Effective 31 March 2018, the National Orphan Train Complex rate for research will be $30 an hour with a two-hour minimum, per rider, payable in advance. $5 will be added to each case to cover copies, postage and handling.

When a research request is received, it will be acknowledged (usually by mail), date received noted, and added to the research queue.

NOTC purchases top tier subscriptions to both Ancestry.com and Newspapers.com.

After all information possible has been gleaned from primary sources, local sources for the area the Rider lived/died in are also searched. This includes birth, marriage and death certificates online if available. In-house records of the American Female Guardian Society will be searched (by hand because these volumes have only been partially transcribed) to see if the child was sent from there. During the research process, an attempt will be made to determine which of the more than thirty placing organizations sent the rider out. Contact information for the holder of those records will be provided so the requester may contact them for additional information.

Please be aware that the National Orphan Train Complex DOES NOT house any records from any sending organization other than the American Female Guardian Society. It is the responsibility of the person requesting research to then follow up with the sending organizations to try to obtain official documentation. Most organization’s records are held in the origin state due to state foster and adoption laws. These organizations will only release records to direct descendants or family members of the child.

Foster Parents of the rider, and birth parents if names are available, will also be researched using primary sources and local state information. Two copies of each record will be printed; one for the requester, one for a file to be kept with the museum files.

If additional time was required for a thorough search, an invoice will be sent to the requester prior to any copies of research being mailed. A thorough search usually takes two to three hours total; it is rare to go over the three-hour mark. Upon payment of that final invoice, the packet of information will be sent to the requester.