

Adoption vs. PLC (Youth Friendly)

Use the chart below as a guide to compare permanency options.

	Adoption	Permanent Legal Custodianship
Birth Parents' Rights	If you are under the age of 18 and wish to be adopted, the courts most terminate your birth parents rights.	If your birth parents' right have not been terminated, they keep certain rights, including: • They can visit you as long as there is a court order and your health and safety are not put at risk by visitation. • Your birth parents can go to court and ask if they can regain custody. • Your birth parents have to pay child support.
Post Adoption Contact Agreement (PACA)	Contact with your birth relative(s) after adoption IS possible. This can happen either informally or through a use of a Post Adoption Contact Agreement (PACA). A PACA is voluntary and must be agreed upon by, your adoptive family, and your birth relative(s).	The PACA is not allowed or needed to maintain contact with birth relative(s). This can be done by a court order or informally with your caregiver's permission.
Caregiver's Rights	Your adoptive parents are given all the rights and responsibilities that once belonged to your birth parents.	The person caring for you is given legal and physical responsibility for you and accepts responsibility for your care and treatment, including medical care, training and education, decisions about travel, driver's license, marriage and enlistment in the armed forces. When the person caring for you is married, either one or both can be named as your caregiver. If your birth parents' rights have been terminated, your caregiver may adopt you later if you wish.

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Legal Documentation	At your adoption hearing, the document, (final decree of adoption) completes your adoption. In addition to the final decree of adoption, a subsidy agreement could be made between your adoptive parents and the county. Subsidy payments will last until you are 18, but could go until you are 21. This depends on your age at the time of the adoption and whether or not you are in school, working, etc.	At your PLC hearing, the document (PLC court order) completes your PLC, which might include information about visitation with your birth parents. In addition to the final decree of PLC, a subsidy agreement could be made between your caregivers and the county. Subsidy payments will last until you are 18, but could go until you are 21. This depends on your age at the time of the PLC arrangement and whether or not you are in school, working, etc.
Who Makes Decisions for You?	All decisions are made by your adoptive parents.	Your caregivers make the major decisions about school, medical treatment and give you permission for other major life decisions. Your birth parents keep important rights if no TPR (visitation, agreeing to your adoption).
Relationship with Your Birth Parents	You and your adoptive parents can work out a way to keep a relationship with your birth family. In order to put this in motion, a PACA (Post-Adoption Contact Agreement) will need to be developed.	If your birth parents' rights are not terminated, they have the right to visit you, unless a court orders otherwise. The court should tell you how the visitation will occur and how often. Your birth parents have the right to ask the court to have you returned to them.

	Adoption	Permanent Legal Custodianship
Your Legal Name	If you wish, you and your adoptive parents will work together to determine your legal name.	You keep the name your birth parents gave you. If you want your name changed there is a process to do so through the courts.
Inheritance	You have the right to inherit from your adoptive parents if there is no Will. Otherwise, your rights to an inheritance are made through their will.	You have no right to an inheritance from your caregiver unless you are named in their will. However, you keep the right to inherit from birth parents with or without a will.
Your Consent	If you are 12 or older, you have to agree to being adopted.	Children 12 and older should have a discussion about the positives and negatives of adoption and PLC, before choosing PLC.