



El Salvador Adoption Program Overview

El Salvador is the smallest and most densely populated country in Central America. ABI offers adoption services in El Salvador for toddlers and older children in need of permanent families. The time frame for an adoption from El Salvador is between 18-24 months, with the majority falling somewhere in the middle. El Salvador has lower fees for adoption than many countries. ABI has a ministry in El Salvador called "Jeremiah 29:11" whose purpose is to assist institutionalized children and their families. You can learn more about this ministry on our website on the Humanitarian Aid page!



Children Available: Toddlers and older children, including those with special needs and sibling groups are available for referral from El Salvador

General Adoptive Parent Requirements: To be eligible to adopt from El Salvador, both parents must be at least 25 years old and no more than 45 years older than the child they are seeking to adopt. In addition, a married couple must have been married for at least 5 years. Single female applicants are accepted by the law of El Salvador; however, in reality they are rarely approved to adopt unless they desire older children or those with special needs. Prospective parents should be in good health and prepared to submit a psychological report.

Adoption Process– The adoption process from El Salvador can appear overwhelming initially. However, it is a step-by-step process and ABI will guide you. The first step in adopting from El Salvador is to have a **Home study** conducted by an agency licensed in your state of residence. The second step, that can be done concurrently, is to file your Immigration and Naturalization Paperwork: the **I-800A**.

Dossier. The next step is the Dossier. It is a compilation of documents that require various seals at different levels of government. ABI, Inc. will provide adopting families with exact directions about how to prepare their dossier and an up-to-date Dossier document list when they have decided on their specific country. Don't be overwhelmed - we'll help you with this and ABI Inc. will even manage dossier preparation and domestic and international mailing! Once your dossier is ready to submit, your documents will be reviewed and your dossier will be sent to El Salvador.

Referral. Adoptions from El Salvador must be approved by the Central Authority. The adoptive parents must be approved before a potential match is made which must also be approved. The wait time for a referral from El Salvador varies based upon the age and gender of child a family is requesting. Gender requests will not be accepted unless a family is seeking to adopt a child over 5. It is anticipated that referrals for older and/or special needs children will be made in a shorter time frame. The time frame for actual adoption completion will likely range from 18 months to 24 months. Referral information includes as much detail as we receive from our overseas counterparts, including a photograph with medical and social history. However, please note, that referrals offered by the government of El Salvador may not include the level of detail families or our agency would like.

Travel. Travel is required of both parents for approximately two – three weeks, although two short trips are a possibility with approximately two weeks between them. Please Note – travel requirements can change during the adoption process and are not under ABI control.

Post-Adoption. Reports following a child's placement for adoption are required to be completed by a licensed adoption agency (typically the same one that conducted the homestudy) at 1, 6, 12, and 24 months following placement. These are sent by ABI to El Salvador.

