

INTERNATIONAL PARENTAL CHILD ABDUCTION

U.S. Department of State • Bureau of Consular Affairs



U.S. Department of State, Office of Children's Issues

The Office of Children's Issues is the Central Authority charged with the implementation of the Hague Abduction Convention. Accordingly, this office provides information on preventing and assisting in cases of international parental child abduction. As the Central Authority, this office is aware that victims of domestic violence may be involved in cases of international parental child abduction because they have fled with their child or the other parent has taken their child. To report a case of international parental child abduction and/or the possibility of a future abduction, please contact our office.

Website: childabduction.state.gov

Telephone: **1-888-407-4747**

Email: AskCI@state.gov

Hague Abduction Convention: The 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction ([Hague Abduction Convention](#)) is an international treaty that provides a civil legal framework to promptly return children to their country of habitual residence after a wrongful removal or retention by one parent. A list of countries that are treaty partners with the United States can be found on the Office of Children's Issues [website](#) along with [country flyers](#) with specific information for many countries.

Countries not party to the Hague Abduction Convention: For parents whose child was taken from the United States to a country that is not party to the Hague Abduction Convention, other options may be available. Please contact the Office of Children's Issues for more information.

Prevention Office: The Prevention Branch in the Office of Children's Issues responds to inquiries from embassies and consulates, domestic passport agencies, and the general public regarding preventing abductions from the United States to a foreign country. The Prevention Branch works with state, local and federal law enforcement to assist parents and legal guardians who are concerned about possible child abduction. For more information about prevention please visit our [website](#).



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Retaining an Attorney: [Attorneys](#) can play an important role in international parental child abduction cases, whether they are representing a parent who fears a parental abduction may take place, or advising parents whose children have already been abducted to another country. If your child has been taken abroad, you can contact the closest [U.S. Embassy or Consulate](#) for a list of attorneys in that foreign country. For information on finding an attorney in the United States, the following organizations may be of assistance:

[American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers](#)
[International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers](#)
[American Bar Association](#)

Connecting victims with resources: The State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs is dedicated to assisting victims of domestic violence. Consular staff may help to identify domestic violence victim assistance, such as counseling referrals, domestic violence shelter information, and compensation resources that may be available in the local community, as well as resources if/when the child victim returns to the United States.

U visa: A U visa is a non-immigrant visa for persons who have suffered substantial mental or physical abuse as a result of being the victim of a crime. The person must be willing to assist law enforcement and government authorities in the investigation or prosecution of the crime. For instructions on how to apply for a U visa, please visit the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services \(USCIS\) website](#).

