



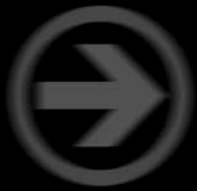
Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



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CONSULAR DIRECTORATE

Foreign & Commonwealth Office
Old Admiralty Building
The Mall, London SW1A 2PA
Tel: 00 44 (0)20 7008 1500



CHILD ABDUCTION

AND THE UK-PAKISTAN PROTOCOL

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

We welcome the views of our customers on the quality of the service we provide. Please write to the Head of Consular Directorate at the above address.



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CHILD ABDUCTION

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Has your child been taken to or kept in Pakistan without your permission? This leaflet will tell you what you can do, who to contact and how we can help.

* For general information on child abduction, please see our leaflet 'International Child Abduction'.





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THE UK-PAKISTAN PROTOCOL

In January 2003 judges from Pakistan and the UK signed a 'judicial protocol'. This is an understanding between the two countries which aims to secure the return of an abducted child to the country where they normally live, without regard to the nationality, culture or religion of the parents.

The judges agreed that the child's welfare is a priority and that the courts of the country where the child normally lives are usually in the best position to decide on matters of custody and where a child should live.

The protocol asks judges to consider any existing court orders made by the courts in the child's 'home' country. Usually the judge will then order the child to be returned to the country where they normally live. So if your child is taken to Pakistan, or does not return from a holiday there, and you have an existing residence order, or a prohibitive order against the person who has taken your child, you may be able to use the protocol to help return your child to the UK.

Liaison judges have been appointed in both the UK and Pakistan. They will communicate with each other on individual cases to ensure that each is aware of court orders from the other's country. You should contact the Family Division of the Royal Courts of Justice to find out who the liaison judges are in each country (see Contacts Section).

IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN ABDUCTED TO PAKISTAN AND YOU WANT TO USE THE PROTOCOL TO TRY TO HAVE THEM RETURNED, YOU SHOULD:

- Consult a solicitor in the UK. They will be able to help you get any UK court orders that you may need. Explain to them that your child has been taken to Pakistan and that you have heard that there is a protocol that may help you to have your child returned.
- Consult a lawyer in Pakistan. You will need to start court proceedings in Pakistan to use the protocol, but you may not have to travel to Pakistan to do this. We can supply you with a list of lawyers in Pakistan.¹ Please note that there is no Legal Aid for court proceedings in Pakistan. You will therefore have to pay your own legal costs.
- Ask your solicitor to send copies of your UK court orders and details of your court proceedings in Pakistan to the liaison judge in the UK at the Royal Courts of Justice. The contact details are on the back of this leaflet.
- The UK liaison judge will communicate with the Pakistani liaison judge. He will draw attention to your UK court order, your court proceedings in Pakistan and your request to have your child returned to the UK.

NOTE 1

Neither the Government nor the relevant British Embassy, High Commission or Consulate can make any guarantee in relation to the professional ability or character of any person or company on the list, nor can they be held responsible in any way for you relying on any advice you are given.

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WHO CAN HELP?

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office

We can give you information about what you can do if your child has been abducted and taken to Pakistan, or if you think that this might happen. We can also help when you are dealing with authorities overseas.

reunite

This is a charity which provides advice, information and support to parents, family members and guardians whose children have been abducted, or might be abducted and taken overseas. They can give you a list of UK lawyers with experience in family law.

The police

Tell your local police station if you think your child has been abducted or is about to be. Depending on the circumstances, the person who abducts the child may have committed a crime in the UK. If there is a real and imminent threat of your child being abducted and taken overseas, the police can contact the National Ports Office and ask them to alert all UK points of departure to try to prevent the abduction. This is called a 'Port Alert'. If your child has been taken overseas but you do not know exactly where, the UK police will be able to contact Interpol. Interpol can work with police forces overseas to help find your child.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

The Family Division Lawyer
President's Chambers
Royal Courts of Justice
Strand
London WC2A 2LL
Tel: 020 7947 7197
Fax: 020 7947 7274

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Child Abduction Section
Consular Directorate
Old Admiralty Building
London SW1A 2PA
Tel: 020 7008 0878 (or the FCO switchboard on
0207 008 1500 outside of office hours).
Website: www.fco.gov.uk/childabduction

reunite International Child Abduction Centre
PO Box 7124
Leicester LE1 7XX
Tel: 0116 2556 234 (advice line)
Website: www.reunite.org

