

Traveling with minors from Panama: What you should know



If you are going to travel with any of your children, you must first comply with a series of legal requirements in Panama.

Traveling abroad from Panama for business, vacation or any other reason is simple. However, taking your minor children - considering that the child is traveling with only one parent - requires a little more attention, as well as fulfilling additional legal requirements.

Not knowing these requirements can jeopardize your vacation, urgent health trip, or even a business trip. But, if the necessary measures are taken, as required by law, with sufficient time and the necessary advice, these requirements should not generate inconveniences.

The requirements to be met by Panamanian minors or residents in the country, when leaving the country, are contained in Article 40 of Decree Law No. 30 of February 22, 2008.

For whom does it apply?

These requirements apply to Panamanian minors and resident aliens, that is to say, those who are under any migratory category.

The main requirement, without exception, is to show the minor's birth certificate.

- In case the child is Panamanian, he/she must bring the original birth certificate and a copy issued by the Electoral Tribunal of Panama with its stamps (timbre), or present original and copy of both sides of the juvenile identification card.
- If the child is a resident alien, he/she must present the original and copy of the birth certificate duly legalized or apostilled.

Common cases

Usually, one of the parents travels with the child. If this is the case, you must take into consideration the following:

- Submit original and copy of the letter of authorization signed by the other parent granting permission for the minor to leave the country, with the other parents.
- The letter of authorization presented must be authenticated by a Notary Public.

Common cases

Usually, one of the parents travels with the child. If this is the case, you must take into consideration the following:

- Submit original and copy of the letter of authorization signed by the other parent granting permission for the minor to leave the country, with the other parents.
- The letter of authorization presented must be authenticated by a Notary Public.

This document must have the following documentation:

- Complete data of the parent granting the authorization;
- Complete data of the parent traveling with the minor;
- Information about the trip: departure date, flight number, airline, and return date to Panama.

NOT
KNOWING
THESE
REQUIREMENTS
CAN JEOPARDIZE
YOUR TRIP,
EVEN IF IT'S
URGENT

Particular cases

1. Guardianship and nurturing:

In the case that one of the parents is the guardian and parent, the original and copy of the document with the authorization of the judge must be presented. If the document was issued in another country, it must be apostilled.

2. Death:

In the case of death of one of the parents, the original and copy of the death certificate issued by the Electoral Tribunal of Panama or by the competent authority of the country where the death occurred, with its respective apostille, must be presented.

3. Traveling with a third party:

If the minor is accompanied by another relative or by a responsible third party, the original and copy of the letter of authorization authenticated by a Notary Public and signed by both parents must be presented.

4. Traveling alone:

If the minor is traveling alone, the original and copy of the letter of authorization authenticated by a Notary Public and signed by both parents must be presented.

5. One of the parents lives or works in another country: In practice, the preparation of a power of attorney elevated to public deed is acceptable, through which one of the parents grants authorization for the exit of the country (Panama) of his/her minor child.

Exceptions to the rule:

Panamanian law does not require a letter of authorization, as long as both parents are physically present themselves at the Migratory control post at the airport, in order for the officer in charge to certify the signature of the parent who will not be traveling, confirming said signature against the identity card or passport and requesting the fingerprint printed on the document.

Although the regulation allows it, it is advisable to avoid this modality. Keep in mind that the Immigration officer will evaluate your case for as long as necessary, and

according to his/her criteria, he/she may or may not grant a favorable concept.

There is also the possibility that, in the exceptional case that the minors must travel multiple times in the same year, a notarized power of attorney is issued, in which both the mother and the father authorize it.

Such power of attorney is valid for more than one year from the time of signature and must be renewed annually.

The importance of exit controls

Exit controls are enforced for security and human trafficking reasons and are primarily aimed at protecting children. In this regard, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has stated:

"Children account for nearly one-third of identified victims of trafficking worldwide. Approximately 28% of identified victims of trafficking worldwide are children, UNICEF and the Inter-Agency Coordination Group Against Trafficking (ICAT) said today....

In regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, Central America and the Caribbean, children represent an even higher proportion of identified trafficking victims: 64% and 62%, respectively."

Finally, we recommend validating the requirements with the airline and your lawyer, as they may change without notice.

Visit: www.focusalcogal.com