

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18

As set out by the new South African immigration regulations, from the 1st of June 2015, all individuals under the age of 18 (minors) will have to accompany their passports with an unabridged birth certificate when both entering and exiting any South African port of entry.

What is an Unabridged Birth Certificate?

An unabridged birth certificate contains the identity document number, first name and surname, date of birth, place of birth, and country of birth of not only the minor to which it belongs, but for both parents or legal guardians as well. If the original unabridged birth certificate is not written in English, then a sworn English translation performed by an accredited authority in the minor's country of origin is to be provided.

Travelling Requirements

The South African Immigration Act's requirements for travelling minors are contingent on whether they are accompanied or not. Below are the travel requirements for minors entering or exiting South Africa.

Minors travelling with Both Parents

- Valid passport.
- Unabridged birth certificate.

Minors travelling with One Parent

- Valid passport.
- Unabridged birth certificate.
- Affidavit expressing consent from the absent parent.
- Court order granting full parental responsibilities to the legal guardian/parent accompanying the minor.
- The affidavit should be no more than 3 months old. In the event that the absent parent is deceased, then a death certificate will be required.

Minors travelling with an Adult

- Valid passport.
- Unabridged birth certificate.
- Affidavits from the minor's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) expressing consent for the minor to be accompanied by the respective adult.
- Contact details of parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
- Copies of the ID documents or passports belonging to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Minors travelling Unaccompanied

- Valid passport.
- Unabridged birth certificate.
- Proof of consent from one or both of the minor's parents or legal guardians (can be in the form of a written letter or affidavit). If proof of consent is only obtained from one parent, then a court order granting full parental responsibility to the consenting parent will also be need to be produced.
- The particulars of the individual to receive the minor in South Africa (contact details and residential address).
- Copy of the identity document, valid passport, visa, or permanent residence permit of the individual to receive the minor in South Africa.
- Contact details of the minor's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

How can I get an Unabridged Birth Certificate?

You can apply for your child's unabridged birth certificate at your nearest Department of Home Affairs. In order to apply you will need your ID document as well as your child's ID number. Please note that an unabridged birth certificate currently costs R75 and can take up to 8 weeks to be processed. Furthermore, all submitted documents must be originals or certified copies. If your child was born after the 14th of March 2013, then you should already be in possession of an unabridged birth certificate.

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