

HEART TO HEART ADOPTIONS

Your Rights as a Birth Mother in New York

A plain-language checklist. Keep this for reference.

New York law protects you in real ways. This is a quick-reference version of those protections — not legal advice. Your independent attorney can explain exactly how each of these applies to your situation.

Before you sign anything

- ☐ You cannot be asked to sign consent papers during pregnancy — only after birth
- ☐ You have the right to your own free lawyer, who works only for you
- ☐ You have the right to counseling before you sign anything
- ☐ No one can pressure or rush you into signing

After you sign

- ☐ If you sign outside of court, you get a window of time afterward to change your mind
- ☐ Signing in court before a judge is usually final right away — your lawyer will make sure you understand this before it happens

Staying connected

- ☐ You can set up a Post-Adoption Contact Agreement with the adoptive family
- ☐ Once a judge approves that agreement, it's enforceable by law — not just a promise
- ☐ You choose your level of contact: photos, calls, visits, or a mix

Financial assistance

- ☐ Help with rent, utilities, groceries, medical care, and transportation is available starting at month 8 of pregnancy
- ☐ You are never required to pay this money back, even if you change your mind about adoption

Choosing a family

- ☐ You choose the adoptive family — no one chooses for you
- ☐ You can change your mind about a family at any point before consent is final
- ☐ You can ask for cultural, faith, or location preferences in your search

If you feel pressured

- ☐ Stop. Tell your caseworker or call your lawyer right away
- ☐ Coercion is against the rules. You always have the right to take more time

This is general information, not legal advice. For anything specific to your situation, talk with your own independent adoption attorney. Heart to Heart will connect you with one at no cost.

**Questions? Call or text anytime — day or night. 518-557-1722 | 877-437-3424 | Text
801-563-1000**

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