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Ethiopia

March 27, 2014

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Notice:Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth Affairs Change in Procedure for Regional Approval Letters

On March 13, in response to our request for clarification on reported delays from adoption service providers and prospective adoptive families, the Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth Affairs (MOWCYA) informed the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa of a change that took place November 7, 2013 in the procedures for issuance of the regional approval for placement of a child for intercountry adoption.

On November 7, 2013 (October 29, 2006 Ethiopian calendar), MOWCYA issued a directive to regional Bureaus of Women, Children, and Youth Affairs stating that all letters of approval for children placed for intercountry adoption must be signed by the head or vice-head of the regional Women, Children and Youth Affairs bureau confirming the child's adoptability and eligibility for intercountry adoption. The directive states the purpose of the policy change was to standardize which office certifies eligibility for intercountry adoption across all regions in Ethiopia.

Initially, the request was to be retroactive, which caused delays in some regions. After some discussion between the regional and federal level offices, the change in procedure will apply to cases filed after November 7, 2013 (October 29, 2006 Ethiopian calendar) and those filed before will be grandfathered. Cases from all regions should be progressing on normal time frames.