referral. **

- Our China Facilitator emails information on the potential referral to the International Program Director (IPD) and contacts her immediately.
- IPD immediately sends potential referral information to local pediatrician for review and feedback.
- IPD reviews the provided information to familiarize herself with the special needs listed for this potential referral. Additionally, the IPD researches the diagnosis, conditions and severity of listed special needs.
- IPD speaks with the local pediatrician to learn more about and gain feedback on the special needs of this potential referral.
- IPD will email the medical info and child study of the potential referral and call to discuss in detail.
- After your conversation with our IPD, **you will send the information we’ve received on your potential referral to University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) International Adoption Clinic for review.** (Or another International Adoption Clinic that you have chosen in advance)

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Finding a Referral Cont.

- Information for UAB International Adoption Clinic has been provided to you. Before we reach this point (finding a potential referral), you will be asked by your adoption coordinator to provide us with your International Adoption Clinic selection and their terms for reviewing a potential referral.
- You will have the opportunity to make your decision on the potential referral based on findings from UAB (or other clinic) and other physicians
- **If you make the decision not to match**, the match is cancelled and we will begin the search for another potential referral.

Deciding to Match

If you make decision to match with a potential referral, the following pieces will be submitted to CCCWA by our China Facilitator:

1. Nurturing Letter (written by you) a sample is found on the [China Program Documents](#) webpage
 2. Rehabilitation Letter (written by you) a sample is found on the [China Program Documents](#) webpage
 3. Opinion Letter (written by International Program Director - IPD)
 4. Information Sheet on Prospective Adoptive Parents (completed by Adoption Coordinator)
 5. Copy of Medicals submitted in the China Dossier
 6. Copy of Family Photos submitted in the China Dossier
 7. Copy of Passport Pages for each parent
- The 2 letters you are responsible for (Nurturing & Rehabilitation) must be type-written and signed before scanning and emailing to your adoption coordinator.

Acceptance Documents

- CCCWA will approve the match and send official **Acceptance Documents** to the Children of the World office for your signatures.
 1. Letter Seeking Confirmation from Adopters
 2. Letter Seeking Confirmation by Central Authority
- *These are sometimes referred to as **LSC***
- Once received, your adoption coordinator will overnight the *Letter Seeking Confirmation from Adopters* to you for signatures and dates– to be used during the next phase. **This document will have very specific requirements for where and how to sign. So please be sure to closely follow the instruction sheet that arrives with this letter.** You will be returning this document to Children of the World in a pre-paid overnight FedEx envelope
 - Your adoption coordinator will next send the 2 original LSCs to our China Facilitator for processing with the CCCWA and for use later on.
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Looking Ahead

The following are remaining phases in your adoption process:

I800 process – Phase II of Immigration, seeking approval for your specific referral

DS260 process - your child's US visa application

Article 5 - final approval from US Immigration

Travel Approval (Travel Invitation) final approval from CCCWA, approved range of dates for travel

In-Country Appointments – Orphanage Tour/ Got-cha Day, Medicals, & US Consulate

Travel Arrangements / Preparation – Flights, Reservations, Itinerary Review



FAQs for Matching with a Referral

How long will it take to find a potential referral? *At this time, we are finding that new referrals are not being added very quickly to the shared list provided by CCCWA. Therefore, unfortunately, there is no average timeline for finding a potential referral. The good news is that by having our China Facilitator search for your referral, she is available to keep a close eye on the shared list during “China Time”.*

What time of day/night could I hear that we have a potential referral? *Depending on what time the China Facilitator finds the potential referral, all of the preliminary review steps could be happening in the middle of the night. (local pediatrician review, IPD review/research). Our International Program Director (IPD) will do her best to be familiar with and understands specific special needs of the potential referral before contacting you. But, given the quick turnaround for officially “matching” (72 hrs) you might be contacted at a very late hour to start your review as well. This is another reason why it is very important to have a plan in place for submitting your potential referral to an International Adoption Clinic for review.*

When will I get to see a picture of the potential referral? *Our IPD typically refrains from sharing the referral pictures until you have had a chance to objectively consider the medical / special needs information. This preference is based on her 30 years of experience working in International Adoption. As humans, it is incredibly difficult to make an impartial decision when have a strong emotional influence, like pictures.*

Is it possible to receive additional or updated medical information on the potential referral? *Yes and No. We can always ask the CCCWA for updated/additional information. But it is not likely that we will receive anything additional during the 72 hour decision period. We might receive feedback from CCCWA later on as we await your official acceptance letters. Recently, the Chinese Government enacted new laws prohibiting foreign entities (like US Adoption Agencies) from directly working/communicating with regulated Chinese entities (like Chinese Orphanages). This was not intended to impact International Adoption. But, unfortunately it has and the result is much slower lines of communication and information sharing.

What is the difference between “matching” and “accepting”? *These two terms are often used interchangeably; however, it is helpful to think of these as two separate levels of commitment to a referral.

We like to use the word “matching” when, after your 72 hr window of time, you decided to “move forward” with a potential referral. There is still the opportunity to “un-match” after this point, should you choose to. We might receive more current information from CCCWA or better feedback on the special needs listed that could prove helpful in determining if this is an acceptable referral.

“Accepting” a referral is the process of formally committing to your referral by signing the original Acceptance Letter we receive in the mail from CCCWA.

Do families turn down potential referrals often? *It is not uncommon for families to review more than one referral before accepting a match. **If at any point in the review process you decide not to match or decide to un-match, you may do so.** Information we receive from the local pediatrician, or the International Adoption Clinic might lead to a decision not to accept – and that is ok. Our IPD will encourage you to consider how this special need(s) will impact your whole family short & long term, emotionally, financially, etc.*

How long will it take to receive my official acceptance letters from CCCWA? *Again, with recent changes to CCCWA procedures, it is unclear how previous timelines will be affected. It is our understanding that these letters could take 3-4 weeks to receive.



What can I tell my family about our potential referral and when can I share his/her picture?

*First and foremost we advise all families to refrain from sharing any “identifying” information (name, orphanage, photos) about your referral electronically or on ANY type of social media until your child is securely in your arms. Foreign authorities frown upon the “American Way” of oversharing. It is important to remember that your referral is not “officially” your child until the notarial appointment you attend during your first week in China. Even though we (Children of the World) understand the deep connection you might feel beforehand, we can assure you that foreign authorities do not feel the same way.

Please refrain from sharing any information electronically with friends and family until you have decided to proceed with “matching”. (This of course does not include the sharing of information with a medical professional that could help with your decision making). Instead, call or text with the simple message “We have a potential referral. We will share more information when we can. For now, please pray for God to guide our steps.”

After matching, and before accepting you may choose to share information with the closest members of your support group (your parents & siblings, closest friends, existing children, etc). When you decide to do this please consider the following:

- *They will become emotionally attached to this referral too. (Especially grandparents & siblings of your child)*
- *Make sure they fully understand the implications of sharing ANY information about your referral with ANYONE unless they have permission. It is simply too risky, and there will be plenty of time for Facebook and Instagram posts once the child arrives home.*

If you are using social media to keep family and friends informed of your journey – wonderful! But, do not share any identifying information about your referral (including photos). This applies even if your posts are “private” or your group is “closed”. ***Never underestimate how quickly family and friends (eager to share your joy) will screen shot and share your posts or forward an email with pictures/info. We see it happen all the time.***

Sharing basic information such as gender and age is acceptable. Even sharing your child’s special need or province/city you will be traveling to for the purposes of learning more is acceptable. Anything other than these two examples will need to be approved by our International Program Director.

Additionally – as BEAUTIFUL as we know your child will be, please do not include their referral photo(s) on your Christmas / Holiday card. There are several creative ways families can incorporate their adoption plans into these types of announcements, but again – identifying information should not be included.

What can I be doing while we wait? *Waiting is the hardest part of any adoption journey. Surround yourself and your family with support and encouragement. Research and educate yourself on as many adoptive parenting topics as you can. Join support groups with other in-process adoptive parents. Now is also a great time to learn as much as you can about your child’s heritage and culture.

******Please Remember******

While you wait, if there are ANY changes to your household we need to be informed. If changes are not reported to USCIS with an updated home study report, your next steps could be significantly delayed.

Below is a list of examples for possible “Household Changes”

- Marriage /Divorce /Separation
- Moving (ANY change of address)
- Significant changes in income
- Additional Adults and/or Children Living in the Home - **Including:** family, friends, students, and/or missionaries living with you temporarily (anything other than a vacation)
- Pregnancy or Birth of a Child

