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Colombia

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Alert:Colombia Moratorium Update

The Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF) formally announced several important changes in Colombia's management of intercountry adoptions.

Beginning July 15, 2013, ICBF will no longer accept new intercountry adoption applications from non-Colombian citizens living abroad interested in adopting a child under 6 years and 11 months old, unless ICBF considers the child to have special characteristics or needs. Families who are considering adopting a healthy child in this age range should ensure that they have filed their initial application with ICBF no later than the July 15, 2013 deadline. Visit [ICBF website](#) to learn what documents ICBF requires as part of the initial application. ICBF has indicated this moratorium will last at least two years.

The Department of State expects that adoption processing will continue to operate normally in all other respects. Families who have already been accepted by ICBF as prospective adoptive parents for a healthy child less than 6 years and 11 months old will maintain their place on the existing waiting list and ICBF will continue to match and finalize adoptions for these children. Families interested in adopting older children or any child identified by ICBF as being more difficult to place because of special characteristics or needs should not experience any changes as a result of this decision. Furthermore, ICBF has indicated that any family currently on the waiting list which is open to adopting a different category of child should work with their adoption service provider to let ICBF know. Visit [icbf.gov.co](#) to learn more about the 8,000 children with special characteristics or needs who are currently awaiting adoption.

In addition to this moratorium, ICBF has also implemented a number of changes affecting adoption service providers and private adoption houses. Effective immediately, adoption service providers may no longer charge prospective adoptive families for "humanitarian assistance" programs as part of an adoption contract. In addition, ICBF has formally reminded prospective adoptive parents, adoption service providers, and private adoption houses of its ban on donations by any family or entity involved in an ongoing adoption prior to the completion of that adoption. ICBF is concerned that these payments and donations jeopardize the credibility of Colombia's intercountry adoption process. The Department of State expects that ICBF may take adverse action against any individuals or entities that do not honor these requirements.

For updates you may email the Bogota U.S. Embassy at: IVBogota@state.gov, *Attn Adoptions* or refer to [adoption.state.gov](#) for updates.