

Childbirth

If you or your spouse gives birth to a child during your stay abroad, contact the Canadian embassy or one of its consulates in your host country to find out how to get a Canadian citizenship card and a passport for the baby. Start the process early since it may be time-consuming.

Respecting Local Customs and Laws

Difficult situations or frustrating confrontations can sometimes occur if you are unaware of the local customs and laws of your host country. Be wise and learn ahead of time what behaviour is appropriate and what is likely to offend the local citizens. For example, consumption of alcohol is illegal in certain countries.

Thousands of Canadians are currently imprisoned abroad for various offences. Keep in mind that while you are in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws and regulations. Ignorance is no defence, and your Canadian citizenship offers you no immunity.

If you are arrested or detained, you can request that the arresting officer inform the nearest Canadian government office abroad. You will need a lawyer, and the consular official can

refer you to one who speaks English. In the meantime, be aware that what you say can be used against you. Avoid making any statements unless your lawyer is present. Do not sign anything in a language you do not understand without the permission of your lawyer.

Drugs

Most countries impose severe penalties for the possession of even a minuscule amount of illegal drugs. Even prescription drugs and syringes used for legitimate medical purposes come under intense scrutiny and should therefore have proper accompanying documentation. As previously mentioned, keep all drugs in their original containers and carry the prescriptions with you.

Choose your travelling companions wisely. Do not pick up hitchhikers. Never agree to take any parcel that is not yours across a border.

For more information, consult the Drugs and Travel section of our Web site (www.voyage.gc.ca/main/drugs_menu-en.asp) and our publication *Drugs and Travel: Why They Don't Mix*.