

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Canadian Consular Services

Providing Assistance to Canadians Abroad



Foreign Affairs
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Providing Assistance to Canadians Abroad

Published by
Foreign Affairs Canada

To obtain more information or additional free copies of this booklet, visit your nearest Passport Office, check the Consular Affairs Web site (www.voyage.gc.ca) or write to:

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We would like to receive your comments on this booklet. Write to us at the address above or e-mail us at voyage@international.gc.ca.

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This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre Les Services consulaires canadiens : l'aide que nous offrons aux Canadiens et Canadiennes à l'étranger.

Note: The information contained in this booklet is subject to change. Please consult our Web site or the other resources listed in the For More Information section for the most up-to-date information. That section also includes information on publications and programs available from the Department.

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Cat. No.: E2-489/2004E
ISBN: 0-662-36585-2



Consular officials provide assistance to Canadians who are travelling, working or living abroad. They are committed to providing you with a variety of services* when you are in another country. Being informed about the services they provide—and do not provide—will help you in making your stay a pleasant one.

Before leaving Canada, you may wish to visit the Consular Affairs Web site at www.voyage.gc.ca to obtain safe travel advice and information on your country of destination. Our Country Travel Reports contain up-to-date information on current conditions in over 200 foreign destinations, including security and health issues, as well as visa requirements.

If you expect to stay in a country for more than three months, you may register with the local Canadian government office so that we can reach you in case of an emergency,

such as civil unrest or a natural disaster. You can register on-line at www.voyage.gc.ca/main/sos/rocapage-en.asp.

In addition, we recommend that you visit the Web site of the Canadian government office in your destination country to note their location and hours of operation.† We have over 270 consular points of service in more than 180 countries.

Consular officials are also available in Ottawa to assist you **24 hours a day, 7 days a week**. If you require urgent assistance while abroad, you may call the local Canadian government office or make a collect call to the Consular Affairs Bureau of Foreign Affairs Canada in Ottawa at **(613) 996-8885**. To find out if there is a toll-free number to reach our emergency services from your country of destination, consult our Country Travel Reports.



Consular Officials Provide the Following Services:

(Services are free unless otherwise indicated.)

Emergencies

- Assist in arranging evacuation in the event of a war, civil unrest, or a natural disaster.
- Arrange help in a medical emergency or assist in the event of a death by providing you with a list of local doctors and hospitals.
- Comfort and assist victims of robbery or other violence.
- Help find missing persons and abducted children.

Legal Issues

- Provide you with a list of local lawyers.
- Provide you with sources of information about local laws and regulations.
- Seek to ensure that you are treated fairly under the country's laws if you are arrested or detained (see our publication *A Guide for Canadians Imprisoned Abroad*).
- Provide assistance if your child has been abducted and taken to another country (see our publication *International Child Abductions: A Manual for Parents*).
- Notarize documents (fees apply).

Renée is visiting an archeological site near Lima, Peru, when a civil war breaks out. She calls the Canadian Embassy in Lima to find out if they can help her leave the country. A consular official tells her that they can assist her but that she will have to sign a document stating she will repay the costs of her evacuation. That night, she and other Canadians gather at a hotel. They are then escorted to a military airport and flown to Ecuador, the nearest safe location. They are all informed that the Embassy does not pay for any costs associated with their evacuation to Ecuador.



Rozalina is a Canadian exchange student at the Lomonosov Moscow State University. She is on her way to class one morning when the subway car she is riding in is targeted by a suicide bomber. Rozalina is among the seriously injured. The consular official who visits Rozalina in the hospital tells her that the Embassy can notify her family and assist them in transferring funds to her, but that it will not pay her medical expenses.



Other Issues

- Replace a lost, stolen, damaged, or expired passport (fees apply).
- Extend the period of validity in a limited validity passport (fees apply).
- Add a married or conjugal name to a passport (fees apply).
- Issue certificates in lieu of a birth certificate, record of civil status, or record of family civil status (fees apply).
- Issue a statement in lieu of a certificate of non-impediment to marriage abroad (fees apply).
- Provide an emergency loan, but only as a last resort and subject to strict rules (fees apply).
- Transfer funds (fees apply).
- Provide translation services (fees apply).
- Contact relatives or friends and ask them to send you money or airline tickets.
- Contact your next of kin, with your authorization, if you've had an accident or are detained by police.
- Accept citizenship applications.
- Provide advice about burying a Canadian abroad or repatriating the remains to Canada.
- Contact your next of kin in case of death.
- Request that local authorities investigate suspicious circumstances in the event of an alleged or apparent crime or death.

Consular Officials *Do Not* Provide the Following Services:

Legal Issues

- Intervene in private legal matters.
- Provide legal advice.
- Obtain a criminal record check on your behalf.
- Post bail, pay fines or pay legal fees.
- Get you out of prison (see our publication *A Guide for Canadians Imprisoned Abroad*).
- Take possession of an abducted child (see our publication *International Child Abductions: A Manual for Parents*).
- Enforce a Canadian custody agreement overseas or compel a country to decide a custody case.
- Investigate a crime or death.
- Ask local authorities to give preferential treatment to Canadians.

Other Issues

- Make travel arrangements.
- Compensate or reimburse you for delayed or cancelled travel.
- Pay your hotel, medical, travel, or other expenses.
- Store personal effects or search for lost items.
- Acquire local permits or licences on your behalf, including foreign visas or work permits.
- Assist with job hunting.
- Help you find an apartment or house.
- Accept mail on your behalf.
- Issue pension or social security cheques.
- Perform marriage ceremonies.
- Pay the burial, cremation or repatriation costs of a deceased Canadian.

Karim meets Julia on the train from Rome to Milan. They discover they have a lot in common and decide to travel around Italy together. When they return to Rome the night before Karim's departure for Canada, Julia asks him to take a parcel to a friend in Ottawa. At the airport, Karim is detained and charged with drug possession. He had no reason to suspect that the parcel contained cocaine. When he calls the Canadian Embassy in Rome, a consular official tells him that the Embassy can provide him with a list of lawyers and notify his family, but that consular officials cannot represent him in court or pay his legal fees.

A Few Words of Advice

- Find out sooner rather than later whether you need a foreign visa or other documents.
- Find out about local laws and customs **before** you visit other countries.
- Visit www.voyage.gc.ca and consult the Country Travel Report for your travel destination.
- Leave a detailed flight and travel itinerary with a friend or family member.
- Buy trip cancellation insurance, health insurance, and transportation insurance.

Michèle travels to Poland and falls in love with a Polish jazz musician. He suggests they get married before she returns to Canada. When she calls the Canadian Embassy in Warsaw, she finds out that consular officials cannot perform marriage ceremonies, and that she will need a certificate proving that her civil status allows her to be married in Poland. Fortunately for Michèle, the Embassy can issue a statement in lieu of the certificate for a fee of \$50 or the equivalent in Polish zloty. (Not all countries will accept a statement in lieu of a certificate of non-impediment to marriage abroad.)



Lawrence is on his way to the London Heathrow Airport when he notices that his passport is missing. He is getting married in a few days and doesn't want to be delayed in London. He calls the Canadian High Commission in London and speaks to a consular official who tells him that the High Commission can issue a limited validity replacement passport that will allow him to travel back to Canada. It does not, however, pay for his hotel room or other expenses while he waits for his application to be processed.

Susan has left her home in Canada without telling her family where she is headed. Her mother, though, is certain she has travelled to Guinea. Her mother contacts the Consular Affairs Bureau in Ottawa, indicating that Susan may be in danger and requesting the Bureau's help in tracing her. The Canadian Embassy in Conakry, Guinea, is informed of the request. It is able to locate Susan, but Susan does not want to speak with her mother or any of her relatives. She has started a new life in Guinea and does not want her location made known to her family. The Consular Affairs Bureau contacts Susan's mother and confirms that Susan has been located. When Susan's mother asks for Susan's address and telephone number, the Consular Affairs Bureau declines the request citing Susan's rights under Canadian privacy legislation.



More Brochures

The Consular Affairs Bureau publishes, in both official languages, a series of safe travel brochures. You can access them at www.voyage.gc.ca or order them by calling **1 800 267-8376** (in Canada) or **(613) 944-4000**.

How to Find Us

If you need assistance while abroad, contact a Canadian consular point of service. Addresses and telephone

numbers are listed at www.voyage.gc.ca/alt/canoffices.asp or check the local telephone directory.

E-mail: voyage@international.gc.ca

*The list of consular services is not exhaustive and is subject to change.

† Australian consular officials provide assistance to Canadians in some locations, such as the State of Hawaii and on the island of Bali in Indonesia.