

Frequently Asked Questions

What if the parents don't want contact?	Biological parents have the option to file a contact preference form, which will be attached to the OBC. However, just 3% of biological parents in states with similar OBC policies prefer not to be contacted.
Weren't the Biological mothers guaranteed confidentiality?	Most birth mothers were coerced and were not legally guaranteed lifelong anonymity. When laws in states that have restored access have been challenged, courts have found neither statutory guarantees, nor constitutional right to anonymity. The popular use of connecting with family through DNA testing, such as 23 and Me, makes it nearly impossible to guarantee confidentiality.
Won't this cause abortion rates to increase?	Findings that support the concept of openness and the acknowledgement of the negative consequences that secrecy can inflict on the relationships within the families has led agencies to improve practices by providing more knowledge about their original information. Only 5% of adoptions are closed. States with OBC access or similar legislation, saw decreases or no change in abortion rates.
Why at age 18?	Maryland's age of majority is 18 years of age. You can vote and join the military at the age of 18.
If you already have identifying information, why do you need your OBC?	An OBC is a government-issued record of birth, independent of adoption. It is a vital record used as proof of identity and ancestry, for obtaining a passport, Real ID, or acceptance into heritage societies. It's a vital record. It holds our truth.

Why We Need Change

Second class citizens	Every non-adopted person can obtain their certificate. Existing OBC policies discriminate against adopted people.
Bipartisan	This issue touches every race, religion, gender, age and class in every Maryland city and county.
1 in 4 people are connected to adoption	You probably know someone who is impacted by adoption.
Family medical/mental history	Many federal public health agencies recognize the importance that genetic data and knowledge of family medical history have the potential to aid in providing preventative care and services such as cancer screenings or diagnosing thousands of hereditary medical and mental issues.
Right to accurate record	It is a moral right to know the truth about our personal information. A birth certificate is a government issued record used as proof of identity and ancestry. As U.S. citizens, we are all entitled to our personal information.
Loss of identity	Denying an adopted person access to their truth defies the basic legal standard in adoption, which is to ensure the best interest of the child. Not knowing who you are can make adoptees feel isolated and ostracized.
Loss of Heritage	Adoptees are unable to apply for membership to organizations such as Daughters of the Revolution or Native American groups because they do not have access to their original birth certificate.
Right to privacy, no anonymity	Most birth mothers were coerced and were not legally guaranteed lifelong anonymity. When laws in states that have restored access have been challenged, courts have found neither statutory guarantees of nor constitutional right to anonymity.
Birth mothers want to be found	Less than 3% of birth parents in the states with open access requested no contact. This tells us that most birth parents want to be found; they want to, at the very least, know their child is alive and OK.
Access to OBC is more private.	Connecting initially through social media or DNA tests is neither discrete nor tactful. Granting access will allow direct contact on a very sensitive and private matter.