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Uganda

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Notice: Visa Adjudication Procedures for Intercountry Adoptions at U.S. Embassy Kampala

This notice provides information clarifying the process for filing the Form I-600, *Petition to Classify Orphan as an Immediate Relative*, and DS-260, *Immigrant Visa and Alien Registration Application* (Immigrant Visa) at the U.S. Embassy in Kampala, Uganda.

Filing of Form I-600 in Uganda:

Once prospective adoptive parents are in possession of the below documentation, prospective adoptive parents or their authorized agent may file a Form I-600 petition with the U.S. Embassy in Kampala:

- Valid Form I-600A approval,
- A legible, certified final adoption decree, or guardianship decree sufficient for the purposes of emigration and adoption in the United States issued by the appropriate High Court in Uganda,
- The child's long form birth certificate (or if unavailable, other evidence of the child's age and identity), and
- All other required Form I-600 supporting documentation.

If prospective adoptive parents wish to file the Form I-600 petition abroad with the U.S. Embassy in Kampala, they must be physically present in Uganda during some point in the adoption process. To file the Form I-600 at the U.S. Embassy in Kampala, prospective adoptive parents should email KampalaAdoptions@state.gov to request an appointment to file the Form I-600 petition. This should be done prior to scheduling a visa interview or submitting the DS-260 immigrant visa application. Appointments to file the Form I-600 at the U.S. Embassy are scheduled for Monday and Thursday mornings of each week.

Families who file Form I-600 petitions directly with the U.S. Embassy are not required to remain in Uganda throughout the adjudication of the Form I-600 petitions. Families should not expect to receive immigrant visas for their prospective adoptive children until they have an approved Form I-600, and, ultimately, notification of an approved Immigrant Visa.

Alternatively, families may also choose to file the Form I-600 petition directly with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in the United States. For information on how to file the Form I-600 petition domestically with USCIS through the National Benefits Center (NBC), please refer to the [USCIS](#) website.

Note: The U.S. Embassy cannot process the DS-260, Immigrant Visa Application, until the petitioners have an approved Form I-600 petition. Prospective adoptive parents should not take any action related to the immigrant visa process, including obtaining the medical exam, prior to notification of their Form I-600 petition being approved.

Orphan Determination Process:

Upon receipt of the Form I-600 and accompanying documentation, the U.S. Embassy in Kampala conducts the required orphan determination prior to the Form I-600 petition adjudication. The timeframe for completion of the orphan determination depends on the circumstances of each case and can take anywhere from several days to several months.

Note: Consular Officers have limited delegated authority from USCIS and thus may only approve clearly approvable Form I-600 petitions. If the supporting evidence is insufficient to determine if a child meets the definition of an orphan under U.S. immigration law, the U.S. Embassy in Kampala must refer those not clearly approvable Form I-600 petitions to USCIS for further review.

Currently, the U.S. Embassy in Kampala physically forwards all "not clearly approvable" cases filed on behalf of a child from Uganda to the USCIS Field Office in Rome. Embassy Kampala will provide prospective adoptive parents with a transfer notice indicating when the case is physically forwarded to USCIS Rome.

Upon receipt of the "not clearly approvable" petition, the USCIS Rome Field Office notifies the petitioner that the case has been received and will take appropriate steps to complete adjudication of the case. The USCIS Rome Field Office will notify the petitioner of the final decision. If the case is approved, USCIS will return the case to the U.S. Embassy in Kampala for further visa adjudication.

Submission of DS-260, Immigrant Visa Application:

Upon approval of a Form I-600 petition, the U.S. Embassy in Kampala will notify prospective adoptive parents, provide information regarding the required panel physician's medical report, and schedule the visa interview. On completion of the medical examination, IOM will forward the medical paperwork to the Consular Section for review and further processing. This process normally takes 3-5 business days.

Immigrant visa appointments are scheduled on Monday and Wednesday afternoons. Prior to the immigrant visa appointment, prospective adoptive parents will need to complete the [online DS-260, Immigrant Visa application](#).