

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI



JIM HOOD
ATTORNEY GENERAL

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Contact: Jacob Ray
Special Assistant Attorney General
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**SOUTHERN ADOPTIONS PROHIBITED
FROM PROVIDING ADOPTION SERVICES**

Attorney General Jim Hood obtained a "Preliminary Injunction" against Southern Adoptions and its owner, Kathy Lahr, on April 13, 2005. The injunction followed an investigation brought about after several complaints were filed with the Attorney General's Office against the Philadelphia, Mississippi adoption agency. The complaints alleged that the company was accepting payment for services and then failing to provide said services. Consumers seeking to adopt children paid thousand of dollars to Southern Adoptions. The company was being enlisted to make arrangements for both domestic and international adoptions. Mississippi law requires all adoption agencies to be licensed by the Mississippi Department of Human Services. After investigating these complaints, General Hood's office learned that the company's application for renewal of its license to provide adoption services was denied by the Mississippi Department of Human Services on August 11, 2004. Thereafter, the Attorney General's Office issued and served a Cease and Desist Order on the company ordering it to discontinue representing itself as a "licensed" agency and discontinue its advertisements and solicitations on the internet. This order was also sent to the company's website hosts instructing them to remove the websites.

Further complaints were received after issuance of the Cease and Desist Order alleging that Southern Adoptions was continuing its operations. Subsequently, on February 15, 2005, Attorney General Hood filed a lawsuit against the company and its owner, Kathy Lahr, requesting injunctive relief, restitution, civil penalties and attorney fees and cost. At a hearing held on April 13, 2005, the Chancery Court of Neshoba County, Philadelphia, Mississippi, entered a preliminary injunction prohibiting the company from (1) providing adoption services; (2) representing that it has a license to provide adoption services (3) transferring any assets and (4) destroying any documents.

Attorney General Hood stated "The act of adoption is a most unselfish act and is a very emotional time. These consumers put their trust and their hard earned money in the hands of Southern Adoptions. When trust like this is abused, it can not go unpunished." The case is still pending.

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