

# Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

[Home](#) > [Research Program](#) > [Responses to Information Requests](#)

## Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website.

27 January 2006

### COL100935.E

Colombia: Whether a passport can be issued to a minor in the absence of either parent; documentation required for a minor to exit Colombia when not accompanied by one of the parents.  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

#### Obtaining a passport

The Website of the Colombian embassy in Canada indicates that a passport can be issued to a minor in the absence of a parent, but that the authorization of both parents is necessary for the minor to travel outside of the country (Colombia n.d.a).

The Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores) of Colombia provides information on how a minor can obtain a passport (ibid. 8 Mar. 2005). Children under seven years of age must be accompanied by a parent (or tutor) and must bear documents proving the relationship and a copy of their national identity document (*cédula*) (ibid.). If the parents (or tutor) are not with the child, they can provide another person with a written authorization certified by a notary or a consul (ibid.). In the latter circumstance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must give official recognition to the signature on the document (ibid.).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also requires the following documents:

- A certified copy from the civil registry where the birth of the child was registered (including the notary's signature and information on the parents). An additional copy is required in consulates;
- Two recent colour photographs conforming to Ministry of Foreign Affairs specifications;
- The expired passport or a declaration for a lost passport if applicable;
- Bank receipts proving payment for the passport;
- For children born abroad and not registered in a consulate, proof that their parents reside in Colombia;
- [Translation] In order to prove the residency rights of the child, [non-Colombian] parents of a child born in Colombia must present at least one visa that either parent had at the time of the child's birth (ibid.).

The Website of the embassy of Colombia in Canada noted requirements for three colour photographs, the submission of an application form, and the amount to cover the cost of the passport (US\$98) (ibid. n.d.a). The passport is valid for ten years (ibid.).

#### Documents required for a minor to exit Colombia

A representative from the consular section in the embassy of Colombia in Canada and a Coordinator of Consular Affairs from the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated that a minor is allowed to travel with a person other than his or her parents only with the written authorization from the parents, certified by a notary or a consulate (ibid. 24 Jan. 2006; ibid. 27 Jan. 2006; US 15 Aug. 2005). As well, the minor travelling outside of Colombia without one of his or her parents has to present the written authorization of the other parent to exit the country (Colombia 27 Jan. 2006).

The US Department of State added that the document [translation] "Minor Travel Authorization," is completed

by the absent parent or by both parents if the minor is travelling alone or with another person and presented to the Administrative Security Department (Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad, DAS) (15 Aug. 2005). This document also has to be certified at a consulate or notary office (*ibid.*). According to the embassy's Website, this document is valid for three months and costs US\$19 (*ibid.* n.d.b). As well, upon leaving Colombia, the minor must present his or her birth registration (*ibid.*).

The embassy official added that there are circumstances under which other documents must be provided: for a deceased parent, the death certificate has to be presented to the DAS (*ibid.* 24 Jan. 2006; see also US 15 Aug. 2005); for a "disappeared" parent, papers concerning custody of the minor are considered; for an unknown parent, a permit is provided by the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar) (Colombia 24 Jan. 2006).

Regarding documentation required for a minor to exit Colombia, the United States Department of State provides additional information:

In an effort to prevent international child abduction, many governments, including Colombia's, have initiated procedures at entry/exit points. These often include requiring documentary evidence of relationship and permission for the child's travel from the parent(s) or legal guardian not present. Having such documentation on hand, even if not required, may facilitate entry/departure. ...

If documents are prepared in the United States, the authorization and the birth certificate must be translated into Spanish and notarized. An "apostille" must then be affixed to the document by the designated state government authority. ... Finally, the Colombian Embassy or a Colombian consulate in the United States must authenticate the authorization and birth certificate. If documents are prepared in Colombia, only notarization by a Colombian notary is required. A permission letter prepared outside of Colombia is valid for 90 days. A permission letter prepared in Colombia is valid for 60 days (15 Aug. 2005).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

## References

Colombia. 27 January 2006. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. Written communication sent to the Research Directorate by a Coordinator of Consular Affairs.

\_\_\_\_\_. 24 January 2006. Embassy of Colombia in Canada. Written communication sent to the Research Directorate by a representative from the consular section.

\_\_\_\_\_. 8 March 2005. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. "Tramite: Solicitud de Pasaporte Ordinario." <[http://portal.minrelext.gov.co/portal/webdriver.exe?Mival=po\\_inicio.html](http://portal.minrelext.gov.co/portal/webdriver.exe?Mival=po_inicio.html)> [Accessed 13 Dec. 2005]

\_\_\_\_\_. N.d.a. Embassy of Colombia in Canada. "Expedición de Pasaportes." <<http://embajadacolombia.ca/servicios.php#pasaportes>> [Accessed 23 Jan. 2006]

\_\_\_\_\_. N.d.b. Embassy of Colombia in Canada. "Autorizar la salida del país de los hijos menores." <<http://embajadacolombia.ca/servicios.php?ID=2#Autorizar>> [Accessed 24 Jan. 2006]

United States (US). 15 August 2005. Department of State. "State Department Issues Consular Information Sheet on Colombia." (Factiva)

## Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral sources:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia did not provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

**Internet:** Factiva, Ministerio del Interior y de Justicia, Rama Judicial de Colombia.

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