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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ADOPTION RECORDS.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. Section 578-14, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended as follows:

3           "**§578-14 Record of adoption.** (a) A certified copy of the  
4 decree of adoption, or a certified abstract thereof on a form  
5 approved by the department of health, after the decree has  
6 become effective, shall be sent to the department. The  
7 department shall cause to be made a new record of the birth in  
8 the name of the individual, as fixed or changed by the decree,  
9 with the names of the adoptive parents and~~[, upon request of~~  
10 ~~both adoptive parents, or the sole adoptive parent if there is~~  
11 ~~only one, that]~~the name or names of either or both of the  
12 natural parents ~~[appear on the certificate, with the name of a~~  
13 ~~natural parent who consents to be named on the certificate].~~

14           SECTION 2. Section 578-15, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
15 amended to read as follows:

16           "**§578-15 Secrecy of proceedings and records.** (a) The  
17 records in adoption proceedings, after the petition is filed and  
18 prior to the entry of the decree, shall be open to inspection



1 only by the parties or their attorneys, the director of human  
2 services or the director's agent, or by any proper person on a  
3 showing of good cause therefor, upon order of the court. Except  
4 in the case of an individual being adopted by a person married  
5 to the legal father or mother of the individual or unless  
6 authorized by the court, no petition for adoption shall set  
7 forth the name of the individual sought to be adopted or the  
8 name of either of the parents of the individual; provided that  
9 the legal name of the individual and the name of each of the  
10 individual's legal parents may be added to the petition by  
11 amendment during the course of the hearing thereof and shall be  
12 included in the decree. The hearing of the petition shall be in  
13 chambers and shall not be open to the public.

14 (b) Upon the entry of the decree, or upon the later  
15 effective date of the decree, or upon the dismissal or  
16 discontinuance or other final disposition of the petition, the  
17 clerk of the court shall seal all records in the proceedings;  
18 provided that upon the written request of the petitioner or  
19 petitioners, the court may waive the requirement that the  
20 records be sealed. The seal shall not be broken and the records  
21 shall not be inspected by any person, [~~including~~] except the  
22 parties to the proceedings, [~~except~~]



1           (1) Upon order of the family court in response to a  
2                     written request from one of the parties to the  
3                     proceedings [~~upon a showing of good cause~~];

4           [~~(2) For adoptions which occurred prior to January 1, 1991,~~  
5                     ~~after the adopted individual attains the age of~~  
6                     ~~eighteen and upon submission to the family court of a~~  
7                     ~~written request for inspection by the adopted~~  
8                     ~~individual or the adoptive parents in accordance with~~  
9                     ~~the following:~~

10           ~~(A) Within sixty calendar days after receipt of a~~  
11                     ~~request for inspection, the family court, by~~  
12                     ~~certified mail with return receipt requested,~~  
13                     ~~shall mail to the last known address of each~~  
14                     ~~natural parent a notice of the request for~~  
15                     ~~inspection of adoption records, a copy of the~~  
16                     ~~request for inspection and copies of any~~  
17                     ~~accompanying letters, photographs, or other~~  
18                     ~~documents submitted in support of the request.~~  
19                     ~~The notice shall inform the natural parent that~~  
20                     ~~unless an affidavit signed by the natural parent~~  
21                     ~~requesting confidentiality is received by the~~  
22                     ~~family court within sixty calendar days of the~~



1 ~~date of receipt of the notice, the natural parent~~  
2 ~~will be deemed to have waived any rights of~~  
3 ~~confidentiality and the records shall be subject~~  
4 ~~to inspection by the adopted individual or the~~  
5 ~~adoptive parent who submitted the request. The~~  
6 ~~notice shall also inform the natural parent that~~  
7 ~~an affidavit requesting confidentiality for a~~  
8 ~~period of ten years may be filed. A blank~~  
9 ~~affidavit to be completed and signed by the~~  
10 ~~natural parent shall be mailed with the notice;~~

11 ~~(B) If the family court has received a return receipt~~  
12 ~~for the notice but an affidavit requesting~~  
13 ~~confidentiality is not received by the family~~  
14 ~~court within sixty calendar days of the date of~~  
15 ~~receipt of the notice, the family court shall~~  
16 ~~allow inspection under this section;~~

17 ~~(C) If the notice is returned as undeliverable to a~~  
18 ~~natural parent, the family court shall designate~~  
19 ~~an agent or agency to conduct a good faith and~~  
20 ~~diligent search to locate the natural parent and~~  
21 ~~to provide the notice and all other documents~~  
22 ~~required under subparagraph (A). The search~~



1           ~~shall extend over a period not to exceed one~~  
2           ~~hundred eighty calendar days. Contacts with~~  
3           ~~natural parents by a designated agent or agency~~  
4           ~~under this section shall be personal, whenever~~  
5           ~~possible, and confidential. The family court~~  
6           ~~shall provide the designated agent or agency with~~  
7           ~~a copy of the request for inspection and copies~~  
8           ~~of any accompanying letters, photographs, or~~  
9           ~~other documents submitted in support of the~~  
10           ~~request, and the designated agent or agency shall~~  
11           ~~present the copies to the natural parent when~~  
12           ~~contacted. The family court and the designated~~  
13           ~~agent or agency shall ensure that no person other~~  
14           ~~than a natural parent or the agent or agency~~  
15           ~~through which a natural parent obtained~~  
16           ~~assistance for the adoption is informed of the~~  
17           ~~adoptive individual's existence and the~~  
18           ~~relationship to the natural parent;~~

19           ~~(D) If a natural parent cannot be located after the~~  
20           ~~search conducted under subparagraph (C), the~~  
21           ~~family court shall allow inspection under this~~  
22           ~~section;~~



1           ~~(E) If an affidavit requesting confidentiality is~~  
2           ~~received by the family court within sixty~~  
3           ~~calendar days of the date of receipt of the~~  
4           ~~notice provided under subparagraph (A) or (C),~~  
5           ~~the family court shall not allow inspection~~  
6           ~~during the effective period of the affidavit;~~

7           ~~(F) If a ten-year affidavit is filed under~~  
8           ~~subparagraph (E), the natural parent may refile~~  
9           ~~affidavits every ten years thereafter to maintain~~  
10           ~~confidentiality, or the natural parent may file~~  
11           ~~an affidavit effective for the remainder of the~~  
12           ~~natural parent's lifetime. All affidavits~~  
13           ~~subsequent to the initial affidavit may be filed~~  
14           ~~within ninety calendar days before the last~~  
15           ~~effective day of the initial affidavit. If there~~  
16           ~~is no effective affidavit on file with the family~~  
17           ~~court at the time a request for inspection is~~  
18           ~~received by the court, the court shall allow~~  
19           ~~inspection under this paragraph;~~

20           ~~(G) An affidavit requesting confidentiality shall be~~  
21           ~~effective until the last day of the period for~~  
22           ~~which the affidavit was filed, until the natural~~



1 ~~parent revokes the affidavit, or until the~~  
2 ~~natural parent is deceased, whichever occurs~~  
3 ~~sooner; and~~

4 ~~(H) Where two natural parents are involved and~~  
5 ~~confidentiality is waived under this paragraph by~~  
6 ~~only one natural parent, the inspection of the~~  
7 ~~records shall not include any identifying~~  
8 ~~information concerning the other natural parent;~~

9 ~~(3) For adoptions occurring after December 31, 1990, in~~  
10 ~~accordance with the following:~~

11 ~~(A) Each natural parent shall be informed of the~~  
12 ~~procedures required under this paragraph if the~~  
13 ~~natural parent desires to maintain~~  
14 ~~confidentiality after the adopted individual~~  
15 ~~attains the age of eighteen;~~

16 ~~(B) Within ninety calendar days before the adopted~~  
17 ~~individual attains the age of eighteen a natural~~  
18 ~~parent may file an affidavit with the family~~  
19 ~~court to request confidentiality and the natural~~  
20 ~~parent may refile affidavits every ten years~~  
21 ~~thereafter to maintain confidentiality or the~~  
22 ~~natural parent may file an affidavit effective~~



1                   ~~for the remainder of the natural parent's~~  
2                   ~~lifetime. All affidavits after the initial~~  
3                   ~~affidavit may be filed within ninety calendar~~  
4                   ~~days before the last effective day of the initial~~  
5                   ~~affidavit;~~

6           ~~(C) If a natural parent declines or fails to file an~~  
7           ~~affidavit under subparagraph (B), the family~~  
8           ~~court shall allow inspection of the record by the~~  
9           ~~adopted individual or the adoptive parents at any~~  
10           ~~time after the adopted individual has attained~~  
11           ~~the age of eighteen; and~~

12           ~~(D) Where two natural parents are involved and~~  
13           ~~confidentiality is waived under this paragraph by~~  
14           ~~only one natural parent, the inspection of the~~  
15           ~~records shall not include any identifying~~  
16           ~~information concerning the other natural parent;~~

17           ~~(4) For all adoptions, regardless of date of occurrence,~~  
18           ~~after the adopted individual attains the age of~~  
19           ~~eighteen and upon submission to the family court of a~~  
20           ~~written request for inspection by a natural parent;~~  
21           ~~provided that the adopted individual shall have the~~  
22           ~~same rights and obligations applicable to natural~~





1 ~~parents under paragraphs (2) and (3), including rights~~  
2 ~~of notice and opportunity to file affidavits~~  
3 ~~requesting confidentiality.~~

4 ~~(5) For all adoptions, regardless of date of occurrence,~~  
5 ~~after the adopted individual attains the age of~~  
6 ~~eighteen and upon submission of an affidavit by a~~  
7 ~~natural parent consenting to the inspection of records~~  
8 ~~by the adoptee or an affidavit submitted by an adoptee~~  
9 ~~consenting to the inspection of records by the natural~~  
10 ~~parents; provided that where only one natural parent~~  
11 ~~files an affidavit for consent, the inspection of~~  
12 ~~records shall not include any identifying information~~  
13 ~~concerning the other natural parent;~~

14 ~~(6)]~~ (2) Upon request by the adopted individual or the  
15 adoptive parents for information contained in the  
16 records concerning ethnic background and necessary  
17 medical information[, notwithstanding any affidavit  
18 requesting confidentiality]; or

19 ~~(7)]~~ (3) Upon request by a natural parent for a copy of the  
20 original birth certificate.



1 As used in this subsection, "natural parent" means a biological  
2 mother or father, or a legal parent who is not also the  
3 biological parent.

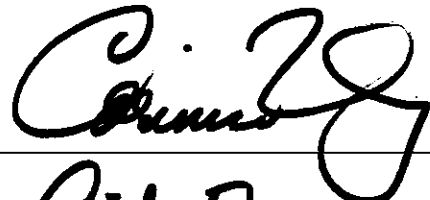

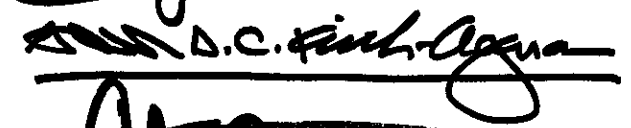
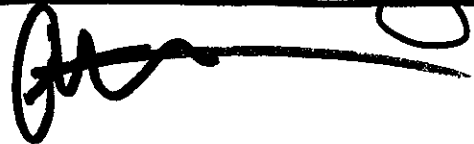
4 (c) The clerk of the court shall keep a docket of all  
5 adoption proceedings, which may be inspected only by order of  
6 the family court."

7 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
8 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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11

INTRODUCED BY:

JAN 26 2011



**Report Title:**

Adopted persons; access to their adoptive information.

**Description:**

Amends certain sections of Chapter 587, HRS to allow adoptive persons access to their adoptive information.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

