

TO: Petitioners for Adoption
FROM: Judge Margaret Donnelly, Administrative Judge, St. Louis County Family Court
DATE: August 6, 2018
RE: 21st Circuit Annual Adoption Celebration Notice

1. In conjunction with National Adoption Awareness Month (November) and the National Adoption Saturday Project, and due to the overwhelming success of previous year's events, the St. Louis County Family Court is again planning a major adoption event "***Adoption Awareness Day***" on **Wednesday November 14, 2018**. The purpose of the event is to increase public awareness of children available for adoption. In order to accomplish this goal, the Family Court is sponsoring a special day called wherein adoptions will be performed with invited media coverage and public participation. The purpose of this notice is to invite the participation of persons who are petitioning for adoption and who will have their adoption hearing scheduled between now and *Adoption Awareness Day*. In order to facilitate the timely disposition of adoptions on this special day, participation is limited to non-contested cases only.
2. *Adoption Awareness Day* will be held in the Family Court Center at 105 South Central Avenue, in Clayton from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m., on November 14, 2018. Judges from both the Family Court and the Circuit Court will participate. However, unlike other adoption hearings, these hearings will not be confidential. In fact, we are hoping for heavy media coverage from both print and electronic media. Also, in order to facilitate our goal of information and education to the public about adoptions, members of the public will be invited to attend *Adoption Awareness Day* and observe adoption hearings being held.
3. Petitioners' for adoption who are interested are encouraged to participate in *Adoption Awareness Day*. **However, as this is intended to be a public event with media coverage, participation would not be appropriate for petitioner's wishing to maintain confidentiality in their own adoption.**
4. **POINT OF CONTACT** for persons wishing to participate in Adoption Awareness Day is Clara Hampton of the St. Louis County Circuit Clerk's Office. Please notify Clara of your interest in participating by e-filing the attached Application for Participation. Please note: You client(s) are also required to complete a Consent to Participate in Adoption Awareness Day. **In order to be considered for participation, applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on October 19, 2018.** If we are able to include your adoption in *Adoption Awareness Day* you will receive an electronic notice when the application is accepted. If accepted, your client's consent to participate must be filed by November 7, 2018, or your case will be removed from the docket.
5. **In addition to limiting participation to non-contested adoption cases, Children's Division subsidized cases will only be docketed if the subsidy has been approved and finalized.**

APPLICATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN ADOPTION AWARENESS DAY

Please docket my adoption hearing for "*Adoption Awareness Day*", November 14, 2018.

Petitioner's Attorney: _____
Name

Address

Phone

Fax

Case Style and Case Number: _____

I understand that this adoption proceeding will not be confidential, members of the public and the media have been invited and as a result, the identity of the adoptive parents and adopted child could become known.

This is a subsidized adoption and the subsidy has been approved.

Attorney Signature/Bar No.

Adoption must be filed and application received no later than October 19, 2018.

Approved for participation:

Judge

Date

Consent to Participate in Non-Confidential Adoption Proceeding

I understand that parties to an adoption proceeding in the Family Court of St. Louis County are entitled to confidentiality protection under the laws of the State of Missouri.

I understand that media representatives and other interested non-parties may attend and witness an adoption proceeding to which I am a party on November 14, 2018, at 105 South Central Avenue, Clayton, Missouri.

I understand that this proceeding may be the subject of coverage on or in local and/or national television; local and/or national radio programs; and local and/or national print media. I further understand that there will be no attempt to conceal, hide or disguise my identity during the course of such media coverage.

Mindful that my identity may be revealed to interested non-parties and that I may appear on or in television broadcasts, radio broadcasts and/or print media due to my participation in this proceeding, I, the undersigned, specifically waive my right to the confidentiality protections of the Juvenile and Adoption Codes of the State of Missouri and agree to participate in the proceeding. I further release the Family Court of St. Louis County and its staff from any and all liability pertaining to my participation in this proceeding.

Cause Number

Cause Style - **Required** (Please Print)

Date

Adoption Petitioner

Date

Adoption Petitioner

Date

Adoptee (if age 12 or older)

Date

Attorney for Petitioner(s)

Date

Guardian ad Litem

This form must be completed and signed by all parties and e-filed with the Court no later than November 7, 2018 or your adoption may be removed from the Adoption Awareness Day docket.

So Authorized:

Judge/Commissioner

Date