

STATE OF NEW YORK

2939

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 18, 2017

Introduced by Sens. LAVALLE, AVELLA -- read twice and ordered printed,
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Children and
Families

AN ACT to amend the domestic relations law, in relation to disclosure of
information relating to natural siblings of adopted persons

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assem-
bly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The domestic relations law is amended by adding a new
2 section 114-a to read as follows:

3 § 114-a. Records of adopted natural siblings. Notwithstanding the
4 foregoing or any other inconsistent provisions of law, a justice, surro-
5 gate or judge of the court in which the order of adoption was made
6 shall, upon written ex parte application by a person at least twenty-one
7 years of age who, as a child, had been legally adopted grant an order
8 directing the clerk of the court who is custodian of the papers, records
9 or files pertaining to such adoption to submit them to the court for
10 physical unsealing to permit in camera review, by the court alone, of
11 the information contained therein on the identification of the appli-
12 cant's adopted natural sibling or siblings. Prior to such review, the
13 court shall send a letter to the last known addresses of the adopted
14 natural brothers or sisters over twenty-one years of age of the appli-
15 cant stating that an adopted natural sibling is attempting to contact
16 them. The letter shall contain a method for the adopted natural brother
17 or sister to consent or reject such contact. The consent must be
18 received by the court within one hundred twenty days in order to
19 proceed. Upon receiving consent from the natural brother or sister and
20 the review of the records have concluded that disclosure would not in
21 any way reveal the name or names of the natural parent or parents, the
22 court shall disclose to the applicant for the order of review the names
23 and all last known addresses of the natural brothers and sisters over
24 the age of twenty-one of the child who was adopted, and the clerk of the

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 court shall reseal and return the papers, records or files to the clerk
2 of the court re-filing thereof. If contact has been denied, the appli-
3 cant may not reapply to the court to obtain records of the natural
4 brother or sister who explicitly rejected contact. An applicant may
5 reapply, no sooner than one year after the previous application, for
6 such records if the natural brother or sister did not respond to the
7 letter of consent.

8 § 2. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall
9 have become a law.