

# MANUAL TRANSMITTAL

**Arkansas Department of Human Services**  
Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

Policy    Form    **Policy Directive**  
Service Programs Policy Manual

**Issuance Number: FSPP 2008-03**  
**Issuance Date: August 1, 2008**  
Expiration Date: **Until Promulgated**

**From: Pat Page, DCFS Director**

**Subj: Executive Directive:** Guidelines for Determining Appropriateness of Adoptive Applicant Age

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The Agency has reviewed its adoption policy as it relates to the age of an adoptive applicant and has researched guidelines used in other states. As a result, DCFS policy will be updated to include age as it relates to the applicant's ability to actively parent the child.

Until policy is promulgated, DCFS staff are to adhere to the following guidelines for determining the appropriateness of adoptive applicants as it relates to age:

- Adoptive applicants must be at least 21 years of age.
- In determining what is in the best interests of the child(ren) to be adopted, the Adoption Specialist will assess each prospective adoptive parent's ability to actively parent the prospective adoptee(s).
- Generally, at least a ten-year age difference and no more than a 45-year age difference, between the child and the adoptive parent is preferred.

**THIS EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE IS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.**  
**Submit Inquiries to: DCFS Policy Unit, phone (501) 682 – 8750**