

# Chicago adoption group helps Illinois adoptees seeking birth certificate



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**(Chicago, IL)** –A new Illinois law will allow an estimated 250,000 Illinois-born adoptees to request copies of their original birth certificate from the state beginning in November, and a local adoption group is helping adoptees navigate the process.

“Starting on November 15th, the new law will allow adopted adults to apply for a non-certified copy of their original birth certificate that will help them learn more about their birth families,” said **Melisha Mitchell**, executive director of the Chicago-based [White Oak Foundation](#). “We are helping people walk through the application process.

According to the head of the, adoptees born on or after January 1, 1946, may apply for their original birth certificates starting November 15, 2011.

A free seminar organized by the White Oak Foundation was held on October 6 in Chicago to provide adoptees with application assistance and on possible next steps once they’ve received non-certified copies of their original birth certificates.

Adoptees born before 1946 have had access to their original birth certificates since May of 2010.

The law’s sponsor, State Rep. **Sara Feigenholtz** (D-Chicago), an adoptee, appeared as seminar’s keynote speaker. “On November 15, I will be able to mail my application and \$15 check to the state’s office of Vital Records and get a copy of my original birth certificate within six months,” Feigenholtz told the group assembled in an auditorium of Illinois Masonic Hospital located in Chicago’s Lakeview neighborhood.

**“And on that birth certificate will be the name of the woman who gave birth to me 53 years ago. I can’t wait to hold it in my hand,”** Feigenholtz added.

The 2-hour symposium provided a “roadmap” to securing a non-certified copy of an original birth certificate under the new law as well as review the search and reunion options available to adoptees and their surviving relatives through the White Oak Foundation and state agencies.

For additional information call 312-666-5721 or e-mail Mitchell at [iltreesurgeon@aol.com](mailto:iltreesurgeon@aol.com) or visit [www.whiteoakfoundation.org](http://www.whiteoakfoundation.org).

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