

Legal Assistance Request, 2014
Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction

PLEASE NOTE:

- The “2014 Legal Assistance Income Guidelines” are based on Legal Service Corporation (“LSC”) maximum income levels for individuals eligible for legal assistance. LSC updates the guidelines annually to reflect annual amendments to Federal Poverty Guidelines. The guidelines are published in the Code of Federal Regulations, 45 CFR Part 1611, Appendix A. The Federal Register notice of the 2014 income guidelines (79 FR 6837, Feb. 5, 2014, as amended at 79 FR 8864, Feb. 14, 2014) is available at <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?&node=45:4.1.3.11.12.0.9.10.18>. Special tables for Hawaii and Alaska are available on that website.
- The U.S. Central Authority may ask you for additional information to verify your income and eligibility to request assistance finding *pro bono* (**free**) or reduced fee legal representation.
- If you are not forthcoming or in error in your self-assessment (as determined by a legal aid organization or private attorney reviewing the case), the U.S. Central Authority may limit any further assistance in helping you find legal representation.
- Legal representation may be offered by attorneys in private practice (“private attorneys”), by attorneys working for legal aid organizations, and/or by law professors and their law students. **However, there is no guarantee that an attorney will take your case.**
- Legal aid organizations determine eligibility for legal assistance based on income guidelines and program priorities. During the ‘intake’ process to determine your eligibility for assistance, you will be asked about your income and assets. **Please note: There is no entitlement to legal aid.**
- Private attorneys may ask you for additional information (such as income tax returns; other assets) to determine whether and on what terms to offer you their legal services. **There is no guarantee that a private attorney will offer to represent you *pro bono* or on a reduced fee basis.** Fee arrangements are strictly between you and the attorney. The Department of State plays **no** role in the setting, negotiating, collecting, or anything else having to do with fees.
- **Costs and expenses.** Most private attorneys will expect you to pay court costs and expenses (including but not limited to filing fees, service of process on the other party, phone calls, travel expenses, document duplication, translations) even when they provide their legal services to you *pro bono* or for reduced fees. Costs and expenses may be as much as \$1000 or more, and may vary depending on the particular case. Legal aid organizations may cover some or all of the costs and expenses associated with your Hague Convention case.
- It may be faster and easier to find an attorney if you are willing to pay some amount for legal services. Even if you are eligible to request *pro bono* legal assistance, you may request reduced fee legal assistance. Or, you may request a list of ‘full fee’ attorneys, who would charge their usual rates. In order to expedite the process, choose **only** one option.