



El Salvador

May 29, 2013

[Print](#) [Email](#)

Alert: Adoption Delays and Complications

El Salvador and the United States are parties to the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption ("Convention"). Therefore, all adoptions between El Salvador and the United States initiated after April 1, 2008, must meet the requirements of the Convention and the U.S. and Salvadoran laws implementing the Convention.

The U.S. Embassy in San Salvador continues to work with the Salvadoran Central Authority – the Public Defender's Office (*Procuraduría General de la República - PGR*) – to ensure that intercountry adoptions comply with the requirements of the Convention and U.S. and Salvadoran law. However, the U.S. Embassy in San Salvador continues to see both out-of-order and incorrectly processed intercountry adoption cases that are not in compliance with these requirements or valid for U.S. immigration purposes. Adoptive families have encountered serious delays, additional expenses, uncertainty, and unexpected difficulties. The Department of State therefore advises U.S. citizens to proceed with caution when deciding whether to adopt from El Salvador.

All U.S. citizens and Adoption Services Providers (ASPs) should consult with the U.S. Embassy prior to beginning the adoption process in El Salvador. Those with adoption cases already underway should likewise consult with the U.S. Embassy. The U.S. Embassy can provide background on the common problems that arise so that both ASPs and prospective adoptive parents (PAPs) can monitor their adoption case carefully to ensure that it is compliant with Convention requirements and valid for immigration purposes.

Most adoptions in El Salvador take at least two years to finalize, and some have taken as long as eight years. PAPs and ASPs should be prepared to work closely with the Public Defender's Office for Adoptions (*Oficina Para Adopciones - OPA*) to ensure that their adoption case is following the correct path and meeting all legal requirements so that it will be valid for immigration purposes once the adoption process is finalized.

To contact the Immigrant Visa Unit at the U.S. Embassy in San Salvador regarding a pending or future adoption case, please send an e-mail to adoptsansal@state.gov.