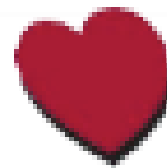


# YAVAPAI CASA FOR KIDS FOUNDATION



**Support a Child**



**Save a Life**

**ADOPTION EXCHANGE MAILBOX  
PARTICIPANT PROCEDURES  
PACKET**

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# About the Adoption Exchange Mailbox

The Adoption Exchange Mailbox (AEM) is a program Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation, with support from the Verde Valley CASA Support Council, designed to help foster children in Yavapai County - Upon adoption- feel as though they are gaining a family instead of losing one.

The AEM achieves this by providing a safe and confidential mailbox for the exchange of letters and gifts between adoptive and biological families. The AEM protects the privacy of all parties involved by acting as the “middleman” to all correspondents. **At no time will Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation or the Verde Valley CASA Support Council release any identifying information regarding the AEM participants.**

This service is only available when approved by the court and when both the biological and the adoptive families agree to participate.

All physical correspondence (between families or to AEM staff) for the AEM can be sent to the follow:

**Adoption Exchange Mailbox  
P.O. Box 26322  
Prescott Valley, AZ 86312**

## A Brief History:

The Adoption Exchange Mailbox was developed in 2014 by Barbara Polk, a CASA and founding member of Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation, to deal with “Agreements Regarding Communication” which was added to the Arizona statute in the mid-1990s. The actual procedure for court approval of an Agreement Regarding Communication under ARS §8-116.01 is as follows:

1. The parties to a proceeding under this chapter may enter into an agreement regarding communication with a child adoptee, the adoptive parents and a birth parent.
2. An agreement is not enforceable unless the agreement is in writing and is approved by the court. The court shall not approve an agreement unless the agreement is approved by the prospective adoptive parents, any birth parent with whom the agreement is being made and, if the child is in the custody of the division or an agency, a representative of the division or agency. ...

The Agreement is filed in the adoption proceeding and, when it is approved by the judge, it becomes a court order. The court retains jurisdiction to enforce, modify or revoke the terms to the Agreement. The Department of Child Safety (DCS) is not a party to the Agreement, but their approval is required if the child is in their custody. It is critical that both the biological and adoptive parents register with the Adoption Exchange Mailbox so that the Mailbox can be used for communication.

## Eligibility

In order to register to use the Adoption Exchange Mailbox the following requirements must be met:

1. Adoption of a youth from the foster care system in Yavapai County
2. The judge involved in the adoption approves
3. Both the adoptive and biological families agree to participate in the AEM

## How It works

### Registering for AEM Participation

To register for the Adoption Exchange Mailbox, visit [YavapaiCASAforKids.org/adoption-exchange-mailbox](http://YavapaiCASAforKids.org/adoption-exchange-mailbox) and download the registration packet. The packet is a fillable PDF

and must be submitted to either [info@yavapaicasaforkids.org](mailto:info@yavapaicasaforkids.org) or to PO Box 26322 Prescott Valley, AZ 86312. Registration is complete when both the adoptive and biological parents have submitted the registration packet. Once registration is complete both parties will receive an email. If one party fails to register the registered party will be informed.

## Sending/Receiving Mail

Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation manages the operation of the Adoption Exchange Mailbox. When correspondence is received (such as letters, gifts, reports, etc.) Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation will take that correspondence and forward it to the intended party. Postage for the forwarding is paid for by Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation and once the correspondence is forwarded Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation will email to inform the sender.

Once both parties are registered for the AEM use of the mailbox can begin. To use the mailbox, follow these steps:

1. The sender places correspondence (gifts, letters, etc.) in an envelope or in a shipping package, depending on the size of the contents.
2. The sender will then add to the envelope or package a note that says "To The Adoptive Parents of" or "To The Birth Parents of" or "To The Relative of" followed by the child's birth name and birth date.

Example:

<b>To The Adoptive Parents of John Doe, Date of Birth: 01-01-2015</b>
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3. Then the envelope or package is sealed, postage is paid, and the correspondence is sent to the following address:

**Adoption Exchange Mailbox**

**P.O. Box 26322**

**Prescott Valley, AZ 86312**

4. The sender's correct return address should be on the envelope or package to ensure its delivery or return.
5. Once the correspondence is received, Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation will remove its contents and place it in another envelope or package, pay the postage, and send it to the intended recipient (provided the recipient has registered).
6. Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation will notify the sender when the correspondence is sent to the intended recipient.
7. If the receiving partner withdraws from the AEM or the address is not valid and the correspondence is returned to the Adoption Exchange Mailbox, Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation will return the correspondence to the original sender.

**ALL NAMES AND ADDRESSES WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL**

## Updating Contact Information

When your contact information changes it is important to update Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation as soon as possible, allowing for uninterrupted communication via the mailbox. Should correspondence be returned to an incorrect address, Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation will attempt (one time) to connect the intended receiver to get an updated address. If the intended receiver does not update their information within 2 business days, the correspondence will be returned to the sender.

**To update your information** call 928-445-0800 or email

[Info@YavapaiCASAforKids.org](mailto:Info@YavapaiCASAforKids.org) with the subject line "AEM contact update." You will receive an email notification within 1 business day informing you when your file has been updated.

## Pausing, Terminating, or Reinstating AEM Participation

Participation in the Adoption Exchange Mailbox can be paused, terminated, or reinstated at any time by any participating party (adoptive or biological) by emailing [info@YavapaiCASAforKids.org](mailto:info@YavapaiCASAforKids.org) with "AEM participation change" in the subject line or by

calling 928-445-0800. Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation will process your request within 2 business days and email all parties involved of the change in participation status.