

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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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.

28 June 2011

SLV103772.E

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El Salvador: Birth and death certificates, including procedures for issuing them and the information provided by them
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Birth certificates

In a 22 June 2011 telephone interview with the Research Directorate, a representative from El Salvador's Consular Services said that the following information is included in all birth certificates: the bearer's name; time, date and, through the name of the municipality (alcaldía) that issues the birth certificate, place of birth; the parents' full names; and each parent's identification number from their Sole Identity Document (Documento Único de Identidad, DUI). The representative also said that the appearance of a birth certificate depends on the municipality from which it is issued (El Salvador 22 June 2011). In correspondence with the Research Directorate, an official from the Canadian Embassy in El Salvador noted that in addition to the child's name, time, date and place of birth; and the names of the parents, a birth certificate also includes the sex, the address of the facility issuing the certificate, and the date it is issued. Similar to the El Salvador Consular Services representative, the Canadian embassy official also noted that the format of the birth certificate "may vary from each city or state" (Canada 9 June 2011).

The Canadian embassy official also said that in the 1980s, births in some cities were registered in books, and that a photocopy of the appropriate page became the birth certificate (*ibid.*). However, according to the official, "[m]ost of these books are in pieces, illegible, and it's very difficult to understand the handwriting" (*ibid.*). The official pointed out that in some cases there are no records available, such as "when books were destroyed" during the war (*ibid.*). She explained that those "citizens need to follow an identity trial," which would involve "a lawyer, two witnesses plus relatives, attesting [that] they have known the applicant since childhood" (*ibid.*).

The El Salvador Consular Services representative noted that a birth certificate can be obtained through the municipalities in El Salvador, and that a family member or friend can be authorized to obtain a copy (El Salvador 22 June 2011). *Elsalvador.com*, the online version of *El Diario de Hoy* and *El Salvador Magazine*, indicates that residents of El Salvador can obtain their birth certificates from the municipality in which they were born, and that, if abroad, the person must contact the nearest embassy or consulate (2004). The Canadian embassy representative also said that citizens of El Salvador living abroad can request birth certificates through any embassy or consulate, and added that the process can take two or more months (Canada 9 June 2011). The El Salvador Consulate General in Los Angeles indicates on its website that applicants must complete the request at the consulate (El Salvador n.d.a). Birth certificates from municipalities other than San Salvador are available at no cost; however, San Salvador birth certificates cost \$3.00 US and must be paid for with an international money order (*ibid.*). The process takes 45 to 60 days (*ibid.*).

According to the criminal and family law firm IURE, which provides legal services for clients inside and outside El Salvador (IURE n.d.a), if a birth certificate is [translation] "properly registered," a person outside of El Salvador can "authorize a person to request it at the respective municipality" (*ibid.* n.d.b). However, if the document was never registered or was lost by the municipality, the legal firm indicates that the person must go through [translation] "a notary process called subsidiary civil state (*estado civil subsidiario*)" (*ibid.*). This process requires the applicant to [translation]

send a special letter of authorization (*poder especial*) to conduct the process in El Salvador, [and] provide documents that can prove the date of birth, and witnesses that can testify to the date and place of birth. The process takes approximately 2 months. (*ibid.*)

Death certificates

The El Salvador Consular Services representative indicated that a death certificate generally includes the name of the deceased and the time and location of the death (22 June 2011). The Canadian embassy official indicated that the

information on the death certificate includes the name of the deceased; the cause of death; the date, time and place of the death; and the "personal data" of whomever certifies the death (e.g., "physician, medical examiner, etc.") (Canada 9 June 2011).

According to the website of the San Salvador municipality, if a death certificate has not been registered with the municipality, an applicant must go to the central or regional municipal office and submit the original and copies of the following documents to obtain proof that there is no death certificate: hospital death report, legal medical examination, birth certificate of the deceased, DUI of the deceased or proof from the DUI centre that the card was never obtained, proof from the National Register of Natural Persons (Registro Nacional de las Personas Naturales, RNPN) that no death certificate exists, a certificate of record of an identity card if there is no DUI, a copy of the applicant's DUI, and a signed request form (El Salvador n.d.b). The applicant can only be the father, mother, brother, spouse, child, or an authorized lawyer (ibid.).

San Salvador birth and death certificates

The San Salvador website includes an online form with which a person can request a birth or death certificate (27 July 2010). The form requests the following information:

- The registered name of the newborn or newly dead and the complete names of his or her mother and father;
- Date of birth or death, depending on which type of certificate is being requested;
- Number of copies requested;
- If known, the year, book, and document numbers (año, libro, partida);
- An identity number from either the DUI, a driver's licence, a passport, or another document;
- The applicant's name, email, address, postal code, telephone number, and country;
- Contact information for the person to whom the certificate is being sent (El Salvador 27 July 2010).

The applicant will then be contacted via email by a service agent (El Salvador 27 July 2010). Information on how long it takes to process a request could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

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 sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Canada. 9 June 2011. Embassy of Canada in El Salvador. Correspondence from an official to the Research Directorate.

El Salvador. 22 June 2011. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. Servicios Consulares. Telephone interview with a representative.

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IURE Servicios Jurídicos. N.d.a. "Acerca de IURE." <<http://www.iure.com.sv/dynamicdata/acercade.asp>> [Accessed 17 June 2011]

_____. N.d.b. "Preguntas frecuentes de salvadoreños en el exterior." <<http://www.iure.com.sv/dynamicdata/faq.asp>> [Accessed 17 June 2011]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) did not have information for this Response. The Embassy of El Salvador in Ottawa did not reply to the request for information within the time constraints of this Response. Attempts to contact an official at the San Salvador municipality (Alcaldía de San Salvador) were unsuccessful.

Internet sites, including: El Salvador - Embassy of El Salvador in Washington, DC, Ministerio de Gobernación, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores.

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