

V – Assistance from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

When a Canadian child is abducted to another country, the Consular Operations and Emergency Services Division of the Department works closely with Canadian diplomatic missions abroad, the local police, the RCMP, the Hague Convention authorities and others to assist you. This assistance will only be provided at your explicit request, made personally or by a person authorized in writing to act on your behalf. All planned actions will be discussed with you in advance.

You can contact us 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-800-267-6788 or (613) 996-8885. These emergency numbers will put you in contact with a case officer who will remain in charge of your case. You should have the information available as detailed in Section VIII.

Your case officer in Ottawa will provide the information to a consular officer in the Canadian diplomatic mission overseas who, working with the local authorities or other persons, will assist in the efforts to find your child. The first step is to attempt to confirm the entry of your child into the country by using landing and other records. Unfortunately, not every country maintains such records in an easily retrievable form. Some countries may not be prepared to release such information, especially if the child and/or the abducting parent is a citizen.

A. What Foreign Affairs CAN DO

- ❖ in cases where the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction applies (see Part III), assist you in making direct contact with the relevant provincial/territorial Canadian central authority, and assist the central authorities both in Canada and abroad;
- ❖ in cases where the Hague Convention does not apply, attempt to locate and visit the child and report on his or her welfare;
- ❖ work with the Passport Office in establishing what travel documentation may have been used by your child;
- ❖ contact foreign diplomatic missions in Canada to establish what travel documentation may have been used, or whether a visa was issued;
- ❖ provide you with information on the country concerned, including its legal system, family laws and a list of attorneys there who may be willing to act on your behalf in the return of your child and assist in the authentication of needed documents;
- ❖ should you decide to travel to the country to which the abduction took place, provide you with advice and guidance before departure and ensure that the Canadian embassy or consulate is available to assist you upon your arrival;
- ❖ provide you with a point of contact and information;
- ❖ monitor judicial and administrative proceedings overseas and provide you with information on developments;
- ❖ assist you in contacting officials in other countries or contact them on your behalf;