



News Release

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USCIS ISSUES INTERIM RULE ESTABLISHING NEW PROCEDURES FOR ADOPTED CHILDREN UNDER THE HAGUE CONVENTION

WASHINGTON —U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) today announced the publication of an interim rule in the *Federal Register* to establish new administrative procedures for the immigration of children who are adopted by U.S. citizens and who come from countries that are parties to the *Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption*. The rule amends U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regulations relating to the immigration of adopted children to be in conformity with the convention, a treaty that the United States plans to ratify soon. USCIS invites public comments on the interim rule published in the *Federal Register* and currently is available for public review at www.uscis.gov.

The interim rule is effective on November 3, 2007, though the actual filing of cases will begin when the United States becomes a party to the Convention, and the Convention has entered into force for the United States. The Department of State is still finalizing necessary steps for the Convention to enter into force. The Department of State will announce the exact date that the Convention will enter into force for the United States and will do so approximately three months in advance.

Each country that is a party to the convention has an officially-designated Central Authority. The Central Authority in the child's country will ensure that intercountry adoption is in the child's best interests and that the birth parents, if still living, have freely consented to the adoption. The Central Authority in the parents' country will also ensure that the adoptive parents are suitable as adoptive parents, and that the proposed adoption will be recognized in the parents' country.

"USCIS is committed to the effective implementation of the convention principles in developing this new DHS procedure," remarked Emilio Gonzalez, Director of USCIS. "The Convention and the new DHS regulation will improve the ability of USCIS to safeguard the interests of birth parents, adoptive parents, and children," he added.

Once DHS has published the interim rule in the *Federal Register*, the public will have until December 3, 2007, to submit written comments by visiting the website at www.regulations.gov and looking for docket number "USCIS-2007-0008." More information regarding the interim rule is available through an accompanying Question and Answer sheet available at the USCIS website: www.uscis.gov. Also, more general information concerning intercountry adoptions is available at the USCIS website or by contacting the USCIS National Customer Service Center at 800-375-5283. Country specific information related to intercountry adoption may be found on the Department of State's website at www.travel.state.gov.

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